



Fun Facts about Judge Mooney

What is the best piece of advice you've received?

The best piece of advice I received never was articulated as advice but instead was demonstrated through conduct. My father, by his life's example, taught me to live a life of moderation.

What has been your favorite family vacation?

After leaving the [Missouri] Court of Appeals, we took an extended trip to Ireland. Two of my grandparents had emigrated from Ireland as teenagers, leaving many brothers and sisters behind. Their descendants welcomed us warmly and traveled with us around Ireland.

What fictional character do you wish you could meet?

I would love to meet Max Bialystock, the scheming, larger-than-life character who is at the heart of Mel Brooks's show, "The Producers."

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

I chose JAMS because of its reputation for professionalism and a desire to be of service. I visited with many colleagues and friends before choosing JAMS. To a person, they all spoke of JAMS as the premier alternative dispute resolution service. I had no intention of retiring to a rocking chair. I find it important to be of service to others. For me, that service has often been through my chosen occupation.

Tell us more about your legal career.

My start as a lawyer was a rocky one. Shortly after starting as an associate at a firm, I realized I made a mistake. The firm was dominated by a single lawyer whose ethics I did not admire. I implored the placement office of my law school for help. They advised me of an opening for an assistant prosecuting attorney. I had not taken criminal procedure or planned on a career in litigation, but I needed to find a new position. I was hired and soon found I enjoyed working as a prosecutor. I progressed rapidly in the office and worked as a prosecutor for over 14 years, becoming the first assistant prosecuting attorney in an office of 50 lawyers.

What was your biggest influence for entering the law?

My dad, a member of the Greatest Generation, left college and joined the service during World War II, serving as a navigator for 41 missions in a B-24 bomber over Italy. While in the service, he married my mom. After the war, they immediately started a large family, raising six children. But, with the responsibilities of a growing family, he never returned to finish college. My dad became a very successful life insurance salesman, but at the dinner table, he would often remark, "I wish I could have stayed in school and become a lawyer." Three of the six children followed this lead and went to law school.

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

I hope to mediate civil cases, particularly those with complex issues. I think mediation is still significantly underused. Litigation is too time-consuming and too expensive. Indeed, at times, it's soul-consuming. Despite the very small percent of cases tried, lawyers and parties often don't turn to mediation until the eleventh hour. Of course, litigation may be needed to determine liability or the scope of damages. But once these critical issues are clarified, a good mediator can help facilitate a settlement without the vast expenditures of time and money.

What do others have to say about your settlement skills?

The Missouri Court of Appeals has operated its own settlement docket for over 30 years. I served as our court's settlement judge from 2015 until my retirement in 2019. Chief Judge Colleen Dolan stated, "Out of all his work here at the Court, I would like to single out one particularly important contribution. For years, Judge Mooney has served as the settlement

What's a great book you've read recently?

I love audiobooks and have listened repeatedly to the short stories of Dorothy Parker.

What professional accomplishment are you most proud of?

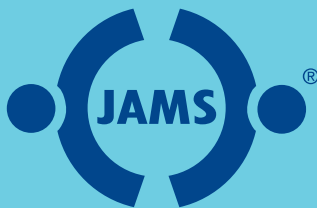
I am proud of my history of public service. That being said, I try to temper that pride by realizing that I stand on the shoulders of giants. I credit my parents and teachers for much of my success.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I am a longtime lover of theatre. As a teenager, I hitchhiked from St. Louis to New York and saw Angela Lansbury in the original Broadway production of "Mame." Recently, I have dabbled in playwriting and succeeded in obtaining a workshop production of a short play.

If you could meet and chat with any person throughout history, living or not, who would that be and why?

I think I'd choose Albert Einstein. It amazes me that after a century, we're still testing his hypotheses and finding them correct. Contrast that with the endless predictions we hear through the media. We're lucky if they have any relevance or legitimacy after a week's time.



judge. His tireless efforts and steady hand have resulted in dozens of cases being resolved by agreement of the parties prior to opinion. For that and all his other service, the judges of the Eastern District will be forever grateful.”

The Supreme Court of Missouri selected me to serve as chair of the Judicial Finance Commission from 2003 until 2019. The Missouri Legislature has charged this commission with mediating and resolving budget disputes between counties and judicial circuits throughout the state.

How do you think the field of law has changed for LGBTQ lawyers over the years?

When I began working as an assistant prosecutor in 1975, I, like most LGBTQ lawyers, was in the closet. In Missouri, consensual sex between adult persons of the same sex was punishable by two years' to life imprisonment. And in the religion of my youth, it was punishable by eternal damnation. To put it mildly, my romantic prospects were clouded. In 1985, I began coming out of the closet, disclosing my sexual orientation to family, close friends and my boss.

Now it feels like we're in a different world—there has been a revolution in thinking. But this revolution was not the product of mobs or generals. Instead, it was the direct result of LGBTQ persons coming out of the closet. Many of these heroes, some amazingly young, risked rejection from those they most trust and value to give witness to their true identities.

To set a case with Judge Mooney,
visit jamsadr.com/mooney or call 314.334.5267.

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