

JUDICIAL PROFILE:

HON. DAVID HARDY

CHIEF JUDGE OF THE SECOND
JUDICIAL DISTRICT

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They may not be real life lawyers, but Atticus Finch and the great Perry Mason served as inspiration for Second Judicial District Court Chief Judge David Hardy. Reading “To Kill a Mockingbird” and “Letters from a Birmingham Jail” in high school helped a young Hardy become interested in a legal career. In particular, he said reading Martin Luther King’s words: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” captured his attention.

Legal Career

While in the Army, Hardy decided to use his veteran’s benefits to attend college at Brigham Young University and, later on, to attend law school, also at BYU. But, he didn’t end his education there. Hardy went back to school at the University of Nevada, Reno to earn a master’s degree in judicial studies. He graduated from law school in 1993 and he has practiced here ever since.

Hardy clerked for Justice Thomas Steffen and also worked on the Supreme Court’s central staff for three years. Hardy said the time he spent working with and observing Justices Steffen, Rose, Springer, Shearing, Maupin and Young helped teach him how to become a great judge. “They are my professional heroes,” he said.

For six years Hardy served in the family division and was then elected (without opposition) to a general jurisdiction department. Last year he was elected by his colleagues to act as Chief Judge for the Second Judicial District. He also serves as the president of the Nevada District Judges Association.

Hardy is also an accomplished writer and has authored more than 60 essays on judicial ethics for the Washoe County Bar Association’s publication, *The Writ*.

Making a Good Impression

There are many ways to impress a judge, but when appearing in front of Judge Hardy, punctuality, preparedness and professionalism are good starting points. Hardy also appreciates it when the attorneys before him avoid telling him how other judges would rule on the case, discussing how long they have been in practice or saying they might have to appeal his decision to a higher court. “I prefer fact- and law-specific arguments that are not intended to invoke an emotional response,” Hardy said.

If you really want to impress Hardy in the courtroom, be passionate about the case or the client, but don’t go overboard; exercise civility. Hardy recommends that attorneys read “Making Your Case: The Art of Persuading Judges,” by Justice Antonin Scalia and Bryan Garner and, in particular, pay attention to its general principals of argumentation for some tips on winning in the courtroom. ■

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