



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former President Judge of Commonwealth Court James Gardner Colins to Resign from Bench in January

HARRISBURG, October 3, 2007 - The Hon. James Gardner Colins, a member of the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania for more than 20 years and the court's immediate past president judge, is announcing his resignation from the bench effective Jan. 7, 2008. Please find attached a letter of resignation by Judge Colins to Gov. Ed Rendell. The attachment also includes the judge's biography.

A judge for more than 27 years, Judge Colins said he is leaving to pursue other interests.

A PHOTO IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST BY CALLING ART HEINZ AT (717) 795-2062.



COMMONWEALTH COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

JAMES GARDNER COLINS
PRESIDENT JUDGE EMERITUS

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THE WIDENER BUILDING
ONE SOUTH PENN SQUARE
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19107
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October 2, 2007

His Excellency
The Governor of Pennsylvania
Hon. Edward G. Rendell
Room 225, Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Rendell:

I am writing to inform you of my intention to resign my commission as a Judge of the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania, effective 12:01 a.m., January 7, 2008.

As you are aware, you and I have worked, both independently and together, to improve the quality of justice for all Pennsylvanians for our entire careers.

We started as Assistant District Attorneys under Senator Specter. You then became District Attorney and, shortly thereafter, I was appointed by Governor Thornburgh to the Municipal Court bench. After my election to Commonwealth Court, you were elected as Mayor of Philadelphia.

I very much enjoyed working with you during my second term as President Judge of the Commonwealth Court and your first term as Governor. You, Chief Justice Cappy, and I collaborated to make the dream of a Pennsylvania Judicial Center and Courthouse for the Commonwealth Court a reality.

Since I have accomplished my goals during my two terms as President Judge, and the court is now in the very capable hands of President Judge Leadbetter and my uniformly outstanding colleagues, I feel that I must move on to pursue other interests.

One of these interests will be to more actively warn the public of the increasing threat to the independence of the judiciary. In my 27 plus years as a Judge, I have never observed the level of specious political attacks upon the judiciary by special interest groups that now exists. I am looking forward to once again becoming a member of the practicing Bar, so that I may vigorously speak out on behalf of my fellow Judges.

I commend you for your exemplary commitment to public service and wish you much success and happiness during the remainder of your term as Governor.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Gardner Collins". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

JAMES GARDNER COLINS

/s

JUDGE JAMES GARDNER COLINS

Home ~ 7 North Columbus Boulevard, #129 ~ Philadelphia, PA 19106 ~ 215-923-0373

Chambers ~ Suite 900, The Widener Bldg ~ One South Penn Square ~ Philadelphia, PA 19107 ~ 215-560-3010

E-mail ~ judge.colins@pacourts.us

EDUCATION

J.D. **Villanova University School of Law**
1971 - Villanova, PA

B.A. **University of Pennsylvania**
1968 - Philadelphia, PA
Majored in History

EXPERIENCE

1984-present **Judge, Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania**
Commonwealth Court is one of two state intermediate appellate courts. The Court hears appeals from decisions of the county courts and state administrative agencies, and has significant original jurisdiction over actions by and against the Commonwealth government, challenges to state government policies, and election issues involving candidates for statewide offices and national office.

1994-1999 **President Judge, Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania**
2002-2006 Served two five-year terms as President Judge, charged with overall administrative and fiscal responsibilities for a statewide appellate court with a budget of \$16,818,000; 124 employees and 15 judicial colleagues.
In 2005, the Commonwealth Court inventory reached its lowest point in the past 28 years, with 1,064 appeals pending, compared with 2,790 in 1997. Average time elapsed between case assignment and opinion filing was the lowest in history.

1997-2001 **Member, Pennsylvania Judicial Conduct Board**
1999-2001 **Chairman, Pennsylvania Judicial Conduct Board**
The Judicial Conduct Board is the state agency responsible by constitutional mandate for investigating complaints of misconduct against judges of Pennsylvania's unified judicial system and, where appropriate, filing formal charges against those judges found to have engaged in unethical behavior.
The Chairman of the Board supervises a twelve-member board and its staff, with fiscal authority over a budget of over \$1,000,000.

