



Franklin S. Van Antwerpen

Born: October 23, 1941, in Passaic, New Jersey
Died: July 25, 2016, in Palmer Township, Pennsylvania

Federal Judicial Service:

Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Nominated by Ronald Reagan on September 11, 1987, to a seat vacated by Alfred L. Luongo.
Confirmed by the Senate on December 8, 1987, and received commission on December 9, 1987.
Service terminated on June 1, 2004, due to appointment to another judicial position.

Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

Nominated by George W. Bush on November 21, 2003, to a seat vacated by Edward R. Becker.
Confirmed by the Senate on May 20, 2004, and received commission on May 24, 2004.
Assumed senior status on October 23, 2006.
Service terminated on July 25, 2016, due to death.

Education:

University of Maine, B.S., 1964

Temple University School of Law (now James E. Beasley School of Law), J.D., 1967

Professional Career:

Contracts Counsel, Hazeltine Corporation, New York City: 1967-1970

Chief Counsel, Northampton County, Pennsylvania Legal Aid Society: 1970-1971

Private Practice, Easton, Pennsylvania: 1971-1979

Judge, Court of Common Pleas of Northampton County, Pennsylvania: 1979-1987

Other Nominations/Recess Appointments:

Nominated to U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, September 11, 1991; no Senate vote

* * *

Judicial Biography

Judge Van Antwerpen graduated from Newark Academy in 1960, and attended college at the University of Maine, where he graduated in 1964 with a degree in Engineering Physics and a minor in Electrical Engineering. He continued his studies at the Temple University Beasley School of Law, graduating with a Juris Doctor degree in 1967. While in law school, he served as a Justice of the Moot Court. After law school, he worked for Hazeltine Corporation on projects including a top secret electronic battlefield program for the armed forces dubbed as the “Manhattan Project of the Vietnam War.”

In 1970, he left his corporate law position in New York City and became Chief Counsel of the Northampton County Legal Aid Society in Easton, Pennsylvania, a clinic providing legal assistance to those most in need. He then joined and became partner in the Easton law firm of Hemstreet, Smith, and Van Antwerpen. In 1979, he was appointed to fill a vacancy as judge on the Northampton County Court of Common Pleas and then elected to a 10-year term in 1982, having secured the backing of both major political parties. While serving on the state bench, he also spent two years as the President Judge of Bradford County by special appointment, and was instrumental in rewriting the Pennsylvania Domestic Relations Code and various municipal laws. He frequently lectured on the law of evidence for the Pennsylvania Bar Institute and taught law as an adjunct professor at a local college. In 1987, President Ronald Reagan appointed Judge Van Antwerpen to the federal bench. In 1988, he conducted a trial involving all 17 members of the Philadelphia mafia and sentenced them to long prison terms. The trial gave rise to three books and a made-for-TV movie.

Judge Van Antwerpen was nominated by President Bush to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals and sworn in as a Circuit Judge on June 1, 2004.

Judge Van Antwerpen presided as Chairman of the Criminal Business Committee of the U.S. District Court, and served on the Defender Services Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States. He was also Chairman of the nationwide Subcommittee on Federal Defender Funding with a budget of almost a billion dollars. Judge Van Antwerpen served on the Board of Visitors of Temple University Beasley School of Law, and received numerous awards for his service and contributions, including the Law Enforcement Commendation medal of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, The Law Day Award of the Temple Law School Alumni Association, Liberty Bell Award of the Lehigh County Bar Association, and the Alumni Career Award of Newark Academy. In 2009, he received the University of Maine Alumni Achievement Award, and was listed by the Maine Alumni Magazine as one of 125 people who have made a difference in the world. A brief story about his life can be found on YouTube under the heading “UMaine Alumni Association 2009 Career Award Franklin Van Antwerpen.” He was an avid pipe organ player and fond of classical music.

He assumed senior status on the Court of Appeals on October 23, 2006 and served in that capacity until his death on July 25, 2016 in Palmer Township, Pennsylvania, at the age of 74.