

## **Judge Hagel:**

Judge Lawrence B. Hagel was appointed a Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims by President George W. Bush in December 2003.

Immediately before his appointment, Judge Hagel served as the General Counsel of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, a congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated to advocating for veterans of the Armed Forces who have a disease or injury of the spinal cord.

Judge Hagel began his employment at the Paralyzed Veterans in January of 1990 as the Deputy General Counsel, a position in which he was responsible for developing the organization's policy and procedure for litigating cases at the then newly created Court of Veterans Appeals, later named the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. He represented individual veterans at the Board of Veterans' Appeals, and both the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. He also filed amicus curiae briefs on behalf of the Paralyzed Veterans, notably filing the amicus brief before the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Brown v. Gardner*, 513 U.S. 115 (1994), on behalf of the Paralyzed Veterans; the Veterans of Foreign Wars; the American Veterans of WWII, Korea and Vietnam; the Blinded Veterans Association; and the Vietnam Veterans of America.

In 1999, Judge Hagel became the General Counsel of the Paralyzed Veterans during which time he retained and supervised outside counsel, advised the organization, its officers, and directors in matters involving employment policy; employment discrimination; internal investigations and employee discipline; corporate governance; taxation; intellectual property; and litigation regarding enforcement of the Americans with Disability Act and the Air Carrier Access Act. Significant litigation in which Judge Hagel was involved on behalf of Paralyzed Veterans included *Paralyzed Veterans of America v. D.C. Arena L. P.*, 117 F.3d 579 (D.C. Cir. 1997), the first case in the country requiring stadium owners to provide accessible seating with views comparable to those of the general public to persons with mobility impairments.

During his legal career, Judge Hagel has been involved extensively in legal issues relating to veterans benefits. He has served as a member of the Administrative Conference of the United States (1995); Steering Committee, District of Columbia Bar Administrative Law and Agency Practice Section (1999-2003); U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims Rules Advisory Committee (1992-2003); and Federal Bar Association, Veterans Law Committee Section, of which he was the Chair from 1994-1995. Judge Hagel also authored the structure and was a founding member of the Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program. He also served on its Executive Board from its creation in 1992 until his appointment to the Court.

Judge Hagel's military experience includes graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy and service in the U.S. Marine Corps as an infantry platoon commander, a headquarters company commander and as a field advisor to a battalion of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam during an extended tour in Viet Nam. Judge Hagel then attended law school at the University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law and after graduation he remained in the Marine Corps serving as a Judge Advocate. He later received a masters of law (labor law) with highest honors from the

National Law Center of The George Washington University. During his time as a Judge Advocate he represented individuals charged with crimes under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and before administrative and medical boards. He was also appointed Special Assistant U.S. Attorney. Judge Hagel appeared on behalf of the Department of the Navy in U.S. District Courts throughout the country, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and Ninth Circuit, the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, and in labor arbitration. Judge Hagel was awarded the Combat Action Ribbon, the Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), the Joint Service Commendation Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal. Cases of note include *Shopco Distribution Co., Inc. v. Commanding General of Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, N.C.*, 885 F.2d 167 (4th Cir. 1989).

Judge Hagel is admitted to practice before the highest courts of Iowa, California, and the District of Columbia. He is also admitted to practice before the U.S. Courts of Appeal for the Federal, Fourth, Ninth, and Tenth Circuits; the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces.

Judge Hagel was born in Washington, Indiana.

## **Judge Davis:**

Judge Davis was appointed by the President of the United States as a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims on December 4, 2004.

Prior to his judicial appointment, Judge Robert N. Davis was a full tenured professor of law at Stetson University College of Law, Gulfport, Florida. He joined the Stetson law faculty in August 2001 after teaching for thirteen years at the University of Mississippi School of Law where he was a tenured full professor. He has also held teaching positions at the University of South Florida, Georgetown University Law Center, the University of Memphis, and Washington and Lee University. He has taught in summer programs at the University of Hawaii, Downing College, Cambridge University, England, Estonia and has lectured at Makerere University School of Law in Uganda, Africa and at the University of Papua New Guinea.

Judge Davis has taught constitutional law, administrative law, national/international security law, alternative dispute resolution, terrorism/counter-terrorism and international and domestic sports law. He is the founder of the Journal of National Security Law, and has held positions of leadership with the American Bar Associations' Standing Committee on Law and National Security, the Federalist Society and the American Association of Law Schools. He has authored numerous articles on a variety of subjects including a recent article published by the Brooklyn Journal of International Law entitled: "Striking the Balance: National Security vs. Civil Liberties." He has been a frequent commentator on local television, radio and newspapers regarding national security, terrorism, constitutional law and elections issues. While teaching in Mississippi, he was appointed by the Governor as a Mississippi Commissioner to the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws.