- 1980-1984 **Judge, Philadelphia Municipal Court**
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 1975-1980 **Partner – Glickman, Dranoff & Colins**
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 1971-1975 **Assistant District Attorney - Philadelphia County District
Attorney's Office**
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

MILITARY SERVICE

Commissioned 2nd Lt., Infantry, USAR, May 1968
Graduated, US Army Infantry School,
Fort Benning, GA, August 1972
Service in Active and Inactive Reserve, 1972 to 1979
Honorable Discharge, Captain, Infantry, USAR, November 1983

HONORS & AWARDS

- 2007 **Elected a Fellow**, College of Physicians of Philadelphia
2006 **Alumni Service Award** – Northeast HS
2002 **Public Service Award** – Philadelphia Flag Day Association
1996 **Distinguished Jurist Award** – John Peter Zenger Law Society
1996 **Outstanding Service Award** – American Hellenic Lawyers
1989 **Distinguished Service Award** – Northeast HS

PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

Committee Memberships:

Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, Special Committee on
Judicial Education, 2003 to present

PA Supreme Court Appointee to Judicial Council of PA
1998 to present

Pennsylvania Bar Association, Judiciary, Academy &
Bar Committee, 1997 to present

Appointed by President of American Bar Association to
Commission on Opportunities for Minorities in the Profession
1997, 1998

Court Reporting Subcommittee of PA Supreme Court's

Statewide Computerization Committee

Judicial Audit Committee of the Administrative Office of
Pennsylvania Courts, 1985 to 1988

PA Conference of Trial Judges Compensation and Benefits
Committee, 1980 to 1981

Lectures and Presentations to:

Pennsylvania Bar Association
Montgomery County Bar Association
Villanova University School of Law
Pennsylvania Bar Institute
Lancaster County Bar Association
Pennsylvania New Judges School
National Practice Institute
Office of the General Counsel of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia Bar Association
American Bar Association
American College of Trial Lawyers
PA Defense Institute

EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

- March, 1995 *Driving Under the Influence and Informed Consent in Pennsylvania* - Pennsylvania Bar Association Continuing Legal Education - Philadelphia
- Oct., 1995 *Appellate Practice and Procedure* - Pennsylvania Bar Association - Greenbrier
- Sept., 1996 *Stay and Supersedeas Practice in Pennsylvania* - Montgomery County Bar Association
- Oct., 1996 Pennsylvania Bar Institute 1996 Midyear Meeting - *Separation of Powers* – CLE - Wigwam Resort - Arizona
- Dec, 1996 Philadelphia Bar Association - *Pennsylvania Vehicle Code: Providing Effective Client Representation in Light of Recent Court Decisions*
- March, 1997 *Effective Appellate Advocacy* - Villanova University School of Law
- March, 1997 Pennsylvania Bar Institute - Municipal Law Colloquium
Keynote address - *Internal Case Management within the Commonwealth Court*

- May, 1997 Lancaster County Bar Association - *Recent Developments Dealing With Psychic Injuries in Workmens' Compensation Cases*
- Jan., 1998 Lecturer -- New Judges' School
- March, 1998 Lecturer -- 32nd Annual Conference of County Bar Leaders - Pennsylvania Bar Association - *The Executive; the Courts; and the Legislature*
- April, 1998 Lecturer -- National Practice Institute - *Professionalism, Discovery Abuse, Unprofessional Conduct at Trial, and Dealing with the Difficult Lawyer*
- May, 1998 OGC University -- CLE Panelist - *Discharging the Duties of Office with Fidelity -- A Round Table Discussion on Public Service and the Law*
- June, 1998 Pennsylvania Bar Association Board of Governor's Retreat -- panelist, *The PBA and the Court*
- July, 1998 Address to Interns -- Office of the Governor -- *Original Jurisdiction vs. Appellate Jurisdiction in the Commonwealth Court*
- Sept., 1998 Panelist -- *PBA Ethics, Take One: Directed by Your Judiciary*
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- Nov., 1998 Speaker -- Philadelphia Bar Association - *Zoning, Land Use & Code Enforcement*
- Jan., 1999 Lecturer -- Pennsylvania Bar Association -- *Council on Judicial Independence*
- Apr., 1999 Speaker -- Pennsylvania Bar Association's Law Day Program -- *Role of the Judiciary in Promoting Justice for All*
- Oct., 1999 CLE Lecturer -- Montgomery County Bar Association -- *Ethical Considerations in Appellate Court Practice*
- Oct., 2000 Advocacy Program -- Litigation Department, Wolf, Block, Schorr & Solis-Cohen
- Oct., 2000 PA Bar Institute presentation -- *Recent Developments in Workmen's Compensation Law and Mediation Practices in the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania*
- Nov., 2000 CLE Lecturer -- Pennsylvania Bar Institute's 5th Annual Administrative Law Symposium -- *Ask the Judges*
- June, 2002 Lecturer -- *Standards for Recusal*, Pennsylvania Trial and Appellate Judges' Conference - Nemaocolin
- June, 2002 Lecturer before PA Attorney General Staff -- *Career Development*

