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Dean Logan's Blog

Hail to the (New) Chief!

Posted by David Logan on 08/17/2009 at 12:00 AM

On July 16, 2009, Paul Suttell was sworn in as Rhode Island's 51st Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, with state and federal judges, political leaders, family and friends in attendance. In spite of the dreary day, the atmosphere was festive, reflecting the remarkably broad array of support (a unanimous vote in the Senate) for the jurist from Little Compton, who has moved from the Family Court (where he served 1990-2003), to Associate Justice of the Supreme Court (2003-09), and now to the pinnacle of the state judiciary as Chief Justice.

Dean Bastone and I attended the ceremony, where we spotted popular Adjunct Professor Don Migliori and his law partner Jack McConnell. (from the RWU Board of Trustees and slated to go on the federal bench this fall), plus Susan Rodriguez ('03) and Elizabeth Suever ('07) who served as Chief Justice Suttell's law clerks, and Sally McDonald ('09) who will be his clerk starting next month. One good example of what a great experience a Suttell clerkship is for young lawyers is that he asked Susan to testify on his behalf during the confirmation process. Elizabeth, now practicing with Roberts, Carroll & Feldstein Carroll, summed up her experience: "Having the opportunity to serve as Justice Suttell's law clerk was a great honor and learning experience. As a new law school graduate, I could not have asked for a better mentor to help me hone my legal writing and research skills. I will always look back fondly on my time in Justice Suttell's chambers."

RWU Law has developed a very close relationship with the Court—every justice typically hires at least one RWU Law grad as a clerk-- and it will only deepen under Chief Justice Suttell's leadership. (In fact, he will address our incoming class, and administer an oath of professionalism to the new class at the kickoff of Orientation this week.) And we look forward to once again hosting the Court for the championship round of our flagship Clark Moot Court Competition later in the fall. Congratulations, Chief!