

NEWS RELEASE

Court of Appeals, Division 2

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May 1, 2020

ARIZONA JUDICIARY MOURNS LOSS OF RETIRED COURT OF APPEALS
JUDGE LLOYD FERNANDEZ

TUCSON – The Arizona Judicial Branch extends its condolences to the family of retired Court of Appeals Judge Lloyd Fernandez. Judge Fernandez passed away on April 6, 2020 at the age of eighty-eight. He is survived by his children, Laura Hutchinson and Mike Fernandez, his son-in-law Mark Hutchinson, his granddaughter Maddie Hutchinson, and extended family and friends.

Judge Fernandez was a first-generation American, born in Greenlee County, Arizona of parents who immigrated to the Clifton-Morenci area from Spain. After graduating from Clifton High School, Judge Fernandez attended Arizona State University, where he lettered as a varsity baseball player all four years. He graduated from ASU with a degree in business administration in 1954. Judge Fernandez served in the military for two years, and then earned his law degree from the University of Arizona in 1959. An impressive legal career followed. After serving as the Greenlee County Attorney, Judge Fernandez was elected Greenlee County Superior Court Judge in 1970. While on the Superior Court bench, he had the unique distinction of trying cases in all of Arizona’s then-existing counties.

In 1984, Judge Fernandez was appointed to Division Two of the Arizona Court of Appeals by Governor Bruce Babbitt. He was one of the first judges to serve on the newly-created second panel of that court, and he remained with the court until he retired in 1996. Division Two Judge Philip Espinosa, who worked with Judge Fernandez at the Court of Appeals, described him as “a wonderful colleague and a very kind man with a compassionate judicial outlook and a non-stop sense of humor.”

Commenting on the history of the Court of Appeals, Judge John Roll, now deceased, noted that he had the “privilege of serving alongside a daunting group of judges” at Division Two, including Judge Fernandez. Judge Roll credited Judge Fernandez with not only introducing him to the game of golf, but to “the need for deference to the trial court,” a concept to which Judge Roll noted he “later became much more attached.”

In an inspirational note Judge Fernandez left for Greenlee County Superior Court Presiding Judge Monica Stauffer when she succeeded him on the Superior Court bench, Judge Fernandez said, “There are no unimportant cases,” a motto Judge Stauffer believes he lived by as an attorney, a trial judge and an appellate judge. According to Judge Stauffer, Judge Fernandez understood well that the law has the ability to change lives. Judge Fernandez’s legacy as a first-generation American raised in a small town who accomplished extraordinary things will have a lasting and profound impact on the lives of many.

Judge Fernandez will be buried in his beloved Greenlee County.