

DMVA Hall of Fame  
Inductee Nomination Form

DATE: 1 April 2014

NAME OF INDUCTEE: Justice Seamus McCaffery

CATEGORY: Military Retiree/ Government Executive – Retired Air Force Colonel, Current PA Supreme Court Justice

TIME PERIOD: 1968 – 2014

**JUSTIFICATION:** Justice McCaffery served 40 years in military service commencing in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1968 and retiring from the US Air Force Reserve in 2008. Justice MaCaffery enlisted in the U. S. Marine Corps in 1968 and rose to the rank of Captain before leaving the Marine Corps and joining the US Air Force Reserve in 1985 where he rose to the rank of Colonel before his retirement. Justice McCaffery is a 1977 graduate of LaSalle University and received hi J.D in 1989 from Temple University School of Law. He served in the Philadelphia Police Department for 20 years, was elected a Municipal Court Judge in Philadelphia in 1993, appointed Administrative Judge of Municipal Court in 2003 and elected Judge of the PA Superior Court in 2003. Justice McCaffery was elected a justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in 2007. In his positions he worked tirelessly on the behalf of all Veterans. He is responsible for Pennsylvania having the largest and most successful Veterans Court program across the nation. Justice McCaffrey has many awards and honors to include: American Legion Man of the Year; Catholic War Veterans Man of the Year; Philadelphia Shomrim Fellowship Award; Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Hall of Fame; U. S. Air Force Reserves Squadron Commander of the Year; Air Force Security Police Commander of the Year to name a few. He is an honorary board member of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee; the Pennsylvania March of Dimes; and Liberty USO, the USO of Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey.

**PROPOSED CITATION:**

Justice Seamus McCaffrey distinguished himself by outstanding service to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs through more than 40 years as a member of the Armed Forces and over 40 years of support to the Commonwealth's Veterans. From his early days as a Philadelphia Policeman to his appointment as a Supreme Court Justice of the Commonwealth, Justice MaCaffrey has been an outspoken leader on behalf of Veterans. Through his initiative and tireless efforts, Justice MacCaffrey has developed the Pennsylvania program on Veterans Courts to the premier program for other states to follow. His unwavering commitment and uncanny ability to accomplish the task of improving upon and growing this key rehabilitative program for Veterans has provided hope and dignity to all Veterans who have graduated from the program. He

continues to support Veterans through his memberships in the USO of Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey and the Viet Nam Veterans Memorial Committee. He is a huge motivator and an ardent supporter of all programs in support of the Commonwealths 950,000 Veterans. Justice McCaffrey's outstanding achievements reflect great credit upon himself, the Judiciary of the Commonwealth, the Veterans of the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a whole.

DATE FORWARDED BY NOMINATION COMMITTEE:

SELECTION BOARD ACTION: APPROVED/DISAPPROVED

DATE:

## JUSTICE SEAMUS P. McCAFFERY

Justice Seamus P. McCaffery was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on June 3, 1950. In 1955, his parents, Seamus and Rita McCaffery, brought the family to the United States and since that time, Justice McCaffery has called Philadelphia his home. Justice McCaffery has made a career of serving his city, commonwealth, and country, for a combined 74 years of public service.

Justice McCaffery began his 40-year military career immediately upon graduation from Cardinal Dougherty High School in 1968, when he joined the United States Marines. After his tour of active duty, Justice McCaffery became a reservist, serving in the Marine Corps Reserve for 15 years, rising to the rank of Captain. He then transferred to the United States Air Force Reserve, where he became the Commanding Officer of the 913th Security Police Squadron. Justice McCaffery was mobilized in support of Operation Noble Eagle after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, and served as the Regional Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer for Homeland Defense. He retired in 2008 at the rank of Full Colonel, with 40 years of service. He is the recipient of numerous military honors and medals, including 5 Meritorious Service Medals, the War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the Legion of Merit.\*

After completing his active military service, Justice McCaffery returned home and joined the Philadelphia Police Department. During his 20 years on the police force he served as a patrolman, a plainclothes Vice/Narcotics investigator, and as a detective in the Homicide and Major Crimes Divisions. His distinguished law enforcement career included several high-profile murder investigations, and he rose to the rank of supervisor before retiring as a highly-decorated veteran in 1989.

