

Pepperdine Law Review

Volume 34

Issue 2 *A Tribute to Judge Byrne & Symposium:
Balancing Career & Family: A Work/Life Symposium*

Article 1

1-20-2007

Introduction

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Recommended Citation

Warren Christopher *Introduction*, 34 Pepp. L. Rev. 2 (2007)

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Introduction

Warren Christopher*

Judge Matt Byrne had a magnetic personality. With his sparkling blue eyes, good looks and Irish charm, he made friends easily and kept them for a lifetime. At his memorial service, speakers noted that ever so many people thought they were Matt's best friend.

In the fascinating pages that follow, you will hear from some of these best friends. All that they say is true. You will read of Matt's consummate skill as a trial judge who presided over scores of trials and trained several generations of young Assistant U.S. Attorneys, both when he was U.S. Attorney and, later, as a judge when he held them to an especially high standard. You will be told of Matt's traveling the world as an unofficial Ambassador to help other countries learn about our renowned system of justice. And others will tell of Matt's important contributions beyond the law and lawyering, and his sense of honor and integrity.

While his friends will describe his rare combination of talents, the overarching theme remains his gift for friendship. As one of many beneficiaries, I am honored to introduce this symposium and commend it to you.

* Warren Christopher attended Stanford Law School from 1946-49, where he was President of the Law Review and was elected to the Order of the Coif. He was a law clerk to Justice William O. Douglas of the U.S. Supreme Court from October 1949 to September 1950. He has worked for three Presidents: as Deputy Attorney General for President Johnson; as Deputy Secretary of State for President Carter, and as Secretary of State for President Clinton. President Carter awarded Mr. Christopher the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award, on January 16, 1981, for his role in negotiating the release of 52 American hostages in Iran. In 1991, Mr. Christopher was Chairman of the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department. In the aftermath of the Rodney King incident, the Commission proposed significant reforms of the Los Angeles Police Department that were approved overwhelmingly by a public referendum. Today, Mr. Christopher is a Senior Partner at O'Melveny & Myers.
