

## Chief Justice John D. Minton Jr. Portrait Dedication

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May it please the Court,

I want to begin by thanking Walter Hawkins and his Law Day Chair, Carrie Link, for their hard work in making this day a reality and a rousing success. Please join me in giving them a hand.

I am very honored and pleased to be here on behalf of the attorneys of the Bowling Green-Warren County Bar Association to help present the portrait of Chief Justice John D. Minton, Jr. This project continues our Bar Association's efforts to preserve our legal history by commissioning portraits of former judges of the Warren Circuit Court to be placed for viewing in the Warren County Justice Center.

Like many of the attorneys present who are of a certain age, my first formal experience in the Warren Circuit Court was to be presented for admission to practice in the local Bar by my law partners. In 1998, at the old Justice Center, my partners, John David Cole, Hamp Moore and Matt Baker presented me to their former law partner, then Circuit Court Judge John D. Minton, Jr. Judge Minton swore me in as a practicing attorney in the Warren Circuit Court and since that time, he has been a mentor and a friend to me as I know he has been to many of you here today.

Late in my term as President of the Bowling Green-Warren County Bar Association in 2010, I received a phone call from one of our community's most civic-minded citizens, Cora Jane Spiller. As many of you know, Mrs. Spiller has been instrumental in leading the charge to preserve our community's legal history through the judicial portrait project that we have undertaken in the past few years. For example, Mrs. Spiller was instrumental in helping us begin the work on commissioning the portraits of, among others, former Circuit Court judges Joe Huddleston and Tom Lewis. When she called me at the end of 2010, in her own inimitable way, she informed me that it was time to begin work on the portrait of Chief Justice John Minton to commemorate his work as one of Warren County's most distinguished Circuit Court judges. And thus, began the project that we unveil to you today. Please join me in thanking Mrs. Spiller for her leadership and commitment to preserving our local history for future generations.

It has been my great pleasure to lead the planning and fundraising efforts to commission the portrait of Chief Justice Minton to commemorate his work as a Warren Circuit Court judge. Many thanks go to the law firms and attorneys in the Bowling Green-Warren County Bar Association for their generous contributions to make this portrait possible. The portrait that we are about to unveil will leave a lasting and fitting testament to the good work and commitment of Judge and now Chief Justice John Minton to do justice for the people of Warren County and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

John Dean Minton, Jr. is the son of the late Dr. John Minton and Mrs. Betty Redick Minton. The Minton family has been a pillar of this community for many years. The Chief Justice graduated in 1970 from Western's College High School and went on to Western Kentucky University where he earned his bachelor's degree with honors in 1974. From there, his Honor went on to attend the University of Kentucky College of Law where he graduated with a J.D. in 1977 and was subsequently admitted to the Kentucky Bar that same year.

While at UK, Chief Justice Minton secured a summer clerkship working for the law firm led by John David Cole, Norman Harned and David Broderick here in Bowling Green. Upon his graduation from law school, the Chief Justice was offered a job and began his law practice with that firm. He engaged in law practice here in Bowling Green for the next 15 years.

In 1992, John Minton was elected to serve as a judge of the Warren Circuit Court, Division 2. He served with distinction as a Warren Circuit judge from 1992 to 2003. In addition to his trial court duties here, he also served by special appointment as Chief Regional Judge of the Green River Region. While on the Circuit Court bench, Chief Justice Minton was recognized for his leadership in forming the Warren County Drug Court and for his commitment to law-related education programs. In 2003, the Kentucky Bar Association honored him with its Outstanding Judge Award. His Honor went on to serve as a judge on the Kentucky Court of Appeals, representing the 14 county Second District, from November of 2003 until July 2006. He was elevated to the Kentucky Supreme Court in July 2006 by gubernatorial appointment and was subsequently elected without opposition to retain his seat representing the Second District on the Supreme Court. He was subsequently elected by his colleagues and sworn in as the fifth Chief Justice of Kentucky on July 27, 2008 and continues to serve with distinction in that post today. He is the first Bowling Green resident to serve as Kentucky Chief Justice since the state's current court system was established in 1976.

John Minton has represented this community admirably by making the hard choices as both a Justice and as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Kentucky Court of Justice. He has led Kentucky's judicial branch during hard economic times and there is no person who could have handled the difficult decisions that had to be made in the past few years better and more skillfully than our friend and colleague that we honor today.

I would be remiss not to make mention that the Chief Justice has been supported and encouraged by his wife, Susan Paige Minton, at each stage of his career. The Minton's have two children, a daughter, Paige, and a son, John, III, that are away at college and on their way to outstanding careers and community service in their own right.

As stated, we are here to honor the Chief Justice's eleven years of service as a judge of the Warren Circuit Court. My recollection of Circuit Court Judge Minton was that he was always unfailingly courteous to the attorneys and citizens who came into his courtroom. He was always prepared whether it was for motion hour or a trial. He was and is still a judge's judge; he calls it like he sees it. He plays no favorites and his only judicial philosophy is to do that which is right.

With us this morning is the artist that we commissioned to paint the portrait of the Chief Justice, please welcome Angela Kuprion. I also would like to call forward Warren Circuit Court Judge John Grise, the current occupant of Division 2 of the Warren Circuit Court, to accept the portrait of the Chief Justice which will be placed in the Warren County Justice Center.

And without any further adieu, it is my pleasure on behalf of the Bowling Green-Warren County Bar Association to present this portrait of the Honorable John D. Minton, Jr. and to thank him for his years of service to this community and to the Commonwealth of Kentucky and its legal system. May this portrait ever be a reminder of his good work and an inspiration and encouragement to all those who follow in his seat on the bench of the Warren Circuit Court and all other judicial posts within Kentucky. Thank you.