

Hon. Thomas W Snook (Retired) C.V. Mediator

Mediator Arbitrator Maritime International Disputes

Snook Dispute Resolution

New York University

Miami/Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Returned to first love in law – maritime – as a Mediator and Arbitrator, after more than twenty years on the bench

Uniquely qualified to arbitrate or to assist parties in resolving maritime, international or other disputes through mediation.

Extensive experience in litigation, international negotiation, teaching and the judiciary. This is coupled with sea-going and marine inspection/investigation experience and an engineering and advanced international law degree.

Litigated or heard civil and criminal cases, at the trial and appellate level, and adversarial and non-adversarial cases ranging from the largest oil spill in United States history at the time to thousands of disability and even a few paternity cases, as a judge at Social Security.

Part of the delegation that negotiated the first United Nations high seas drift-net fishing ban, while assigned to the United States Mission to the United Nations, as an advisor on Law of the Sea matters.

Excelled academically from being president of high school National Honor Society to having an “out-standing academic record” in pursuing an LLM in international law at NYU.

Mentored at NYU by Nick Healy, the preeminent maritime lawyer. Taught “Governmental Regulation of Shipping and Commerce” in graduate maritime law program at Tulane.

Selected as Officer-in-Charge Coast Guard JAG school and Chief Trial Judge.

Requested by Congressional Oversight Committee to testify on reforming the disability system, while serving as a Social Security judge. Testimony led to a front page photograph and article in the Washington Post, concerning the largest backlog in the Government – the disability case backlog (presently over one million cases).

Lawyers would often ask me about becoming a judge with Social Security. My initial response was always the same: “If you like people, being on the bench is the best part of the job.”

I like people. I like helping people. I have helped thousands of people. I hope to help you.

Experience

- Mediator Arbitrator**

Company Name Snook Dispute Resolution

Dates Employed Sep 2016 – Present

Employment Duration 1 yr 2 mos

Location Miami/Fort Lauderdale Area

Florida Supreme Court Qualified Arbitrator

Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Civil Mediator

Specializing in maritime and international disputes. Well qualified to resolve environmental, construction, personal injury, labor, military and veteran related, or other disputes based on an engineering background with extensive litigation, judicial, Coast Guard, and leadership experience.



United States Administrative Law Judge

Company Name Social Security Administration

Dates Employed Mar 1997 – Jul 2016

Employment Duration 19 yrs 5 mos

Location Miami/Fort Lauderdale Area

Social Security hearings are all non-adversarial, a trait with some similarity to mediation. Although it is not uncommon to see a person drive by in a Maserati when walking in downtown, Miami has a large poor population. The Miami Herald reported "almost a third of preschoolers live in poverty." Most of the thousands of hearings I held over a twenty-year period involved claimants requesting disability hearings who were poor and uneducated. Many were immigrants from Cuba, other Latin American countries, or Haiti. Therefore, the majority of the cases I heard required an interpreter.

A vocational expert was required in almost every adult case and many times a medical expert was used. Most claimants were represented by counsel. I therefore have extensive experience obtaining testimony from witnesses using an interpreter and dealing with experts and counsel in hearings involving interpreters. In addition to disability cases (both adult and children), I heard cases involving excess resources (usually real property), overpayments and paternity cases.

Maritime Attorney

Company Name Hayden & Milliken

Dates Employed Aug 1994 – Feb 1997

Employment Duration 2 yrs 7 mos

Location Miami/Fort Lauderdale Area

Marine Insurance Defense firm. Designated by SKULD as their correspondent for all oil spills within the State of Florida. Represented cruise line owner at formal Coast Guard investigation of engine room fire off Bahama coast.



Staff Judge Advocate, Atlantic Area

Company Name U.S. Coast Guard

Dates Employed Aug 1991 – Sep 1993

Employment Duration 2 yrs 2 mos

Location Governors Island, New York

Staff Judge Advocate to two separate commands headed by Vice Admiral and Rear Admiral. Managed largest field legal office in the Coast Guard with over twenty civilian and military attorneys. Area of responsibility included the entire eastern United States. Separate from military awards, awarded Distinguished Service Award by the American Bar Association for relief work performed by office after Hurricane Andrew.

