

JUDGE WILLIAM JAY RILEY

U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE EIGHTH CIRCUIT

William Jay Riley was born March 11, 1947, in Lincoln, Nebraska. He graduated from Lincoln High School in 1965 and attended the University of Nebraska, where he graduated with his bachelor's degree in 1969 and with his law degree, with distinction, in 1972. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Order of the Coif and was editor-in-chief of the *Nebraska Law Review*.

Following law school, he clerked for Judge Donald P. Lay of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit from 1972 to 1973.

Riley then began a 28-year career as a premier civil trial attorney



with Fitzgerald, Schorr, Barmettler & Brennan in Omaha, where he was a shareholder and headed the firm's trial department.

In 2001, he was nominated by President George W. Bush to succeed Judge C. Arlen Beam on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. He was unanimously confirmed by the Senate two months later and received his commission on August 3, 2001. He served as Chief Judge of the Eighth Circuit from April 1, 2010 until March 10, 2017, and assumed senior status on June 30, 2017.



U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, 2010. *Seated L-R:* Judges Diana E. Murphy, Roger L. Wollman, William Jay Riley (Chief), James B. Loken, Kermit E. Bye. *Standing L-R:* Judges Bobby E. Shepherd, Raymond W. Gruender, Lavenski R. Smith, Michael J. Melloy, Steven M. Colloton, Duane Benton.



Judge Riley accepting the gavel at his investiture as Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, April 7, 2010. *In background L-R:* Circuit Judge C. Arlen Beam (left), Nebraska's Chief Judge Joseph F. Bataillon, and Circuit Judge Bobby E. Shepherd.

Judge Riley served on the U.S. Judicial Conference as Chief Judge of the Eighth Circuit and was appointed to its Executive Committee. In addition, he was appointed by Chief Justice Rehnquist and reappointed by Chief Justice Roberts to serve on its Criminal Law Committee.



Judicial Conference of the United States, September 13, 2011. Chief Judge Riley (*front row, right end*) and EDMO Judge Rodney W. Sippel (*back row, center*) representing the Eighth Circuit.

Judge Riley is a fellow and past state chair with the American College of Trial Lawyers, a member and former state president of the American Board of Trial Advocates, and a counselor and charter member of the Robert M. Spire Inns of Court. He is a former president and executive council member of the Omaha Bar Association, House Delegate and former Ethics Committee chair with the Nebraska State Bar Association, and chair of the Federal Practice Committee for Nebraska. He is Board Certified in Civil Trial Advocacy by the National Board of Trial Advocacy and has been an adjunct professor in trial practice at Creighton University School of Law and in trial advocacy at the University of Nebraska College of Law.