

BIOGRAPHY OF
THE HONORABLE NORA BARRY FISCHER

The Honorable Nora Barry Fischer was born in 1951 in Homestead Hospital near Pittsburgh, PA. She was raised in the Pittsburgh area by her parents, Michael T. and Olga G. Barry, both first generation United States citizens. She is the oldest of eight (8), seven (7) girls and one boy.

She received a BA magna cum laude from Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana where she majored in both history and humanistic studies. During her undergraduate years, she studied at the L'Universite Catholique located in Angers, France for one academic year. She achieved her undergraduate education on scholarships and work study. She has been involved with her undergraduate school as a member of the Saint Mary's College Alumnae Board of Directors; as a Shannon Scholar and as a member of the local Saint Mary's College Club.

Judge Fischer went on to Notre Dame Law School where she graduated in January 1976, completing her studies in two and a half years. She has assisted the Notre Dame law faculty as a visiting National Institute of Trial Advocacy instructor from time to time.

Following law school graduation, she worked as a legal editor at Callaghan & Company, in part working on revisions to McQuillin on Municipal Corporations and to Fletchers Cyclopedia on Corporations. Returning to Pittsburgh in 1977, she became the first woman associate at Meyer Darragh Buckler Bebenek & Eck, an insurance defense litigation firm. In 1980, she was named its first woman junior partner and in 1982, its first woman senior partner. She also served on various committees including the Management Committee at the firm.

In 1992, she joined the firm of Pietragallo Bosick & Gordon (now Pietragallo, Gordon, Alfano, Bosick & Raspanti, LLP) as an equity partner. She served the firm as administrative partner and as a practice group leader. Her practice at both Meyer Darragh and PB&G was litigation based, as she handled product liability, toxic tort, insurance coverage and bad faith as well as municipal liability and civil rights litigation.

In addition, Judge Fischer's private practice included ADR. She is a trained mediator and arbitrator. Prior to assuming the bench, Judge Fischer also served as a Dalkon Shield Referee, a Special Master in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County and as an Adjunct Settlement Judge and Arbitrator for the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania. As a member of the West Virginia Bar, she also handled mediations on referral in addition to handling mediations by private appointments in both Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

Judge Fischer is a member of the Bars of Illinois, Pennsylvania and West Virginia and corresponding federal district courts as well as the Court of Appeals of the Third Circuit and the Unites States Supreme Court.

Judge Fischer was named the recipient of the 2006 Professionalism Award by the Civil

Litigation Section of the Allegheny County Bar Association for her “faithful adherence to the highest standards of legal professionalism”. In 2004, the Pennsylvania Bar Association honored her for her work as a co-chair of the Task Force on Health Care Delivery in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. She was also honored by the PBA as the recipient of the 2001 Anne X. Alpern Award, given by its Commission on Women in the Profession. Additionally, she has been recognized as a women business leader by the Athena Foundation. Most recently, the Women’s Bar Association conferred on her the Susan B. Anthony Award which recognizes her mentoring efforts directed to less experienced attorneys.

Judge Fischer is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers. She is a past President of the Academy of Trial Lawyers of Allegheny County. She is an active member of the Honorable Amy Reynolds Hay Inns of Court; Allegheny County Bar Association as well as the Pennsylvania Bar Association Commission on Women in the Profession. She has served in the past as a co-chair of the Commission. She is a frequent lecturer and panelist for seminars sponsored by Bar Associations and professional organizations.

Judge Fischer is a designated patent judge under the Patent Pilot Program, which is a ten-year program designed by Congress to enhance expertise in patent cases among federal judges at the district court level. She has been asked to speak on intellectual property and patent litigation issues at local seminars sponsored by the Pittsburgh Intellectual Property Law Association and an upcoming seminar by the Academy of Trial Lawyers of Allegheny County. She has also attended numerous seminars on patent and intellectual property litigation. Representative patent cases include Civil Action No. 09-290, *Carnegie Mellon Univ. v. Marvell Technology Group, LTD* and Civil Action No. 11-269, *Matthews International Corporation v. Biosafe Engineering, LLC, et al.*

In addition, Judge Fischer sat as the Chair of the Court subcommittee which planned and developed the Court’s E-Discovery Special Master Program. This program has been touted as the first of its kind nationally and will assist the Court’s management of ESI issues in complex cases, including patent litigation.

Judge Fischer is married to Dr. Donald R. Fischer, MD, MBA. They are the proud parents of three (3) grown children, all Notre Dame graduates.