

Biographies of the Judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces

Chief Judge Kevin A. Ohlson

Chief Judge Ohlson was born and raised in Sterling, Massachusetts, and he attended Washington and Jefferson College on a four-year Army R.O.T.C. scholarship. While in college, Chief Judge Ohlson successfully completed Air Assault training with the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, served as the commander of the corps of cadets, and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Upon graduating from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1985, Chief Judge Ohlson attended the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's School. He then successfully completed Airborne training at Fort Benning, Georgia, and was placed on jump-status at his next duty assignment at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Chief Judge Ohlson parachuted more than 30 times and into three foreign countries: Honduras, Jordan, and Egypt.

While at Fort Bragg, Chief Judge Ohlson prosecuted a number of criminal cases, handled administrative law matters, and served as an Article 32 (UCMJ) Investigating Officer in a multiple rape and murder case where, at trial, the defendant was sentenced to death.

At the conclusion of his four-year tour of duty in December of 1989, Chief Judge Ohlson became a federal prosecutor in the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia. However, in October of 1990 he volunteered to return to active duty and deployed to Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm where he served as a legal advisor to the XVIII Airborne Corps Command Staff. Chief Judge Ohlson was awarded the Bronze Star for his service.

When he returned to the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia in 1991, Chief Judge Ohlson resumed his duties as a federal prosecutor. In 1992, Chief Judge Ohlson was appointed to serve as Special Counsel to the United States Attorney. In this capacity, Chief Judge Ohlson advised two consecutive United States Attorneys on legal and policy issues.

In 1997, Chief Judge Ohlson was appointed as Chief of Staff to the Deputy Attorney General. After four years in that position, Chief Judge Ohlson was appointed as a member of the Board of Immigration Appeals where he served in a judicial capacity deciding appeals in immigration cases. He later was appointed as the deputy director, and then the director,

of the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

In 2009, Chief Judge Ohlson was appointed as Chief of Staff and Counselor to the Attorney General. In this position, Chief Judge Ohlson advised the Attorney General on legal and policy issues, and handled operational issues affecting the Department of Justice. During this period, Chief Judge Ohlson received the Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award and the Edmund J. Randolph Award.

After stepping down as Chief of Staff and Counselor to the Attorney General in 2011, Chief Judge Ohlson became the chief of the newly-created Professional Misconduct Review Unit at the Department of Justice. That office is responsible for determining whether federal prosecutors have engaged in professional misconduct and, if so, the appropriate discipline to impose.

Chief Judge Ohlson was appointed by President Obama to the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces on November 1, 2013. He became Chief Judge on August 1, 2021.

Chief Judge Ohlson lives in Virginia with his wife, Dr. Carolyn Davis. They have two children, Matthew and Katherine.