



NEWS RELEASE

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Superior Court Judge David M. Szumowski Retires

One of San Diego's most recognizable jurists is stepping down from the bench. Judge David M. Szumowski, well known as the arraignment judge for many of San Diego's high profile criminal cases, is retiring after 18 years at the Court.

Appointed to the Municipal Court by Governor Pete Wilson in 1998, Judge Szumowski became a Superior Court Judge under court consolidation in December of that same year. He has spent his entire career presiding over felony arraignment proceedings; an indispensable court proceeding at which a criminal defendant is formally advised of the charges against him or her and is asked to enter a plea to those charges. A judge plays a crucial role in an arraignment because at this time, the judge may also decide whether the defendant will be released pending trial.

"Judge Szumowski has had a long and distinguished career on our bench. He has provided a consistently high level of judicial excellence in a challenging assignment and has been key to the functioning of our criminal court. He will be very difficult to replace and will be greatly missed by all of his colleagues and the legal community," says Presiding Judge Jeffrey Barton.

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“As I approach an age when life expectancy begins to have meaning, I think that if one can afford to retire and with good health, one should. I have had the privilege to work with extremely dedicated and professional people within the court and legal community, and I will remember the support and friendships made over these past 18 years. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve San Diego County for the last 30 years both as a Deputy District Attorney and recently as a Judge. It has been a wonderful career,” says Judge Szumowski.

A multi-decorated Army veteran, Judge Szumowski worked as a Counselor for the Veterans Administration (1977-80); Executive Director for Vietnam Veterans Leadership (1982-83); a private law practitioner (1984-85), and as San Diego County Deputy District Attorney (1986-98) before his appointment to the Bench.

A graduate of the University Of Richmond, Virginia (1967), Judge Szumowski received his law degree from Denver University (1973).

As for retirement plans, Judge Szumowski says, “Initially, I will toss the alarm clock and donate suits to thrift shops. I love playing and practicing golf. I have many books in my digital library and now I will have time to read them. I hope to become fluent in Spanish, get better acquainted with my exercise equipment, take long walks with Speedwell, my guide dog, and try my hand at writing my autobiography. There will be some travel with my wife Janice also. There is a lot of this country we have not explored.”

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