Hon. Leo S. Papas, Ret.

JUDICATE WEST
Alternative Dispute Resolution
Results Beyond Dispute℠

Judge Papas brings the "pro" to professionalism. A former Federal Magistrate Judge for more than 18 years, he has tried and mediated almost every type of federal matter. Among his many cases, he has helped parties find closure in the Chapter 11 San Diego Roman Catholic Diocese priest abuse cases, multi-party claims against the Coast Guard and United States arising out of catastrophic injuries and death at the annual San Diego Bay Parade of Lights, claims against the City of San Diego, SD Padres, SD Chargers and others regarding ADA claims against Qualcomm Stadium, City of San Diego/DeAnza mobile residence multi-party (230 claimants) and class action cases, the sad chapters resolving civil claims surrounding the historic Stephanie Crowe murder, and Qui Tam claims involving a 14-year relationship between the City of San Diego and Rural/Metro. When he retired in 2009, knowing his passion for mediation, he felt he was destined to do this work and called it his encore career. He brings his unparalleled judicial and private sector experience, thorough preparation, and undivided attention to each case which is why he is on lawyers' "short list" of mediators, particularly in sensitive/emotionally charged matters, class actions, multi-party complex, and mass tort cases. Those experiencing one of his thousands of mediations uniformly remark about his unpretentious and engaging yet businesslike personality, meticulous and thorough preparation, relentless work ethic, limitless patience, and extraordinary passion for helping parties develop the necessary trust and framework to reach closure. From his OBTWs (ask him), Judge Papas appreciates and takes into account the emotional, physical, and economic impact of litigation on each party. His genuine and ingratiating demeanor and eternal optimism allow the litigants to trust him and the process to find closure across the spectrum of disputes, including straightforward matters and those involving the most highly confidential.

LEGAL CAREER & PRIOR EXPERIENCE

- Neutral, Judicate West (2009-Present)
- United States Magistrate Judge, Southern District of California (1991-2009); Presiding Judge (2002-2007)
- Law Offices of Leo S. Papas, APC, Civil Litigation (1977-1991)
- Hervey, Mitchell, Ashworth & Keeney, Civil Litigation (1974-1977)
- U.S. Marine Corps (1969-1975), Captain, Office of Staff Judge Advocate (1969-1974) Major VTU (1974-1975)

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- J.D., Drake University Law School (1969)
- B.A., University of Nebraska & Northwest Missouri State University (1966)
- San Diego Inn of Court, Board of Directors (2007-2015)
- San Diego County Bar Association, Judicial Advisor to Ethics Committee (2003-2015)
- National College of District Attorneys (1971)
- Naval Justice School (1970)
- International Academy of Mediators, Distinguished Fellow (2014-2019)
- Federal Judicial Center Mediation Skills Program for US Magistrate Judges (1999)
- Untied States Arbitration & Mediation Training (1989)
- Intellectual Property Workshop, UC Berkeley, Berkeley Center for Law & Technology (2008)

PRACTICE AREAS

Business; Consumer Class Actions; Employment; Federal Claims; Insurance; Intellectual Property; Jones Act/Maritime; Personal Injury; Professional Liability; Public Entities; Qui Tam; Real Property

ACHIEVEMENTS & AWARDS

- Distinguished Fellow, International Academy of Mediators (2014-2020)
- Los Angeles Magazine "Super Lawyer" - Alternative Dispute Resolution (2012-2017)

2017)

- Thompson Reuters "Super Lawyer" - Alternative Dispute Resolution (2010-Present)
- Daily Journal Top 50 Neutral in California (Since 2010)
- Advisor/Trainer, India & Turkey Court/Government Mediation Programs (2007-2008)
- Consumer Attorneys of San Diego Co-Judge of the Year (2007)
- Athletic Hall of Fame, Washington High School (2006)
- San Diego Bar Association, Outstanding Jurist of the Year (2003)
- United States Marine Corps, Leadership Award (1970)

HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Judge Papas and his wife are travel enthusiasts. They visit their son in New York, their daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren in San Francisco, and take cruises to many foreign ports and exotic locations. The Judge also plays golf and is a fan of most other sports.

LOCATIONS

San Diego, Nationwide