



Hon. Christopher C. Conner (Ret.)

Shareholder and Co-Chair, Appellate Advocacy and Investigations, White Collar and Criminal Defense

Email: cconner@saxtonstump.com

Phone: [\(717\) 216-5522](tel:7172165522)

Services and Industries

- Appellate Advocacy
- Litigation
- Intellectual Property
- Franchising, Licensing and Distribution
- Intellectual Property Litigation
- Investigations, White Collar and Criminal Defense
- Business Litigation and Strategic Solutions
- Construction Law
- Trademark Monitoring Program

Education

- Dickinson School of Law, J.D., 1982
- Cornell University, B.A., 1979

Admissions

- Pennsylvania

After more than 20 productive years as a federal judge, Judge Christopher C. Conner continues his decorated and renowned career at Saxton & Stump following his retirement from the bench. Judge Conner joined the firm in 2025 after serving as a federal judge for the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania from 2002 to 2024. His time on the bench also included the honor of serving as the district's chief judge from 2013 to 2020.

Judge Conner's practice area is broad-based. He joins the [Hon. Lawrence Stengel \(Ret.\)](#) and the [Hon. Margaret Seymour \(Ret.\)](#) – all former federal district chief judges – as part of Saxton & Stump's affiliate company, [Optimal Dispute Resolutions](#) (ODR). In this role, Judge Conner acts as a mediator assisting clients in achieving amicable resolutions prior to trial. He is also happy to accept appointments as a special master or arbitrator in complex litigation, including multidistrict litigation matters (MDL). Our dispute resolution practice is national in scope, and the ODR team is prepared to travel to any jurisdiction.

In addition, at Saxton & Stump, Judge Conner serves as co-chair of both the firm's [Appellate Advocacy](#) and [Investigations, White Collar and Criminal Defense](#) groups, and he is a member of the [Business Litigation and Strategic Solutions](#), [Franchise Litigation](#), and [Intellectual Property](#) groups. Judge Conner also works in an advisory role for clients facing complex government investigations and courtroom trials (including appeals).

Thousands of cases came into Judge Conner's courtroom, where he fairly and impartially presided over some of the most significant cases in the Middle District. Among the most notable was the "[Kids for Cash](#)" case, where two state judges in northeast Pennsylvania were sent to prison for receiving money from the developers of juvenile detention centers in exchange for declaring juveniles delinquent and assigning them to the detention centers, the vast majority of whom were declared delinquent for infractions that typically would result in minor penalties. Judge Conner presided over multiple hearings and a lengthy trial to determine damages for the individuals impacted by the scheme. The case drew national headlines for months as it played out in Judge Conner's courtroom, and was later depicted in a book entitled "Shackled: A Tale of Wronged Kids, Rogue Judges, and a Town that Looked Away," by Candy J. Cooper.

Judge Conner's judicial experience has made him a coveted speaker on continuing legal education (CLE) panels and lectures in Pennsylvania. He's also a sought-after author and has spoken and written on a broad spectrum of litigation-related topics and ethical issues.

Before being appointed a federal judge, Judge Conner worked in private practice in his native Harrisburg, a time when he was very involved in leadership positions at the Pennsylvania Bar Association. He served as President-elect and Vice President of the PBA in 2001-02. He also served two additional terms on the PBA Board of Governors, and he is a Life Fellow of the Pennsylvania Bar Foundation.

Judge Conner was also an adjunct professor at Penn State Dickinson School of Law, where he taught federal criminal practice and at the Widener University School of Law (now Widener Law Commonwealth) in 2020, where he taught trial advocacy. He is a graduate of the Dickinson School of Law, and he earned his undergraduate degree at Cornell University. He was later named a "Distinguished Alumni" for Cornell's Class of 1979.

Significant Opinions

- [United States v. Debus](#), August 2023
- [Wallace v. Powell \("Kids for Cash"\)](#), August 2022
- [Game Comm'n v. Thomas E. Proctor Heirs Tr.](#), December 2021
- [Judicial Watch, Inc. v. Pennsylvania](#), March 2021
- [Rae, Inc. v. Wolf](#), December 2020
- [United States v. Ciavarella](#), August 2020
- [Randolph v. Wetzel \(Death penalty\)](#), May 2020
- [Rothermel v. Dauphin County](#), March 2020
- [Camacho Lopez v. Lowe](#), April 2020
- [Bizarre v. Berryhill](#), March 2019
- [United States v. Ciavarella](#), January 2018
- [Corman v. Torres](#), March 2018
- [United States v. Aziz](#), January 2017
- [Stauffer v. Navient Solutions](#), March 2017
- [UHS of Delaware v. United Health Service](#), March 2017
- [Johnson v. Wetzel \(solitary confinement\)](#), September 2016
- [Abu Jamal v. Kane](#), April 2015
- [Moore v. Beard](#), 42 F. Supp. 3d 624 August 2014
- [Advanced Fluid Systems, Inc. v. Huber](#), April 2015
- [In re Chocolate Confectionary Antitrust Litig.](#), April 2014
- [Goudy-Bachman v. U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Servs. \(Obamacare\)](#), September 2011
- [Arlington Indus. v. Bridgeport Fittings](#), March 2010
- [Arlington Industries v. Bridgeport Fittings](#), November 2003

Recognitions

- *City and State PA*, Fifty over 50, 2025
- Cornell Class of 1979 "Distinguished Alumni" designation
- American Bar Association Special Achievement Award, as co-founder of the Pennsylvania High School Mock Trial Competition
- Pennsylvania Bar Foundation, Life Fellow
- Pennsylvania Bar Association Special Achievement Award, Judicial Reform Campaign on Merit Selection of Appellate Judges
- Widener University Commonwealth Law School, E. John Wherry Lecture Honoree

Publications

- "A Profession of Relationships: Then, Now, and Always," chapter author in *Ethics and Professionalism: The Keys to Building and Maintaining a Successful Law Practice* (2026)
- *Ethics Deskbook for United States Judges* (First Edition 2020), editor and co-author
- *Bridges in Medicine*, co-author of chapters on "Developing Good Judgment" (publication pending)
- "Partisan Elections – The Albatross of Pennsylvania's Appellate Judiciary," *Dickinson Law Review*, co-author
- Authored and co-authored many CLE program materials for the Pennsylvania Bar Institute and other CLE

providers

Professional Affiliations

- American Arbitration Association, National Judicial Panel member
- Judicial Conference of the United States, member, 2017-2020
- Pennsylvania Bar Association, vice president, 2001, president-elect, 2002
- Pennsylvania Bar Association Board of Governors, YLD representative for three-year term
- Pennsylvania Bar Association, former Zone 3 Governor for three-year term
- Pennsylvania Bar Association Committee on Judicial Selection and Reform, former member and chair
- Dauphin County Bar Association, former member of board of directors
- PBA Committee on Judicial Selection and Reform, former chair
- Pennsylvania Bar Association/Young Lawyers Division, chair, 1989 and 1990
- Honorable William W. Lipsitt American Inn of Court

Professorship

- Former adjunct professor, Penn State University Dickinson School of Law
- Former adjunct professor, Widener University Commonwealth Law School

Media