



Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia

News

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Supreme Court Mourns Loss of Justice Tim Armstead

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CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia today mourns the loss of Justice Tim Armstead, who died Tuesday, Aug. 26, following a brief hospitalization. He was 60.

“Tim Armstead is a sterling example of the best of West Virginia,” said Chief Justice William R. “Bill” Wooton. “In an all-to-short life his public service accomplishments are legendary. He served 20 years in the House of Delegates and was selected by his colleagues to lead that institution as its Speaker. And he served seven years as a Justice of our Supreme Court, including two years as Chief Justice. His abilities, talents and character were recognized by his colleagues, his neighbors, and his fellow West Virginians. Tim was elected to the House of Delegates ten different times and was twice elected statewide to the Supreme Court of Appeals. Throughout a lengthy period of public service Tim Armstead never lost an election.

“His public service accomplishments pale in comparison in other areas of his life,” Chief Justice Wooton said. “He was a natural leader, who always led by example. Tim was thoughtful, highly intelligent, an extremely hard worker, and in every decision was guided by Christian principles. Without his ever saying anything, each of his Supreme Court colleagues looked to Tim’s example on thorny ethical issues. Likewise, his knowledge of state finances has been an invaluable resource to the West Virginia judicial system.

“Tim was a marvelous husband, father, grandfather, brother, neighbor, and colleague. And he was the nicest, most down-to-earth, unassuming person you could ever hope to meet,” Chief Justice Wooton said. “Everyone who knew Tim Armstead considered him a friend. His passing is a tragedy for the Supreme Court, but our loss is nothing compared to the loss suffered by his beloved wife Anna, his daughter Katie and his two adored grandchildren. They have our deepest sympathy.”

“Tim lived a life marked by integrity, servant leadership and unwavering faith, and his service on the Court reflected those values,” said Justice C. Haley Bunn. “He was appointed at a pivotal moment in the Court’s history and dedicated himself to restoring the public’s confidence in the judiciary and treating every person with dignity and grace. He viewed his role as a justice not as a position of power, but as a sacred responsibility to serve others. His legacy of faithful public

service will endure for generations. We grieve this profound loss of our colleague and friend, but we also give thanks for a life so well-lived.”

“With profound sadness we mourn the loss of Tim Armstead,” said Justice Charles S. Trump IV. “He leaves a legacy of dedicated and selfless service to the citizens of West Virginia. As Speaker of the West Virginia House of Delegates and as Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals, Tim Armstead’s work reflected his great integrity and love for West Virginia and her people. His leadership will be sorely missed here at the Court. Our condolences and prayers remain with his family.”

“As a recent addition to the Court, I was looking forward to working with Justice Armstead,” said Justice-appointee Tom Ewing. “In my limited interactions with him, I found him to be kind and a true gentleman. He was a man of faith, conviction, and integrity and the embodiment of public service. He will be greatly missed on the Court. I offer my prayers and condolences to his wife and family.”

Justice Armstead was appointed to the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia by Gov. Jim Justice and took office September 25, 2018. He was elected November 6, 2018, to retain the seat until the end of the term that ended December 31, 2020, and was re-elected on June 9, 2020, to a 12-year term that began January 1, 2021. He served as the Court’s chief justice in 2020 and 2024.

Born Feb. 26, 1965, in Charleston, Justice Armstead was a graduate of Braxton County High School, the University of Charleston and West Virginia University College of Law. He was a Knight of the Golden Horseshoe and a Judith A. Herdon Fellowship intern with the West Virginia Legislature.

Justice Armstead began his public service career as a press intern for Gov. Arch Moore from 1985 to 1988. He later worked as a law clerk for U.S. District Judge David A. Faber from 1991 to 1994 and as Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff of Gov. Cecil Underwood from 1997 to 1998. He served on the Governor’s Cabinet on Children and Families during the administration of Gov. Underwood and on the Board of the Elk River Community Council.

In September 1998, Gov. Underwood appointed Armstead to the House of Delegates to fill the seat vacated by the death of Delegate Dick Henderson. Armstead was then elected to the seat that November. In 2006, he became Minority Leader of the Republican caucus of the House of Delegates – succeeding former delegate and current Justice Charles S. Trump IV in that role – and in 2015 became Speaker of the House, a position he held until he resigned to seek a seat on the Supreme Court.

Throughout his public service, Armstead sought to strengthen transparency and ethical practices across government. That included sponsorship of [a series of reforms](#) to the state’s Ethics Act while in the Legislature. During his tenure as chief justice last year, he appointed an eight-member advisory committee to propose revisions to the Code of Judicial Conduct. That committee will bring its recommendations to the full Supreme Court for review later this year.

A fiscal conservative, Armstead consistently sought to control spending and more efficiently manage how government agencies spent public funds.

“Our new Supreme Court has worked hard to ensure that the judiciary’s budget sets the right priorities and spends the taxpayers’ hard-earned money more efficiently,” then-Chief Justice Armstead [said when presenting](#) the Supreme Court’s budget in 2020 – a budget that was \$4 million less than prior years’ budgets.

Justice Armstead also [worked to retain and recruit](#) attorneys to provide guardian ad litem services in child abuse and neglect cases – an area of critical need across the state. During his tenure as chief justice in 2024, he worked with officials at the West Virginia University College of Law, the State Bar, Public Defender Services and other agencies on ways to encourage law students and attorneys to serve as guardians ad litem.

A resident of Elkview, Justice Armstead also worked tirelessly to advocate for his community during his time in public service. Following the devastating flood in that region in 2016, as Speaker of the House [he sponsored the creation](#) of the Legislature’s Joint Legislative Committee on Flooding to investigate and propose reforms to mitigate flood damage and improve disaster response. As chief justice, he also took the Supreme Court’s Legal Advancement for West Virginia Students (LAWS) program to the new Herbert Hoover High School [in March 2024](#).

Justice Armstead is survived by his wife, Anna, their daughter, Katie and her husband Aaron Ferrari, a grandson and granddaughter.

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