

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable C. Ellen Connally

PERSON

Connally, C. Ellen, 1945-

Alternative Names: The Honorable C. Ellen Connally;

Life Dates: January 26, 1945-

Place of Birth: Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Residence: Cleveland, OH

Work: Cleveland, OH

Occupations: Judge

Biographical Note

Judge C. Ellen Connally was born on January 26, 1945 in Cleveland, Ohio to George and Gwendolyn Johnson Connally. She attended St. Thomas Aquinas Elementary School and graduated from the Notre Dame Academy in Cleveland, Ohio in 1963. Connally received her B.S. degree in social studies from Bowling Green State University in 1967, and her J.D. degree from Cleveland State University in 1970.

In 1971, Connally was hired as a law clerk for Ohio's 8th District Court of Appeals. From 1972 to 1979, she worked as a trial referee in the Probate Division of the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas. In 1980, Connally was elected a judge of the Cleveland Municipal Court and became the first African American female elected judge in Ohio without being first appointed. She was re-elected in 1985, 1991 and 1997.

In 1998, Connally received her M.A. degree in American history from Cleveland State University. She then went on to attend Akron University and completed all coursework towards a Ph.D. degree in American history.

In 2004, Connally retired from the Cleveland Municipal Court and ran for chief justice of the Ohio Supreme Court. She then worked as an adjunct professor of history at Ursuline College from 2005 to 2006, and as a visiting and adjunct professor of law at the University of Akron College of Law from 2006 to 2008. In 2009, she was appointed special prosecutor for the City of Cleveland. In 2010, Connally was elected to the Cuyahoga City Council, the legislative branch of the county government, and was

elected president of the council in 2010 and re-elected in 2012.

Connally has served as president of the Board of Trustees of Bowling Green State University, president of the Board of Trustees of the Breast Cancer Fund of Ohio, vice president of the Board of Community Action Against Addiction, vice president for Traffic Safety - Greater Cleveland Safety Council, and president of the Northern Ohio Municipal Judges Association. In addition, Connally served on the Mayor's Task Force on Violent Crime, and on the Executive Committee of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable. She has also been a member of numerous boards, including the Cleveland Bar Foundation, the Cleveland Society for the Blind, the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, the Cleveland Public Theater, the Girls and Boys Club of Cleveland, and the Ohio Judicial College. A long time student of the Kennedy Assassination, Connally currently lectures on the subject in programs of continuing legal education and currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the Ohio Historical Society and the Cleveland State University Foundation Board.

Connally has received the 1997 Achievement Award from Cleveland State University's History Department; a 1999 Certificate of Special Appreciation from Mothers Against Drunk Driving; the 2001 Alumni of the Year Award from the Cleveland Marshall College of Law; the Cuyahoga County Criminal Defense Lawyers Association's John J. McMahon Outstanding Jurist Award; and 2004's National Legacy Award, presented by Councilman Zachary Reed.

Connally lives in the Shaker Square area of Cleveland with her two rescue dogs. She is the mother of one son, Seth, an Iraq War Veteran.

C. Ellen Connally was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on February 14, 2014.

Related Entries

St Thomas Aquinas School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

High School Diploma

Bowling Green State University [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

BS

Cleveland-Marshall College of Law [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

JD

Cleveland State University [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

MA

University of Akron [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Completed all coursework for PhD in History

National Judicial College [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Connally Insurance Agency [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Insurance agent

Carl J. Character and Samuel S. Perry [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Law Clerk

Law Department of the City of Cleveland [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Law Clerk

Cuyahoga County Court of Appeals - Judge Alvin I Krenzler [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Law Clerk

Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas - Probate Division [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

General Trial Referee

East Cleveland Municipal Court; South Euclid Municipal Court [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Visiting Judge

Cleveland Municipal Court [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Visiting Judge

Nominee for Chief Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Democratic Nominee

Cleveland Municipal Court [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1989 to 1990]

Administrative Judge

Probation Committee [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1997 to 1998]

Chairperson

Court's Personnel [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1998 to 2003]

Chairperson

City of Cleveland's Fair Election's Committee [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 2002 to ?]

Ursuline College [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 2005 to 2006]

Adjunct Professor of History

University of Akron College of Law [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 2006 to 2008]

Adjunct Professor of Law

Cuyahoga County Council [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 20110101 to 2014]

Member and President

Cleveland Municipal Court [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 19800102 to 20040102]

Judge

Cuyahoga Grand Jury [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 200601 to 200601]

Foreperson

City of Cleveland [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 200605 to 200606]

Special Prosecutor

General Election for Chief Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 200411 to ?]

Candidate

Community Action Against Addiction Board of Trustees [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Vice President

Greater Cleveland Safety Council [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Vice President for Traffic Safety

Cleveland Bar Foundation [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Member

Board of Friends of James A. Garfield Memorial Association [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Member

Board of Trustees of the Cleveland State University Foundation Board [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Member

Legacy Ladies Program - Baldwin Wallace [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Volunteer

Bowling Green State University Board of Trustees [MEMBEROF]

[from 1988 to 1995]

Member, Chairperson, and President

Leadership Cleveland [MEMBEROF]

[from 1989 to ?]

Cuyahoga County Black Alumni - Bowling Green State University [MEMBEROF]

[from 1998 to 2000]

President

Cleveland Marshall College of Law Alumni Association [MEMBEROF]

[from 2001 to ?]

Member

Advisory Committee - Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Archives [MEMBEROF]

[from 2004 to 2004]

Transition Team for Ohio Attorney General [MEMBEROF]

[from 2006 to 2007]

Member and Team Leader

Breast Cancer Fund of Ohio's License to Live Campaign [MEMBEROF]

[from 2006 to 2006]

Spokesperson

Advisory Committee - Cuyahoga County Bicentennial Committee [MEMBEROF]

[from 2007 to 2007]

Advisory Committee - Ohio Attorney General Nancy Rogers [MEMBEROF]

[from 2008 to 2008]

Executive Committee Cleveland Civil War Round Table [MEMBEROF]

[from 2008 to ?]

Advisory Committee for Ohio Attorney General [MEMBEROF]

[from 200702 to ?]

Special Counsel

Board of Trustees - Ohio Historical Society [MEMBEROF]

[from 201310 to ?]

Member