Judge Davis has extensive experience as an arbitrator and mediator with the American Arbitration Association. He was a mediator with the United States Postal Service and was an arbitration panel member with the United States Olympic Committee. Judge Davis was a member of the United States Navy Reserves and was recalled to active duty after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. He was assigned to the Joint Intelligence Directorate at MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, Florida.

Judge Davis graduated from the University of Hartford, West Hartford, Connecticut in 1975 and the Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, D.C. in 1978. He practiced as an appellate attorney for five years with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Washington, D.C. Thereafter, Judge Davis spent four years with the United States Department of Education, Washington, D.C., in the business and administrative law division. Judge Davis also briefly served as a Special Assistant United States Attorney in the District of Columbia as part of a federal agency exchange program.

Judge Davis is an avid sportsman and naturalist enjoying a variety of sports and hobbies including birdwatching, hiking, biking, swimming, camping, tennis, golf and fencing. He enjoys traveling and speaks elementary Spanish and German.

**Steven L. Keller:**

In February 2011, Steven L. Keller was designated by Secretary Shinseki as Acting Chairman of the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). He previously served as the Board's Vice Chairman, a position he has held since Feb. 1, 2009.

Mr. Keller began his government career as a BVA staff attorney in 1982. In May 1991, he was selected as the Counsel to the Chairman and, in 1995, was named Chief Counsel, the same year that President Clinton approved his appointment as a member of the Board. Mr. Keller served as the Board's Senior Deputy Vice Chairman from 1997 until 2008, when he was competitively selected as Principal Deputy Vice Chairman, a Senior Executive Service (SES) position.

In addition to his management and judicial responsibilities with the Board, Mr. Keller has been involved in a range of task forces and study groups focused on improvement of the VA benefits adjudication system.

Prior to becoming an attorney, Mr. Keller taught English literature and composition at Northern Illinois University and Stanford University. He also was a member of the publications staff of several newspapers and magazines in the San Francisco Bay area.

Mr. Keller received his bachelor degree from Long Island University in 1967, his Master of Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1968, and his Juris Doctor degree from Hastings College of the Law in 1979. He is a member of the California and Washington, D.C. bars.

**Laura H. Eskenazi:**

Laura H. Eskenazi was appointed by Secretary Shinseki to the position of Principal Deputy Vice Chairman, Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board), in July 2009. Commensurate with her duties as the Principal Deputy Vice Chairman, she was appointed to the Board as a Veterans Law Judge in July 2010. She currently serves as the second highest ranking careerist at the Board.

Ms. Eskenazi began her career with the Board in January 1996 as a staff attorney, drafting tentative decisions for signature by Board Veterans Law Judges. In November 2002, she was selected as Special Counsel to the Senior Deputy Vice Chairman, and in November 2004, she was competitively selected as the Board's Chief Counsel for Operations, a Senior Level (SL) position.

Ms. Eskenazi received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Virginia Tech. Her degree was in Liberal Arts and Sciences, and contained a triple concentration in English, Economics, and Political Science. She received her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Baltimore School of Law, and a LL.M. in Transnational Business Practices from McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific. She is a licensed attorney with active bar membership in Maryland.

Ms. Eskenazi has significant management and legal responsibilities at the Board, in addition to her work as Veterans Law Judge, and frequently acts on behalf of the Board's Chairman and Vice Chairman. She lives in Maryland with her husband and three young children.

**Robert V. Chisolm:**

Robert V. Chisolm graduated from Boston College magna cum laude in 1984. He graduated from Boston University School of Law magna cum laude in 1988. At Boston University School of Law, he was a member of the Law Review. Mr. Chisolm is admitted to practice law in the following courts: Rhode Island, New York, Massachusetts, United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (1991); Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit (1995); Supreme Court (1995). In addition, he is admitted to practice in the United States District Court for Rhode Island, the Southern District of New York, the Eastern District of New York, and Massachusetts.

After graduating from law school, Mr. Chisolm worked at Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett in New York from 1988-1990. In 1990, he returned to Providence, RI to work with his father at Chisolm & Feldman. Since 1996, Mr. Chisolm has been working at his own firm, Chisolm Chisolm & Kilpatrick. Chisolm Chisolm & Kilpatrick specializes in Veterans Law cases. In addition, the firm handles ERISA claims, LTD claims and personal injury claims.

Mr. Chisolm was a founding member of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims Bar Association and served as President of that organization for the year 2002-2003. Mr. Chisolm served as the President of the National Organization of Veterans' Advocates from 1999 to 2005. Mr. Chisolm's work on behalf of NOVA resulted in the amendment to 38 U.S.C. § 5904 which permits veterans to now hire an attorney after the notice of disagreement is filed. He has presented at NOVA conferences, CAVC Bar Association Conferences as well as the CAVC and Federal Circuit Judicial Conferences. He is the first recipient of NOVA's Kenneth Carpenter Achievement Award for Excellence.