

# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## Boston Neutral Hon. Peter M. Lauriat (Ret.)



### Hon. Peter M. Lauriat (Ret.)

- *My grandfather, a passenger on the Lusitania when it was torpedoed and sunk in 1915, is featured in the book Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania, by Erik Larson.*
- *In 1986, I and seven others bought a minor league affiliate of the Boston Red Sox now known as the Lowell Spinners—from which 24+ players have become major leaguers.*
- *The black robe that I proudly wore in the Superior Court for the last 16 years was my niece's graduation robe from Wheaton College.*

Based in Boston and available nationwide

*Judge Lauriat joins JAMS after serving on the Massachusetts Superior Court for 29 years, including two in the Business Litigation Session. Prior to his appointment to the bench, he practiced law in Boston for 17 years, specializing in civil litigation. Judge Lauriat earned a well-deserved reputation as a no-nonsense judge who was willing to roll up his sleeves in order to understand the complex legal issues, factual controversies and dynamics at play in each case.*

#### ***What types of cases did you handle on the bench?***

I was fortunate to preside over a wide variety of complex business and commercial cases, most notably several involving the effect of corporate governance on shareholder relationships and value. I gained a specialization in startup disputes, where I handled virtually all of the legal issues facing a startup closed corporation including venture capital, partnership agreements and trademark issues.

In addition I presided over and tried all manner of civil actions, from employment cases (including non-compete agreements); malpractice cases; breach of contract cases; personal injury and products liability cases to trade secret claims; construction cases; real estate disputes and insurance coverage claims. I specialized in civil discovery matters and co-authored a two-volume treatise on discovery.

#### ***What do attorneys have to say about your settlement skills?***

I think they appreciate my knowledge of the law and ability to filter out the noise and hone in on what really matters during critical negotiations. I strive to be patient, open-minded and dedicated to resolving every case.

I think most would agree that I study and understand the legal issues, the factual controversies, and weigh them against all the dynamics at play. I speak frankly when I need to settle the hard-to-settle cases but my decisions were well-grounded, and focused on the practicalities of the dispute.

#### ***Tell us more about your legal career.***

Prior to being appointed to the bench, I was a partner at Peabody & Brown (now Nixon Peabody) and an associate and partner at Herrick & Smith. I've taught at Harvard Law School, National Judicial College and taught numerous courses and programs for judges and lawyers in the Commonwealth and elsewhere. I am an author, editor and contributor to several books, including the *Massachusetts Jury Trial Benchbook*, Second (2004) and Third (2017) Editions; *Jury Trial Innovations in Massachusetts*; *Massachusetts Expert Witnesses*; and the *Massachusetts Deposition Practice Manual*.

#### ***What was your biggest influence for entering the law?***

The reason I pursued the law was the advice and support of a Political Science Professor, R. Bruce Carroll, at Middlebury College, from which I graduated in 1968. He had organized a moot court as part of his Constitutional Law course during my junior year, and I was chosen to argue for the petitioner before a judge of the Superior Court in Middlebury. Although I was scared silly about doing so, I survived, and Professor Carroll not only encouraged me to consider law school, but urged me to apply to the University of Chicago, where he had been an undergraduate. I did, I somehow got in, and the rest is history.