

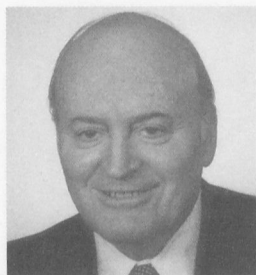
5-21-2012

President's Medal of Honor Awarded Posthumously to Hon. Roger J. Miner '56

New York Law School

HON. ROGER J. MINER '56

*Senior United States Circuit Judge, Trustee Emeritus, and Former Adjunct Professor of Law,
New York Law School*



Judge Roger J. Miner '56 was a widely respected senior judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. His name twice appeared on presidential short-lists for possible nomination to the United States Supreme Court.

Judge Miner's deep and long-standing commitment to the Law School was wide-ranging. He was a recipient of the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Alumni Association, where he served as an honorary director. He was also a recipient of the Dean's Medal for Distinguished Professional Service as well as the Charles W. Froessel Award for Valuable Contribu-

tion to Law. Judge Miner was an adjunct professor of law from 1986 to 1996 and a member of the Law School's Board of Trustees from 1991 to 1996. In 1988, Judge Miner and other members of the Miner family established the Abram Miner Scholarship Fund to honor Judge Miner's father Abram, a member of the Law School's Class of 1926. Also among Judge Miner's lasting contributions to the Law School was the generous donation of his papers, creating a rich and permanent archive for students, faculty, scholars, historians, and other researchers of all disciplines.

Born in 1934 in Hudson, New York, Judge Miner attended Columbia College and received his undergraduate degree from the State University of New York and his LL.B. degree *cum laude* from New York Law School in 1956. He served as the first Managing Editor of the *Law Review* and received the Law Forum Prize in 1955 for his outstanding contributions to the *Review*. Judge Miner received honorary LL.D. degrees from New York Law School, Albany Law School, and Syracuse University.

The *New York Law School Law Review* honored Judge Miner in 1986, dedicating its 30th anniversary volume to him. In describing Judge Miner's judicial opinions, the *Law Review* wrote that they "reflect[ed] his sophisticated understanding of modern social and legal problems, as well as a welcome sense of pragmatism. The body of his work is characterized by remarkable scholarship and perception, and a sense of justice and fairness that has become Judge Miner's hallmark." In 2012, the *Law Review's* Award for Outstanding Editorial Contribution was renamed for Judge Miner.

After graduation and admission to practice in New York, he joined his father Abram in private practice. Judge Miner was also admitted to practice in the United States Court of Military Appeals. He served on active military duty from 1956 to 1959, and later with the Army Reserve, obtaining the rank of captain in the Judge Advocate General's Corps. Judge Miner was awarded the Commendation Ribbon with Metal Pendant for his work on the revision of the *Manual for Courts-Martial*. He was admitted to the Bar of the Republic of Korea in 1958, a rare honor for an American.

In 1976, at the age of 41, Judge Miner became one of the youngest justices of the New York State Supreme Court. He served there until 1981, when President Ronald Reagan appointed him to the United States District Court for the Northern District of New York. Of Judge Miner's 80 District Court decisions that were appealed to the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, only two were reversed. In July 1985, President Reagan nominated Judge Miner to fill one of two new judgeships in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. The nomination was unanimously confirmed by the Senate, and Judge Miner was sworn in on September 14, 1985.

A prolific writer, Judge Miner authored more than 30 law journal and law review articles, and more than 700 published appellate opinions. He sat on Second Circuit panels in well over 2,000 matters. A *Washington Post* obituary noted that Judge Miner had “built a reputation for measured rulings and courtroom conduct and as a judge who showed little tolerance for the intrusions of politics into judicial chambers.”

Throughout his life Judge Miner manifested a profound commitment to public service. From 1961 to 1964, he served as Corporation Counsel for the City of Hudson and as the Assistant District Attorney for Columbia County from 1964 to 1968. He served as the District Attorney for Columbia County from 1968 to 1975. Among the many professional and community organizations to which he devoted his time were the American Law Institute; the American, New York State, and Columbia County Bar Associations; the American Judicature Society; the American Society of Writers on Legal Subjects (Scribes); the Federal Judges Association; the Federal Bar Council; the Association of the Bar of the City of New York; the New York Supreme Court Justices Association; the Association of Trial Judges, Third Judicial District; the National and the New York District Attorneys Associations; the Albany Law School American Inn of Court; the Practising Law Institute; the Columbia County Historical Society; the Columbia County Association; and the Isaiah Lodge B'nai B'rith.

Judge Miner was also a dedicated teacher who tirelessly advocated for the importance of training lawyers for the practice of law. In addition to his 10 years as an adjunct professor of law at NYLS, Judge Miner was an adjunct professor of law at Albany Law School from 1997–2002 and a faculty associate at the Arizona State University College of Law in 2004. He was a lecturer in the State University of New York at Albany Graduate Program in Court Systems Management and an adjunct associate professor of criminal law at Columbia-Greene Community College. He was also a lecturer at the American, New York State, and local Bar Associations and at the U.S. Attorney General's Advocacy Institute.

Judge Miner was an unparalleled mentor to dozens of former law clerks, many of whom are NYLS alumni. In formal remarks appearing in the February 28, 2012 *Congressional Record*, New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, a former law clerk for Judge Miner, remembered him as a “truly brilliant and dedicated jurist who served New York and the nation as a public servant his entire life. . . . He inspired me with his integrity, fairness, and great love of public service. I will always remember his generosity, kindness, and great intellect that taught me so much.”

New York Law School posthumously awards the President's Medal of Honor, the highest honor it can bestow, to Judge Roger J. Miner for his distinguished and devoted service to the Law School and for his unfailing commitment to the principles of law and justice.