



## **OUR COURT GRIEVES THE LOSS OF TWO SENIOR JUDGES IN JULY 2019**

This Court mourns the recent loss of two of its gifted, dedicated jurists who served the Court with distinction for decades. Judge William H. Walls passed away on July 11 at the age of 86, and former Chief Judge Jerome B. Simandle died on July 19 at the age of 70. Their passing leaves a large void in our Court and in our hearts. We are deeply saddened and indebted to them for the honor they bestowed upon this Court.

William H. Walls, born of modest roots in Atlantic City, attended Dartmouth College on scholarship. After earning his bachelor's degree there, he received his Juris Doctor from Yale Law School in 1957. Upon graduation, he worked first as a private attorney and then in Newark as a municipal judge and as a business administrator. When he was nominated by President Clinton to the federal bench in 1994, he became the first African-American male judge to sit in the District of New Jersey. On the bench, Judge Walls had little tolerance for political corruption, was known for doling out tough sentences in appropriate cases, and had tireless energy. Judge Walls had a well-deserved reputation for being sharp-witted, both on the bench and elsewhere, frequently dropping into the Newark Clerk's Office to exchange pleasantries. Judge Walls assumed senior status in 2005 and worked up until his death.

Jerome B. Simandle, born in Binghamton, New York, had a long legal career, which he fully devoted to public service. Judge Simandle earned his B.S. in engineering at Princeton University, graduating magna cum laude. While there, he worked for Ralph Nader's Center for Study of Responsive Law, studying aviation safety and regulation. After receiving his Juris Doctor from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Judge Simandle clerked for two years for former Chief Judge John F. Gerry. He then served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for five years. In 1983, Judge Simandle was appointed as magistrate judge in our Court at the age of 33, and when he became a district judge in 1992 at the age of 43, he was the youngest in the District of New Jersey. Judge Simandle served as Chief Judge of our District from 2012 to 2017, and skillfully managed our Court during a stressful period marked by numerous judicial vacancies and sequestration. He was a humble, gentle man, and although soft-spoken, Judge Simandle had a natural judicial temperament and easily commanded the respect of others. He was known for his eloquent writing and oration, being well-prepared and fair. Judge Simandle spent his entire judicial career in his beloved Camden federal court. Like Judge Walls, he diligently served this Court as a senior judge up until his untimely passing.