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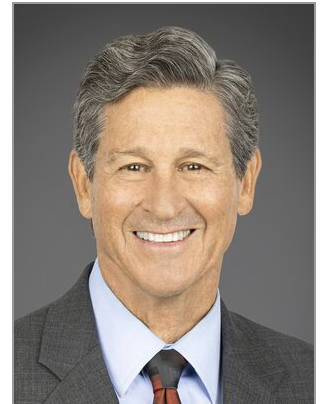
## Judicate West Adds Retired Superior Court Judge In Calif.

By **James Mills**

Law360 (October 20, 2023, 10:06 AM EDT) -- Alternative dispute resolution service Judicate West is expanding its roster of neutrals, bringing in a recently retired Riverside County Superior Court judge to act as a mediator.

John G. Evans is joining Judicate West after officially retiring as a judge in late September, the service announced this week. Evans served 15 years as a superior court judge and 29 years before that as a trial lawyer. Evans will be based out of the Santa Ana office and available throughout California to serve as a mediator, arbitrator and private judge.

In a Thursday afternoon interview, the 70-year-old Evans told Law360 it was time for him to retire from the bench, but he wasn't quite ready to leave the legal world entirely. Even before officially leaving the bench, he started putting out feelers at various dispute resolution centers.



John G. Evans

"I interviewed with several dispute resolution centers, including with Judicate West. I have a couple of really close friends who were also judges working here or just started working here," Evans said. "So, they got my foot in the door. I met with everyone and I just felt absolutely at home. It felt like a wonderful family. Everything clicked for me and I said, 'This is the family I want to be part of.'"

He was especially impressed by how organized Judicate West's staff is and how they plan to help spread the word about him becoming a mediator.

"I liked Judicate West's system, the technical side of it and the assistance that they offer," Evans said. "Based on my circumstances being in the Palm Springs-Indio area, I felt that I needed to get my face in front of the public. They offered me the best solution to get my face out there and let everybody know that I was going to start doing mediations."

Judicate West was founded in 1993 and now has over 100 neutrals in six locations in California. Alan Brutman, president and co-founder of Judicate West, thinks Evans will be "a terrific resource for our clients statewide."

"A seasoned judicial officer with more than 40 years of combined courtroom experience, Evans is as well respected as they come," Brutman said in a statement. "He has presided over a wide range of matters — about 250 combined jury and bench trials — and he has established a reputation as an honest, dependable, and professional trier of fact with a collection of settlement and dispute resolution skills."

Evans is the third judge to join Judicate West in the past six weeks. Linda S. Marks, formerly with the Orange County Superior Court, and Nita L. Stormes, formerly with the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, both joined as neutrals in September.

Evans, who was born in Virginia, earned his law degree in 1979 from Citrus Belt Law School, an evening law school in Riverside, California, known today as California Southern Law School. He earned his bachelor's degree in 1975 from the University of California, Riverside.

He worked with several smaller law firms including MacLachlan Burford & Arias LLP in San Bernardino, California. In 1996, he opened his own practice in Redlands, California, then moved his practice to the Coachella Valley in 1999.

Evans was appointed to the Riverside County Superior Court in 2008 by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. He presided over 68 civil jury trials, including matters involving employment, construction defects, negligence, insurance and contract disputes. Evans also served six years as a probate judge, overseeing trials involving guardianships, conservatorships and trust and decedent estate trials.

Since 2012, Evans has taught torts at the California Desert Trial Academy. He plans to continue teaching, while starting this new chapter of his life with Judicate West.

"This is the best of both worlds. I don't have to have an office. I don't have any overhead. They handle everything. I work when I want to work and if I don't want to work, I just block those dates out," Evans said. "This is absolutely the perfect thing for me to do in retirement."

--Editing by Alyssa Miller.

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