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## Getting to Know JAMS Neutral Hon. Russell Lloyd (Ret.)

BY RUSSELL LLOYD (RET.)

**A Q&A with one of JAMS newest additions in Houston**

In February 2021, JAMS expanded its presence in the Texas legal market with the opening of its newest resolution center in Houston. With this expansion, JAMS welcomed Hon. Russell Lloyd (Ret.) to its talented panel of neutrals.

Hon. Russell Lloyd (Ret.) brings with him 40-plus years of legal experience, including 16 years on the bench in trial and appellate courts. He has served as a prosecutor, civil defense lawyer, plaintiff's attorney, certified mediator and appellate justice, and he has been nationally recognized for his time as civil district judge for some of the country's largest mass action dockets.

Judge Lloyd's 20 years of military service has provided him

with a valuable perspective along with the ability to make decisions under pressure. He is a former paratrooper, Vietnam veteran, JAG officer and military judge. Below he describes his unique and diverse career and how it informs his practice today.

**Why did you choose to join JAMS after stepping down from the bench?**

While on the bench, I saw tremendous value in judges who could help guide parties toward consensus, rather than draw out conflict. The most rewarding cases were those where I was able to help parties reach a consensus by whittling down their disputes. JAMS specifically attracts judges who excel at this, so it's a great fit. And, with JAMS opening a resolution center in Houston, all of the stars seemed to be aligned for me to join the panel.



**What practice areas are you particularly interested in developing at JAMS?**

Dispute resolution is more effective and efficient when a neutral is familiar with the subject matter. I've presided over thousands of complex business and tort cases, and tried many myself, so I know how to cut through the clutter and narrow the issues.

**How would you describe your settlement style?**

Most trials occur because someone has miscalculated. I

help litigants see the middle ground, where defendants can manage their risk and plaintiffs can get immediate relief. My years on both sides of the civil docket and on the bench have enhanced my ability to find common ground. I can then discuss the issues with the parties as a disinterested neutral, pointing out each side's weaknesses and strengths.

**You were on the bench for 16 years, and you also spent 20 years in the military. What skills did you learn in each of those careers that helped prepare you for a career in alternative dispute resolution?**

My time on the bench was a master class in patience. It helped me become a better listener and to always keep an open mind. In the military, you are trained to lead teams through tough situations. Team members come from all walks of life, so you learn what brings people together and what keeps them focused on the mission. When resolving disputes, it is also challenging to keep parties focused, so having a neutral who remains a calming force and who stays focused on reaching a resolution is a big advantage.

**What was your biggest influence on entering the law?**

I've always been interested in public affairs and history. Our nation was founded and built by lawyers based on the rule of law. To be an attorney in this country is to be an important part of the life of the nation.

**What was the most interesting or most difficult case you were involved in, either as a practicing attorney, judge or neutral?**

I represented the hourly workers of the country's biggest retailer when their employer engaged in unfair labor practices. The litigation lasted eight years, with class actions across the southern United States in state and federal courts. They were complex, difficult cases, but in the end, we achieved a fair result, which was very gratifying.

**What achievement are you most proud of?**

I'm really proud of my family. It's a running joke that we could be a law firm since we're all attorneys. I met my wife, Mary, at a bar association event, and our son and daughter both practice law. We've all had different practice areas, so we learn a lot from each other.

Can you share an important lesson that a mentor taught to you?

Just be yourself and don't try to imitate someone else. This was advice on how to try lawsuits, but I have found it to be equally applicable to life as well.

**ADR in the time of COVID-19 has changed significantly. What lasting impact(s) do you think we will see in the ADR field?**

While I much prefer in-person contact, COVID has necessitated the use of Zoom and other virtual platforms. Some parties simply do not want to travel, so I think that there will be many more hybrid ADR proceedings in the future.

*Judge Lloyd is based in the JAMS Houston Resolution Center and can be reached at [rlloyd@jamsadr.com](mailto:rlloyd@jamsadr.com).*

