

U.S. District Courthouse in Shreveport named in honor of Judge Stagg

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Family, friends and former colleagues were in attendance as the U.S. District Courthouse in Shreveport was named Friday in honor of Shreveport native, Tom Stagg.



(Photo: Nick Wooten/The Times)

The ceremony, held in Courtroom One, included remarks from family, fellow judges and Stagg's former law clerks. Their words highlighted Stagg's colorful character and leadership.

"We knew him as a teacher," said U.S. Magistrate Roy Payne, Eastern District of Texas. "He told us to go look it up. He showed us by his own example the value of preparation. ...We knew him as a model of character.

He taught us that justice comes from pursuing the truth with an open mind and following the law where ever it will lead us."

Stagg served as a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana from 1974 until his death in 2015. For his final 23 years on the bench, Stagg held the "senior status" title.

He oversaw the building of the courthouse which now bears his name — from getting appropriations from Congress to inspecting the construction site daily. Speakers throughout the event mentioned that the project was completed on time and under budget. It was a point of pride for Stagg, they said.

He even had his own personal hard hat for the project.

Stagg was born in Shreveport in 1923. A 1939 C.E. Byrd High School graduate, he graduated from LSU before serving in the Army during World War II in France and Germany. He was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge, the Bronze Star for Valor and the Purple Heart. After returning from the war, Stagg went back to LSU. He earned his law degree in 1949.

His grandson, 34-year-old Thomas Eaton Stagg Harrington, donned one of the judge's trademark bow ties when he took to the podium to honor his grandfather.

"This building and I now share a namesake," Harrington said. "(Stagg) was a man of many titles and distinctions, but above all 'Pop Pop,' as we referred to him, lived a life committed to service."

At the end of the ceremony, members of the family, including Stagg's widow, Miki, revealed a new sign for the building: "Tom Stagg United States Court House." "Court House" was written as two words to honor the late Stagg, who preferred it that way.

"He would have loved it," Miki said on the courthouse plaza. "I thank you all for being here."

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