•



Political Advisor, Law of the Sea Advisor

Company Name Department of State, United States Mission to the United Nations

Dates Employed Aug 1989 – Aug 1991

Employment Duration 2 yrs 1 mo

Location Greater New York City Area

Coast Guard Representative to the United States Mission to the United Nations. Member of the Political Section at the Mission. Deputy Representative to the United Nations Special Political Committee which had jurisdiction over Law of the Sea, Peacekeeping and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Special advisor to the Ambassador on Law of the Sea matters. Member of delegation that drafted the first UN high seas drift-net fishing ban. Presented Superior Honor Award by Department of State for service at Mission during Desert Storm/Desert Shield.

•



Chief Trial Judge

Company Name U.S. Coast Guard

Dates Employed Jul 1987 – Jul 1989

Employment Duration 2 yrs 1 mo

Presided over the court-martial of the most senior Coast Guard officer ever court-martialed – Captain (O-6) with 28 years of service. Under the UCMJ Chief Judge cannot be assigned other duties without his or her express consent. Judge Advocate General of the Coast Guard personally requested that I serve as Investigating Officer of an EEO complaint filed by a JAG officer at the Coast Guard Pacific Area command involving a dozen JAG officers either as respondents or representatives, because the complainant had already successfully challenged two prior IOs. Completed the investigation after successfully overcoming a challenge by the complainant.

•

Adjunct Professor

Company Name Tulane University Law School

Dates Employed Aug 1983 – Jul 1988

Employment Duration 5 yrs

Location Greater New Orleans Area

Taught "Governmental Regulation of Shipping and Commerce" in the graduate maritime law program. Class consisted of 20-30 foreign and domestic law school graduates. Theme of course was to begin by comparing the admiralty clause and the commerce clause in the U.S. constitution and then discuss the various governmental entities a vessel would encounter coming into port from the high seas and returning to sea.

•



Trial Attorney, Admiralty and Shipping

Company Name United States Attorney's Office

Dates Employed Jul 1979 – Jul 1981

Employment Duration 2 yrs 1 mo

Location Washington D.C. Metro Area

Trial Attorney in the Admiralty and Shipping Section, Main Justice. Litigated mainly marine environmental cases including the largest oil spill in United States at the time - NEPCO 140 (\$14 million). Travelled extensively with focus on Eastern District of Louisiana. Practiced at both trial and appellate level. Several cases including U.S v M/V Big Sam are discussed in casebook on admiralty law.

Education

-



New York University

Degree Name Master of Laws (LLM)

Field Of Study International Legal Studies

Dates attended or expected graduation 1974 – 1977

Media (1)

This position has 1 media

-

Regarding "out-standing academic record."

Regarding "out-standing academic record."

This media is an image

-



Syracuse University College of Law

Degree Name Doctor of Law (J.D.)

Grade cum laude

Dates attended or expected graduation 1971 – 1974

Activities and Societies: Editor-in-Chief, Syracuse University Journal of International Law and Commerce, Justian Honor Society, Philip C.Jessup International Moot Court (National Semi-Finalist)

Selected for active duty post-graduate education in law by Coast Guard selection board. Allowed to attend law school in my hometown. Concentrated studies on International and Administrative law. In addition to being editor-in-chief of international law journal and international moot court national semi-finalist, received awards as outstanding student in Admiralty law and Conflicts of Law courses.

•

U S Coast Guard Academy

Degree Name Bachelor of Science (BS)

Field Of Study Engineering

Dates attended or expected graduation 1963 – 1967

Appointment to the Coast Guard Academy is by competitive examination. Was president of high school National Honor Society. Attended a technical high school. Studied chemistry for three years in high school. Continued to excel in chemistry at the Academy. Received award as outstanding student in chemistry.