

## 2025 Presentation Ceremony

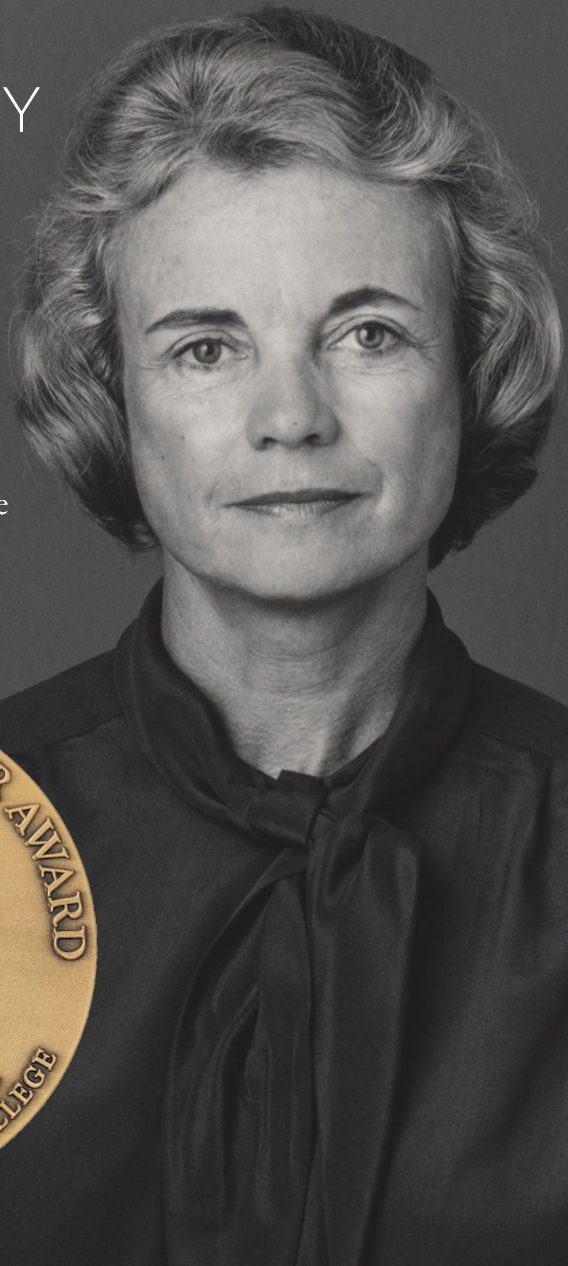
# JUSTICE SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR AWARD

**AJEI  
Summit**

Appellate Judges  
Education Institute

**Thursday, Nov. 13, 2025**

The Depot  
Minneapolis, Minnesota



# THIS EVENING'S PROGRAM

**6:00 PM** Reception

**6:45 PM** Award Ceremony

## WELCOME & INTRODUCTION OF HONOREE

**Hon. Mary-Margaret Anderson (Ret.)**

Chair, Board of Trustees, The National Judicial College

## ACCEPTANCE

**Hon. Mary R. Russell**

Judge, Supreme Court of Missouri



# HONOREE

**Hon. Mary R. Russell**

Judge, Supreme Court of Missouri

Judge Mary R. Russell was appointed to the Missouri Supreme Court in 2004 and has twice served as chief justice. She previously served as a judge on the Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, from 1995 to 2004 and as its chief judge from 1999 to 2000. A seventh-generation Missourian, she is one of five children raised on a dairy farm in Ralls County in northeast Missouri.

After graduating from Truman State University and the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law, Judge Russell returned to her hometown and entered private practice where she assisted neighbors, small businesses and the community with everyday legal issues.

Once on the bench, Judge Russell consistently searched for ways to educate and engage the general public on the role and importance of the courts. She started and expanded civics programs as well as initiatives aimed at increasing access to and improving transparency of the courts. As chief justice, she wrote monthly newspaper op-eds that explained different aspects of the court system and how judges approach cases.

The key to Judge Russell's success is simple: People. She has built lasting relationships with state legislators from both parties from rural communities and urban cities alike. Her special touch is literally "breaking bread" as a way to build relationships founded on common understanding. After several changes led to an increased workload for court staff, as chief justice she visited every jurisdiction in the state to listen to the concerns of court staff, and also thanked the court staff for their service. The efforts led to new laws being passed as well as new friendships.

Over the past two decades, the Missouri court system has become a model for innovation and civic education, thanks in large part to Judge Russell's efforts to unite the three branches of state government in support of the courts.

Thank you to our sponsors for supporting the  
Justice Sandra Day O'Connor Award.

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# Ivan & Sharon Fong



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## About The National Judicial College

Founded in 1963 and based on the campus of the University of Nevada, Reno since 1964, The National Judicial College remains the only educational institution in the United States that teaches courtroom skills to judges of all types from all over the country, Indian Country and abroad. The categories of judges served by the nonprofit and nonpartisan institution – trial and appellate, limited jurisdiction, administrative law, tribal and military – decide more than 95 percent of cases in the United States.



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