While working full-time as a police officer, Justice McCaffery also earned a Bachelor's degree from La Salle University, and then his Juris Doctor degree from Temple University School of Law. Upon entering the legal profession, he joined the Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Washington, D. C. bars, and worked as a litigator at one of Philadelphia's premier law firms.

In 1993, Justice McCaffery became the first retired Philadelphia Police officer ever elected as a trial judge in Philadelphia County. During his decade on the trial court bench, Justice McCaffery won local and national acclaim for creating and volunteering his services for such innovative programs as Nuisance Night Court, Graffiti Court and "Eagles Court," the National Football League's first and only court, conducted during the Philadelphia Eagles' home games. These accomplishments earned him the

label of "Philadelphia's Quality of Life Justice."

In October 2001, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court appointed him the Administrative Judge of the Philadelphia Municipal Court, one of the largest courts in the country. In his capacity as Administrative Judge, Justice McCaffery introduced new programs for drug and domestic violence offenders, and those with mental health issues. He streamlined the operations of the court and structured court-wide procedural reforms which improved the court's efficiency and the delivery of its services to the citizenry.

Justice McCaffery served for four years on the Superior Court of Pennsylvania prior to his election to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in November 2007, where he currently serves as a Justice. His responsibilities include being Liaison Justice for all of Pennsylvania's problem-solving courts. Under his direction and guidance, Pennsylvania has taken a leading role in creating mental health court programs that help to identify individuals with mental illness who are involved in the criminal justice system and to divert them to treatment programs instead of jail. He has been instrumental in the creation of "Veterans Courts" across Pennsylvania, and is the Co-Chair of the statewide Veterans Task Force. Veterans courts partner with the Veterans Administration in order to intercept and divert veterans who suffer from the "invisible wound" known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, out of criminal courts and into treatment programs

Justice McCaffery is a regular keynote speaker across Pennsylvania for professional, civic, military, law enforcement and Masonic organizations, addressing topics such as appellate advocacy, the role and function of the courts, and judicial independence. He is a faculty member of the Pennsylvania Bar Institute, a frequent guest lecturer at the Philadelphia Police Academy, and gives generously of his time to numerous charitable organizations. He is an honorary board member of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee; the Pennsylvania March of Dimes; and Liberty USO, the USO of Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey.

Justice McCaffery is the proud father of three sons, Sean, Jim, and Brian, and the devoted grandfather of Morgan, Delaney, Carleigh, Conor and Noel. The Justice is also an avid motorcycle enthusiast. Justice McCaffery has been the recipient of numerous military and law enforcement awards, medals and decorations, as well as civic and professional awards. Justice McCaffery and his wife, Lise Rapaport, Esquire, continue to make their home in Philadelphia.

\* Military History: Colonel McCaffery joined the United States Marine Corps in 1968. After serving on active duty for training, he was sent to Willow Grove, PA and assigned to HMM 772 (Medium Helicopter Squadron). His Marine Corps career entailed serving in several different units at MAG 43/49, and after serving for ten years as an enlisted Marine, Seamus was

commissioned a Second Lieutenant. After serving in various career fields, e.g., embarkation, E.O.D., etc., and attaining the rank of Captain, in 1985 Captain McCaffery transferred into the Air Force Reserve and became the Commander of the 913<sup>th</sup> WSSF, 913 AW, Willow Grove, PA.

Colonel McCaffery served as the Commander through several transitions, from a Weapons Systems Security Flight, to a Security Police Flight, and eventually to a Security Forces Squadron. Upon his promotion to Major, Colonel McCaffery transferred to the Air Mobility Center, Ft. Dix, NJ, and was assigned to the IMA position of Commander of the 421<sup>st</sup> Ground Combat Readiness Squadron. After he completed Air War College, he was promoted to Lt. Col. and transferred to Air Combat Command, Langley, VA, where he served as the IMA to the ACC Security Forces Commander. After his subsequent promotion to Colonel, Colonel McCaffery became the Pennsylvania State EPLO. After serving in that position for several years, he transferred to FEMA, Region III as a Regional EPLO. On February 1, 2008, at Tyndall, AFB, Panama City, FL, Colonel McCaffery retired from the military after serving for 40 years.