

Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient



The Honorable Robert S. Smith began his extraordinary legal career at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison, where he was a partner for 27 of his 35 years with the firm, from 1968 to 2003. While at Paul Weiss, Judge Smith tried dozens of cases and argued a comparable number of appeals, including two

successful appeals before the U.S. Supreme Court, establishing a reputation as a skillful litigator.

He then worked in private practice and as Special Counsel to the firm of Kornstein Veisz Wexler & Pollard until his appointment to the Court of Appeals by Governor George Pataki. Judge Smith was nominated in November 2003 and confirmed by the New York State Senate in January 2004. During his time on the bench, he wrote scores of opinions and became well known for his independence, judicial scholarship, and intellectual rigor. Judge Smith held the position of Associate Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals, New York's highest court, from 2004 until 2014.

After retiring from the court, Judge Smith practiced law for a decade with Friedman Kaplan Seiler Adelman & Robbins, where he was active in trial-level commercial litigation, alternate dispute resolution, expert witness testimony, and appeals. During his time at Friedman Kaplan, Judge Smith served as an expert witness in U.S. arbitration tribunals and courts and in the courts of nine other countries. He is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

Judge Smith began teaching the State Constitutional Law course at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law in 2006. Previously, he served as Visiting Professor from Practice at Columbia Law School from 1980 to 1981, and as a Lecturer in Law from 1981 until 1990.

Judge Smith graduated with distinction from Stanford University and *magna cum laude* from Columbia Law School, where he was editor-in-chief of the Columbia Law Review.

Judge Smith retired from the practice of law in 2024.