



2019 Walks of Life Honoree
James J. McMonagle

Jim McMonagle has enjoyed a varied and highly respected career as a lawyer. He has been a public defender, prosecutor, Judge, General Counsel, and a Partner with the law firm of Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP.

As a Common Pleas Court Judge, he was internationally recognized for his creative approach to resolving asbestos litigation. Soon after he was sworn in, he was assigned a case that focused on exposure to asbestos produced by the Johns Manville Corporation, which had filed for bankruptcy. His leadership and representation of all the judges in the country before Congress led to legislation that changed the Bankruptcy Code and permitted companies to remain as viable entities but still pay valid claimants who had been injured by exposure to asbestos.

A graduate of Georgetown University and Cleveland Marshall College of Law, McMonagle resigned from the bench in 1990, after serving for thirteen years. He then served twelve years as General Counsel, Senior Vice President and Secretary of University Hospitals Health Systems in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1992, President George H. W. Bush nominated him for a federal judgeship but his nomination was derailed by partisanship in the United States Senate. Presently, he is recognized on a national basis for his abilities as a mediator and arbitrator, and he practices in those areas throughout the United States. He handles matters as diverse as complex commercial litigation, securities litigation, malpractice cases, and employment and tort cases throughout the country and the UK. Additionally he has served as a board member on a number of Fortune 500 corporations and numerous not-for-profits. He is a lead Trustee in asbestos trust funds and has been a Claims Administrator in multi- billion dollar settlements.

His father, George McMonagle, was on the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court from 1966 through 1996. His brother, Richard McMonagle, served on the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court for thirty six years before retiring in 2014. His cousin, Timothy McMonagle, and Timothy's wife, Christine McMonagle, both served on the Ohio 8th District Court of Appeals before retiring.

He and his wife Toddy are parents of William, Brendan and Molly. Another son, Jamie, died in 1996. The couple lives in Chagrin Falls.

2019 Walks of Life Award of the Irish American Archives Society, Cleveland OH.