- Sept., 2002 Presenter – Pennsylvania Bar Institute – Three-hour seminar, with Justice Eakin, to Appellate law clerks and filing staff - *Ethical requirements and the Judicial Canon of Ethics as it relates to law clerks and filing office personnel*
- April, 2003 Address to Philadelphia Bar Association - *Recent developments in Appellate Practice*
- Jan., 2004 Presenter – PBA Midyear Meeting – *Dialogue with the Courts and Legislature – Medical Malpractice Issues in Pennsylvania*
- March, 2004 Presenter – ABA Meeting – Insurance Practice Section - *Another One Bites The Dust - Presentation on practice issues resulting from rehabilitation/liquidation of insurance companies*
- May, 2004 Presenter – American College of Trial Lawyers - *Comparative Analysis of the Daubert and Frye Standards for the Admission of Scientific Evidence within the Three States Which Comprise the Third Federal Circuit*
- June, 2004 CLE Presenter – *Ethical Considerations for Appellate Court Clerks and Staff - Philadelphia*
- June, 2004 CLE Presenter – *Ethical Considerations for Appellate Court Clerks and Staff - Pittsburgh*
- July, 2004 Presentation to Interns from the Office of General Counsel – *Effective Appellate Court Advocacy Procedures*
- Oct., 2004 Presenter - Administrative Law Section of the Pennsylvania Bar Association – *New Election Law – Nader Matter*
- Jan., 2005 Presenter – Pennsylvania Bar Association – *Tips From the Bench on Avoiding the Pitfalls of Appellate Practice*
- Feb., 2005 Co-Presenter - Philadelphia Bar Association – *Appellate Mediation in Pennsylvania: Looking Back at History and Forward to the Future*
- July, 2005 Lecturer before the Office of General Counsel, Staff & Interns – *Legal Ethics*
- Jan., 2006 Lecturer – PBA Mid-Year Meeting – *Bedrock of Successful Appellate Practice and Dialogue with the Courts and Legislature*
- July, 2006 Lecturer before the Office of General Counsel's Staff & Interns – *Legal Ethics*
- Aug., 2006 Lecturer – Pennsylvania Bar Institute – *Appellate Practice & Procedure*

ACTIVITIES

- Vice President of Alumni Class of 1968, University of Pennsylvania
- Reunion Chairman, 35th and 40th Penn Class Reunions
- Former Member, Board of Governors of American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association
- Former Member, Board of Directors, J. Poniatowski Building & Loan Association
- Past President, University of Pennsylvania Sigma Chi Fraternity Alumni Trustees
- Former Member, Board of Governors, Philadelphia Boosters' Association
- Coach, Youth Athletic Programs
- Member, Board of Directors, K'NEX Industries, Inc., 2000 to present

REFERENCES

Honorable Edward G. Rendell
Governor of Pennsylvania
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120
717-787-2500

Honorable James Halpern
United States Tax Court
400 Second Street, NW
Washington, DC 20217
202-521-0707

Honorable Ralph J. Cappy
Chief Justice
Supreme Court of Pennsylvania
3130 One Oxford Centre
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
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