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# Law School Dedicates Appellate Courtroom to Judge Selya

Law school's signature space named for one of Rhode Island's most influential and well-respected jurists

October 18, 2017

Edward Fitzpatrick



The Roger Williams University School of Law dedicated the Honorable Bruce M. Selya Appellate Courtroom on Oct. 15, naming one of the law school's most impressive spaces in honor of one of Rhode Island's most impressive and well-respected judges.

Judge Selya has served on the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals since 1986, assuming senior status in 2006. He has been recognized nationally for his work and is renowned for his judicial writing. The Boston Globe dubbed him "The sesquipedalian septuagenarian," the New York Times has profiled him, and the Wall Street Journal's law blog celebrated his "legendary" vocabulary. He graduated from Harvard University and Harvard Law School. He has been an attorney for more than 50 years and he previously served on the U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island.



Dean Michael J. Yelnosky, Judge Bruce M. Selya and President Donald J. Farish at dedication ceremony

Throughout his time on the Boston-based 1st Circuit court, he has maintained chambers in Providence and remained an active and engaged member of the community -- making special contributions in the areas of health care, the law and education. The RWU School of Law has been a fortunate recipient of his support and talent. He was a long-time member of the adjunct faculty, he has been a member of the law school's board of directors since 2004, and he now serves as the board vice chair. In addition, he has made it a practice to sit periodically with 1st Circuit panels in the courtroom that now bears his name.

The appellate courtroom is the signature space at the law school. The Rhode Island Supreme Court has heard arguments there, as have federal judges and other visiting judges. It is also a venue for many symposia and lectures. So it is fitting tribute that Judge Selya's name will be permanently associated with some of the most consequential conversations and gatherings taking place in Rhode Island about legal issues.



Former RWU School of Law Dean David A. Logan greets Judge Bruce M. Selya

"This is a truly momentous occasion for the law school," RWU School of Law Dean Michael J. Yelnosky said. "Judge Selya is not the only one being honored this morning. We are being honored by the judge's willingness to lend his name and his great reputation to this signature law school space. His votes of confidence over the years in the form of his service to the law school are culminating in this permanent relationship. That he likes us -- that he really, really likes us -- is a great declaration to the community as we sit on the cusp of the law school's 25th anniversary."

In addition to Yelnosky, others who spoke during the dedication ceremony included 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Chief Judge Jeffrey R. Howard, U.S. District Court Chief Judge William E. Smith, Rhode Island Supreme Court Chief Justice Paul A. Suttell, former RWU School of Law Dean David A. Logan and Susan J. Goldberg, a former clerk for Judge Selya who is now the 1st Circuit executive.



1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Chief Judge Jeffrey R. Howard speaks at dedication ceremony