

**THE HONORABLE PETER H. WOLF**  
**SENIOR JUDGE**  
**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Peter H. Wolf was sworn in as an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia on May 16, 1979. The oath of office was administered by United States District Judge George L. Hart, Jr., for whom Judge Wolf served as a law clerk when he first came to Washington, D.C. in 1962. President Carter's nomination of Judge Wolf filled the vacancy created by the elevation to the United States District Court of former Superior Court Chief Judge Harold H. Greene.

Born in 1935, Judge Wolf holds a master's degree in electrical engineering from Cornell University and received his LL.B. from Harvard Law School in 1962. After a clerkship with Judge Hart, he was a D.C. Assistant Corporation Counsel, a staff attorney with President Johnson's Commission on Crime in the District of Columbia, and then a senior research attorney with the Ford Foundation supported Institute of Criminal Law and Procedure at Georgetown University Law Center headed by Samuel Dash. In 1970 he opened his own law office. He had a varied civil and criminal practice in all Divisions of the Superior Court and in the appellate courts. He was one of ten court-appointed defense counsel in the 13-week Hanafi Black Muslim murder trial in 1974.

Judge Wolf's revised third-year honor paper at Harvard, analyzing the Fourth Amendment exclusionary rule in the wake of *Mapp v. Ohio*, decided by the Supreme Court in 1961, was published in the *George Washington Law Review*. In 1966, he wrote an article in the *ABA Journal* arguing that malapportioned state legislatures could not lawfully ratify the late Senator Everett Dirksen's proposed constitutional amendment allowing apportionment of one house of each state legislature on other than a one-person, one-vote basis. The article was quoted and printed in the Senate debate and helped defeat the proposed constitutional amendment. 112 *Congressional Record* 8383-87 (89th Cong., 2d Sess., April 19, 1966).

While with the Institute of Criminal Law, Judge Wolf was project director for evaluation of the Public Defender Service's Offender Rehabilitation Project. The report, *Rehabilitative Planning Services for the Criminal Defense*, was printed in 1970 for national distribution by the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. He also directed a compilation of community resources servicing criminal offenders.

Judge Wolf was very active in the organized bar. He was elected Chairman of the Young Lawyers Section of the voluntary Bar Association of the District of Columbia in 1970. During his tenure, he started the "Lawyers to Lorton" Program as a direct result of his participation in the weeklong District of Columbia Workshop on Crime and Corrections at Shenandoah College, Winchester, Virginia. He and other participants were "prisoners" at Lorton Reformatory for 24 hours. The "Lawyers to Lorton" Program won the ABA's national outstanding single project award

for 1970-71 and the D.C. Young Lawyers Section as a whole was voted the outstanding section in the nation that same year, for cities of comparable size, for its range and breadth of programs of benefit to the public and to the Bar.

In 1967-69 Judge Wolf chaired the inter-law school task force that succeeded, after two years' campaigning, in obtaining the necessary court rule changes to permit third year law students to represent indigents in the then Court of General Sessions Small Claims and Landlord-Tenant branches. The consortium approach used was unique at the time and \$93,000 in grant funds was obtained under his leadership to set up the D.C. Law Students in Court Program using students from all five area law schools. The Program is now a UGF/UBF Agency and handles hundreds of criminal cases as well. Judge Wolf later served for several years as the D.C. Unified Bar's representative on the Board of Directors of the Program. In 1999 he received the first annual Lever Award from the Program for his role in starting it.

Judge Wolf was elected Secretary of the D.C. Unified Bar when it was first established by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals in 1971. After serving in that capacity for two years he was elected to an additional three-year term on its Board of Governors and served on numerous Board Committees including Chairman of the 1977 Committee on the Adequacy of Enforcement of Ineffective Assistance of Counsel in Criminal Justice Act Cases. He was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Bar Association of the District of Columbia during the period 1971-1974.

He served as the D.C. Court of Appeals' representative on the City Council's Advisory Commission on Codification of the D.C. Code and the Code of Municipal Regulations. He also served as Vice Chairman of the D.C. Court of Appeals' Committee on Unauthorized Practice of Law.

As a member of the court, Judge Wolf chaired the Law Students in Court Committee, chaired the court's Training Conference in Fredericksburg, Va. in 1984, served for three years as a member of the court's first Training Committee, and served on the Criminal Justice Act Committee and the Technology Committee. In 1982 he produced a video "What to Expect in D.C. Small Claims Court" that was available for the public in the Small Claims Clerk's Office. In 1987 he wrote an article for *The Washington Lawyer*, the journal of the D.C. Bar, entitled "So What's It Like Being a Judge?" He was the first judge in the District of Columbia to order a summary jury trial in 1986. Judge Wolf wrote a Child Support Guidelines computer program utilized throughout the court and City of Washington for many years before the Guidelines were revised. He was a member of the Civil Delay Reduction Task Force that led to an individual calendar system for civil cases in Superior Court, which has become a model for the nation. He was appointed Deputy Presiding Judge of the Probate and Tax Division of Superior Court in 1992, and became Presiding Judge in 1993.

Judge Wolf took senior status at the end of his 15-year term in 1994. He continues to sit

eight to ten weeks per year, primarily in the Probate Division. He wrote another article for *The Washington Lawyer*, "Humor in the Court," published in October 2001. A monograph, "Advice for a Graduating Law Student: Eight Tips for Success Right out of Law School...And Beyond," appeared on the website for *The National Jurist*, a law student magazine, for over five years beginning in March 2002. Many of his writings mentioned above can be found on Judge Wolf's website [peterhwolf.wordpress.com](http://peterhwolf.wordpress.com).

He and his wife, Frances, have four grown children. Frances is a retired Presbyterian minister. Judge Wolf enjoys traveling, tennis, swimming, boating, and computers.