



Name in English: Harry W. Low
Name in Chinese:
Name in Pinyin:
Gender: Male
Birth Year: 1931
Birth Place: Oakdale, California
Philanthropy: Y

Profession (s): Attorney, Judge, State Insurance Commissioner

Education: BA, 1952, Political Science, University of California, Berkeley; JD, 1955, Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California, Berkeley

Award(s): 2002 Spirit of Excellence Award, American Bar Association; 2000 Judge Lowell Jensen Public Service Award, Boalt Hall School of Law, UC Berkeley; 2003 Distinguished Alumni Award for extraordinary contributions to the legal profession, Boalt Hall Alumni Association, UC Berkeley.

Contribution(s): Judge Harry Low agrees with the statement that he's been a fireman during his career, being called repeatedly in the aftermath of government scandals to bring credibility back to the government process and to solve seemingly intractable problems by politicians of every stripe. He was the first Asian American to serve on San Francisco's Municipal Court and was a pioneer in other judicial offices. After graduating from UC Berkeley's Boalt Hall in 1955, Low served as a deputy attorney general under Attorney General Edmund "Pat" Brown. In 1966, by then California Governor Brown appointed Low to the San Francisco Municipal Court. Governor Ronald Reagan elevated Judge Low to the Superior Court in 1974. In every position Judge Low has been particularly active in pushing for more minorities entering careers previously denied to them through discrimination, particularly notable was the fact that he was appointed by President Carter as Chair of the Board of Visitors of West Point from 1977 to 1981. Governor Jerry Brown raised Judge Low to the First District Court of Appeal in 1982, a position that he retired from as presiding judge in 1992. From 1989 to 1990 he was head of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. In 1992 he was appointed to chair the San Francisco Police Commission in a particularly turbulent time which saw four men as police chief, two of them resigning in disgrace. In retirement Low worked as a mediator and arbitrator with the Judicial Arbitration Mediation Services (JAMS) particularly in cases involving the San Francisco Chinatown community. In 2000, after the disgraced resignation of the incumbent, Judge Low was suddenly appointed to become California's State Insurance Commissioner due to his reputation for honesty and clean politics, becoming the first Asian American holder of the office. His appointment was confirmed unanimously by the California State Legislature.

Judge Low declined to run for the office in his own right and retired in 2003 to resume his arbitration and mediation practice.

Philanthropy: Judge Low helped found the Chinese International School, offering bilingual education and a college-track education to deprived students. He is a board member of the California Healthcare Foundation and the Laguna Honda Hospital Foundation. He is also with Senior Tutors for Youth that helps provide counseling and education to troubled youth.

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