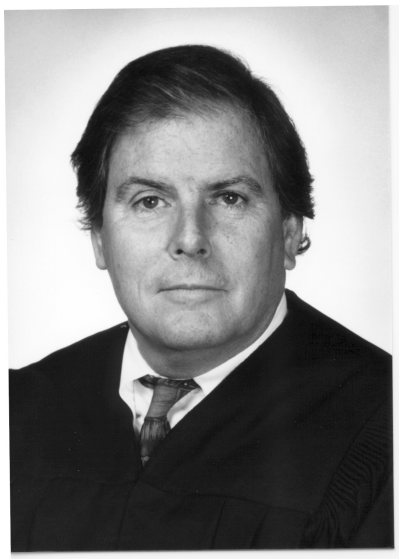
Superior Court of Arizona
Maricopa County

Steven D. Sheldon

JUDICIAL PROFILE



Steven D. Sheldon currently servies on Special Assignment, handling difficult and complex cases or matters that are reassigned from other judges. Previously, he was assigned to the Criminal and Civil Departments. Judge Sheldon received an undergraduate degree in Business Administration from California State Polytechnic University in Pomona in 1971. He graduated cum laude in 1974 from Loyola University School of Law. He was admitted to both the Arizona Bar and the Federal District Court for Arizona in 1974. He was an associate with the Phoenix law firm of Evans, Kitchel & Jencks. From 1977 to 1982 he was a Special Agent with the FBI, specializing in criminal and foreign counter-intelligence investigations. He began serving as a staff attorney with the Arizona Court of Appeals and in 1986 was promoted to Vice Chief Staff Attorney. He was appointed to the Bench in 1989.

Judge Sheldon is actively involved in efforts to examine the role of juries in criminal trials. He spearheaded a Superior Court pilot project to reduce the stress jurors feel during and after trial. He also served on a National Center for State Court's panel studying juror stress. In 1992, he presided over the first dual-jury case conducted in Maricopa County. The case involved stepbrothers charged with murder. He is a sought-after instructor within the legal community for issues ranging from trial evidence to appellate practice. He has authored numerous articles on criminal trial practices. He is a member of the Tempe City Court Judicial Selection Committee, the Tempe Judicial Evaluation Panel, and is a past member of the Judicial College of Arizona's Board of Directors. He is a former member of the Board of Directors of the Tempe Center for Habilitation. He served as both vice-president and secretary of the Tempe South Rotary. Between 1986 and 1989 he was a mediator for the Phoenix Community Mediation program, and was awarded Outstanding Mediator of 1987. He has served on various other court and Bar committees. Judge Sheldon served in the U.S. Navy from 1965 to 1969. He served overseas on board the USS Bryce Canyon, at Guam Naval Radio Station, and completed a one year tour of duty at Nha Be in Vietnam.