

Christine Durham

SENIOR OF COUNSEL

Litigation
Salt Lake City

cdurham@wsgr.com
650-461-5346

FOCUS AREAS

Arbitration
Litigation
Supreme Court and
Appellate

EXPERIENCE

Justice Christine Durham is Senior Of Counsel in the Salt Lake City office of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, where she focuses her practice on appellate litigation as a member of the firm's nationwide Supreme Court and Appellate Practice. Christine also currently serves as a private mediator, and in the fall of 2020, was admitted to the roster of the American Arbitration Association.

Following her appointment by Governor Scott M. Matheson in 1982, Christine became the first woman to serve on the Utah Supreme Court. Four years earlier, she was the first woman appointed to the state's district court. In 1993, Christine was on a shortlist of candidates for the U.S. Supreme Court, put forth by the Clinton administration to replace retiring Justice Harry Blackmun. In 2002, she achieved yet another milestone by being the first woman Chief Justice of the Utah Supreme Court. Christine served as Chief Justice until 2012 and then retired from the bench in November 2017.

From 2018 until she joined Wilson Sonsini, Christine was an attorney at Zimmerman Booher, an appellate law firm in Salt Lake City.

Christine has founded, led, and actively participated in professional judicial organizations across the U.S. and in Utah. For example, she helped to create the National Association of Women Judges and to organize Women Lawyers of Utah. Christine was a founder of the Leadership Institute in Judicial Education, helped create and lead the Utah Coalition for Civic Character and Service Education, and served on the Utah Commission on Civic Education and as chair of the American Bar Association's Council on Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar, the entity that accredits American law schools.

Christine recently served on the ABA's Task Force on the Future of Legal Education, and is currently serving as a member of the Advisory Board for the Educating Tomorrow's Lawyers Project of the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System, as well as on the board of trustees for the University of the People, the world's first non-profit, tuition-free, online academic institution that seeks to revolutionize higher education by making college-level studies accessible to students worldwide. She also currently co-chairs the Utah State Bar Access to Justice Commission.

In addition to her work advocating for diversity and equal access to law, Christine has worked with the Utah State Bar's Pro Bono Commission, which recruits and trains lawyers to provide pro bono legal services. Following her retirement from the Utah Supreme Court, she headed the Conviction Integrity Unit with the Salt Lake County district attorney's office, which focused on reviewing cases of convicted individuals claiming they are innocent.

Christine also received numerous awards throughout her career. For example, in September 2012, she received the "Dwight D. Opperman Award for Judicial Excellence" from the American Judicature Society. In 2008, Christine received the "Transparent Courthouse Award" for contributions to judicial accountability and administration from the Institute for the Advancement of the Legal System. In 2007, she received the "William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence," an annual award presented to a state court judge who exemplifies the highest level of judicial excellence, integrity,

fairness, and professional ethics. Christine has also been recognized for developing interactive education programs in content areas that previously did not have curricula, such as domestic violence, child witness testimony, and scientific evidence.

Previously, Christine was an adjunct professor for University of Utah College of Law, from 1984 to 2008. She also was an adjunct professor of law at Brigham Young University's J. Reuben Clark Law School from 1974 to 1978. During that time, Christine and two other lawyers founded the firm then known as Johnson, Durham & Moxley (now part of a larger firm), in Salt Lake City.

Christine began her career in 1971 as an instructor of legal medicine at Duke University Law Medical School, and opened her own general law practice in Durham, North Carolina. She earned her J.D. from Duke Law School in 1971, at a time when fewer than three percent of the lawyers in the U.S. were women. Christine currently serves as an emeritus member of the Duke Law School's Board of Trustees.

