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A TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE RANDY J. HOLLAND

Justice Randy J. Holland served on the American Judicature Society's (AJS) Board of Directors and chaired the National Advisory Committee to the AJS Center for Judicial Ethics. He received the 2011 Dwight D. Opperman Award for Judicial Excellence and the 2003 Herbert Harley Award.

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The Honorable Randy J. Holland

1947 - 2022

BY THE HONORABLE COLLINS J. SEITZ, JR. AND GAYLE P. LAFFERTY, ESQUIRE

Offering his coat to a homeless person on the way to a winter lecture at Harvard University. Hand-writing welcome letters to new judges. Mentoring judicial colleagues. Sitting on the Delaware Supreme Court for over 30 years. And serving on or leading some of the most prestigious law-related committees, boards, and institutions in the country and beyond. The world is a lesser place with the loss of Justice Randy Holland, one of Delaware's true public servants.

Justice Holland was recognized internationally as an expert and legal scholar in corporation law and corporate governance, legal and judicial ethics, constitutional law, and common law. He was a self-confessed anglophile and historian. Among his prolific legal writings, he co-authored a book on Middle Temple Lawyers and the American Revolution and edited a book about Magna Carta. In 2004, he became only the third American — behind United States Supreme Court Justices John Paul Stevens and Ruth Bader Ginsburg — to be elected as an Honorary “Bencher” of Lincoln’s Inn, London. He served as the National President of the American Inns of Court Foundation from 2000-04 and was the only state court judge of a nine-person Anglo-American Exchange, which included United States Supreme Court Justices Breyer and Scalia. He



worked tirelessly with the Chief Justice of Taiwan to train its judiciary to handle complex corporate and commercial litigation. With Justice Holland’s encouragement, Taiwan adopted the ABA’s Model Code of Judicial Conduct.

His profound impact on and contributions to the practice of law and the legal profession can be traced back to his deep roots and humble upbringing in Milford, Delaware. After serving as the quarterback and captain of the football team and catcher on the baseball team at Milford High School (where he met his true love, Ilona), Randy earned a scholarship to Swarthmore College. After graduating with a B.A. in Economics in

1967, he went on to Penn Law School, where he graduated *cum laude* in 1972 and received the Henry C. Loughlin Award for legal ethics. While he could have pursued a legal career with a Wall Street law firm, Randy chose to return to his rural roots in Milford, where he married Ilona in 1972, and began his law practice in Georgetown with the firm Faulkner & Dunlap (which by 1974 had become Dunlap & Holland). Not long after, Randy and Ilona welcomed their son, Ethan, who would join his parents as distinguished alumni of both Milford High and Swarthmore College.

Randy’s reputation grew as a lawyer of great skill and integrity. As a practitioner, he appeared in every Delaware court and argued before nearly every Delaware judge in a variety of civil, criminal, and family law matters. In 1981, he successfully argued for the reversal of a client’s first-degree murder conviction with assistance on appeal from his friend and former chief counsel of the Senate Watergate Committee, Sam Dash. By the time of his client’s retrial, Randy had become a partner in the Georgetown office of Morris Nichols Arshat & Tunnell. Following conviction of his client upon retrial, Randy again argued successfully in the Delaware Supreme Court to reverse his client’s murder conviction. Not long after, in 1986, Governor Mike

Photo Courtesy of Wilson Sonsini

Castle appointed Randy to become the then-youngest member of the Delaware Supreme Court. He fulfilled that role faithfully for 30 years, as the longest-serving Justice and the author of more than 700 reported opinions and several thousand unreported decisions. Upon his retirement in 2017, he joined the Delaware office of Wilson, Sonsini, Goodrich & Rosati as a Senior Of Counsel. In 2020, Randy served as part of the legal team that successfully defended Delaware's political balance requirement for judicial appointments before the United States Supreme Court.

Throughout his career as both lawyer and judge, Randy gave of his time and talents energetically and unselfishly in support of legal education, the legal profession, and the public good. He authored, co-authored or edited ten books (including a treatise on state constitutional law that is taught in law schools around the country) and countless scholarly articles on wide-ranging topics. He taught as an adjunct professor at several law schools, including Iowa, Vanderbilt, Washington in St. Louis, Penn, and Widener. He also worked to promote public trust and confidence in the administration of justice through law-related public education. He helped to bring his friend Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's iCivics program to Delaware school children to ensure that the practice and privileges of American democracy are taught to each new generation.

He led or served on countless national committees for the ABA, the American Judicature Society, and the National Center for State Courts. For his hard work and dedication, he received numerous awards, including the 2014 American Inns of Court Powell Award for Professionalism and Ethics, the 2011 Dwight D. Opperman Award for Judicial Excellence, and the 1992 Judge of the Year Award from the National Child Support Enforcement Association. To recognize his tireless support of the American Inns of Court movement, a group of Delaware lawyers honored him by naming their Inn the

Randy J. Holland Delaware Workers' Compensation American Inn of Court. In 2017, Governor John Carney awarded him the Order of the First State, and the Delaware Combined Campaign for Justice created the Randy J. Holland Family Law Chair Endowment Fund to honor his legacy and give meaning to his deeply held belief that access to fair and impartial justice should not depend on one's ability to pay. It is a testament to the high regard in which he was held that the legal community contributed over \$2 million to the fund in the first five months after its creation.

All of these accomplishments and accolades do not paint the truest picture of who Randy was — a devoted husband and father who rarely missed a family dinner and was the biggest cheerleader for his wife's, son's, and granddaughters' accomplishments and careers; a dear friend who never missed the opportunity to write an encouraging note or make a congratulatory phone call; a trusted teacher and mentor who gave advice freely and patiently when asked and who sought to develop the talents of young lawyers and to connect them to other Delaware lawyers and institutions he cared about; a giant of the legal profession who gave generously of himself in service to the profession and the democracy that he loved; and, above all, a kind, thoughtful, gracious man who gave his full and undivided attention and respect to those who asked for his help. 🏛️

The Honorable Collins J. Seitz, Jr. is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Delaware.

Gayle Lafferty is the State Court Administrator and a former Law Clerk for Justice Holland.