

WHITTEN ADR

— EXPERIENCED • NEUTRAL • FINAL —

Hon. Christopher T. Whitten (Ret.) brings more than 35 years of experience resolving civil disputes as a trial lawyer, judge, teacher, and mediator. He served twenty years on the Maricopa County Superior Court, including eleven years on civil and commercial assignments.

During his twenty years on the bench, Judge Whitten presided over tens of thousands of civil matters, from routine tort and business disputes to complex commercial litigation, medical malpractice, construction defect, insurance coverage, professional liability, catastrophic injury, and wrongful death cases. He served on the Arizona Supreme Court committee that established Maricopa County's Commercial Court and then served for six years as one of its original judges. All of that experience gave him an unusually broad view of how judges, juries, lawyers, and clients evaluate difficult civil cases and litigation risk.

Before joining the bench, Judge Whitten spent fifteen years as a civil trial lawyer. He appeared in the Superior Courts of 13 of Arizona's 15 counties. He was certified by the Arizona State Bar as a Specialist in Serious Injury and Wrongful Death Litigation and was admitted to the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) as a trial lawyer. He later served as President of the Phoenix Chapter of ABOTA.

Mediation has been a significant part of Judge Whitten's judicial work. He has helped resolve more than one hundred mediations during his final three years on the bench. He believes successful mediation begins with thorough preparation, active listening, and earning the confidence of both clients and counsel. He works to understand not only the legal and factual issues, but also the financial, practical, and personal considerations that may be preventing resolution. When useful, he gives the parties a candid assessment of risk and remains engaged in the search for a practical solution.

Judge Whitten has also held significant leadership positions in the legal and judicial communities. He served as Chair of the American Bar Association (ABA) Judicial Division and Chair of the National Judicial College Board of Trustees, where he served as a Trustee for twelve years. He is a Past President of the Phoenix Chapter of ABOTA and has served in numerous other national and state professional leadership roles.

Teaching trial advocacy has been another important part of his career. Through the National Institute for Trial Advocacy (NITA) and the ABA, Judge Whitten has trained lawyers and judges throughout the United States and internationally, including programs in Mexico, Ireland, England, Myanmar, Malta, Egypt, Guam, Saipan, and Japan. He received NITA's Hon. Robert Keeton Award for outstanding service and currently serves on NITA's Board of Trustees. He has also taught as an adjunct professor at the law schools of Arizona State University, Louisiana State University, the University of San Diego, and Emory University.

That combination of experience shapes Judge Whitten's approach to mediation. There are not many Arizonans who have been part of more jury trials. He understands the pressures faced by lawyers preparing a case for trial, the uncertainty clients face when important decisions must be made, and the way a trial judge evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of competing positions. He prepares carefully, listens to both sides, and works patiently to identify the issues that are truly preventing resolution. His goal is not simply to carry offers between rooms, but to help parties make informed decisions about risk and, when possible, find a practical path to resolution.