CREDENTIALS

Education

- J.D., Duke University School of Law, 1971
- A.B., Wellesley College
With High Honors

Associations and Memberships

Current

- Editorial Board, Judicature, Bolch Judicial Institute of Duke Law
- Member, Advisory Board, ALI project on Restatement, Children and the Law
- Member, Board of Overseers, Civil Justice Institute, RAND Corporation
- Co-chair, Utah State Bar Access to Justice Commission
- Fellow, American Bar Foundation
- Member Emeritus, Council of the American Law Institute
- Member Emeritus, Board of Trustees, Duke University

Past

- Former co-chair, Governing Board, Utah Center for Legal Inclusion
- Former chair, ABA Council on Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar (accrediting body for American Law Schools)
- Former chair, Initiative on Utah Children in Foster Care
- Former member, ABA Commission on the Future of Legal Education
- Former faculty member, NYU Institute of Judicial Administration, Appellate Judges Seminars
- Former president, Conference of Chief Justices, and Board of National Center for State Courts (2009-2010)
- Former member, Utah Constitutional Revision Commission
- Former member, Board of Trustees, American Inns of Court Foundation
- Former member, Board of Directors, National Center for State Courts
- Former member, ABA Commission on Women in the Profession (1996-1999)
- Former member, Executive Committee, Appellate Judges Conference, ABA (1995-1998)
- Former member, Advisory Committee on Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Federal Judicial Conference (1994-2000)
- Former co-founder and chair, advisor board/faculty member, Leadership Institute for Judicial Education (State Justice Institute-funded program for adult development and judicial education) (1990-1998)
- Former chair, Standing Committee on Judicial Branch Education, Utah Judicial Council (1990-1992)
- Former member Emeritus, Duke Law School Board of Visitors
- Former president, Women Judges' Fund for Justice (1987-1988)
- Former board of directors, American Judicature Society (1986-1989)
- Former president, National Association of Women Judges (1986-1987)
- Former member, Governor's Task Force on Implementation of Revised Judicial Article, Utah Constitution (1985)
- Former member, Education Committee, Appellate Judges Conference, ABA Judicial Administration Division (1984-1995)
- Former presiding judge, Third District (1981-1982)
- Former member, Governing Board of Developmental Disabilities, Inc. (nonprofit corporation providing educational services to handicapped preschool children) (1980-1982)

- Former charter member and benchler (now Emeritus), American Inn of Court I (1980-1982)
- Former president, Utah District Judges Association (1980-1981)
- Former co-founder, Women Lawyers of Utah (1980)
- Former member of the Board of Trustees, Legal Services for the Developmentally Disabled (1977-1978)
- Former National Board of Directors, Odyssey Institute, Inc. (nonprofit agency dealing with drug abuse and child abuse) (1974-1978)

Honors

- Robert J. Kutak Award, ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar, for "significant contributions to the collaboration of the academy, the bench, and the Bar," 2019
- Lifetime Service Award, Utah State Bar, 2017
- Honorary Doctor of Laws, Utah Valley University, 2016
- Public Service Award, Utah Valley University, 2012
- Opperman Award for Judicial Excellence, American Judicature Society, 2012
- Honorary Doctor of Human Letters, Southern Utah University, 2008
- "Transparent Courthouse" Award, Institute for the Advancement of the Legal System, University of Denver, 2008
- William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence, National Center for State Courts, 2007
- Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, College of Eastern Utah, 2006
- Public Official of the Year, YWCA, 2005
- Honorary Doctor of Laws, University of Utah, 1998
- Honoree of the Year, National Association of Women Judges, 1997
- Honorary Doctor of Humanities, Salt Lake Community College, 1997
- Charles A. Murphy Award for Public Service, Duke Law School Alumni Association, 1996
- Honorary Order of the Coif, University of Utah College of Law, 1995
- Utah State Bar Award for Service to Women in the Profession, 1995
- Honorary Doctor of Humanities, Weber State University, 1993
- Outstanding Achievement Award, YWCA, 1992
- Morrison Lecturer, California State Bar, 1992
- Distinguished Service Award, Utah State University, 1990
- Appellate Judge of the Year, Utah State Bar, 1990
- Wellesley College Alumna Achievement Award, 1987
- Woman Lawyer of the Year Award, Women Lawyers of Utah, 1986

Admissions

- State Bar of Utah