



The Superior Court
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: COURT MOURNS THE PASSING OF JUDGE FRANKLIN STEPHENSON

Judge Franklin Stephenson passed away on Tuesday, September 22, 2015. He was 54.

Judge Stephenson attended college at Claremont McKenna College. He obtained his law degree in 1988 from Humphreys College School of Law, while working at the San Joaquin County District Attorney's Office as a law clerk. After law school, he joined the district attorney's office. In 1989, he joined the private law firm of Rishwain, Hakeem and Ellis. After five years, he returned to the district attorney's office where he served a distinguished career as a supervising deputy district attorney of the Special Operations Division. Throughout his career, Judge Stephenson continued to teach and mentor Humphrey's students.

Judge Stephenson was appointed to the Superior Court in May 2002. During his tenure, Judge Stephenson presided over felony and misdemeanor matters in the Stockton and Manteca courts. Judge Stephenson was an outstanding judge and a great friend to many. He was intelligent, articulate, unfailingly cheerful, and extremely hard working. He was always willing to help, to mentor new judges, and he was generous with his advice. He cared deeply about public safety and justice issues.

Judge Stephenson enjoyed the respect of his colleagues and co-workers, as well as the respect of the lawyers and litigants who appeared in his courtroom. Although he worked in a high volume department, he ensured that each litigant was treated with fairness and dignity.

Judge Stephenson was a devoted and loving husband and father. He was active in the legal community and was very involved in his local community especially with activities that he could share with his sons. He was an avid golfer and coached his sons' little league teams. We extend our deepest and sincerest condolences to his wife Michelle and their three boys.

On his passing, Presiding Judge D. Lesley Holland said, "The passing of Judge Stephenson leaves a void in our court that will be impossible to fill. He was a courageous, honorable, and dedicated colleague. We will miss him greatly."