

Skadden's Commitment

An Interview with Stephen C. Robinson,
Partner, Litigation, Government Enforcement and
White Collar Crime, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

EDITORS' NOTE Prior to joining Skadden as a litigation and white collar crime partner in 2010, Stephen Robinson served as a federal judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. Judge Robinson just completed a term as a member of Skadden's Policy Committee, the firm's highest governing body, serves as co-chair of its global Diversity Committee, and is a member of the Skadden Fellowship Program Advisory Board.



Stephen C. Robinson

Judge Robinson's government experience also includes serving for three years as U.S. attorney for the District of Connecticut. In addition, he spent three years as principal deputy general counsel and special assistant to the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. From 1987 to 1991, Judge Robinson was an assistant U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York. In 1990, he received the Department of Justice's Director's Award for Superior Service.

Judge Robinson began his legal career in 1984 at a corporate law firm in New York City. Later, he served as associate general counsel and a managing director at Kroll Associates, and as chief compliance officer at Aetna U.S. Healthcare. Judge Robinson is a former Yale Law School senior research fellow; he has taught at Yale about white collar crime and trial advocacy and at Cardozo School of Law about appellate advocacy. He received his B.A. from Cornell University and his J.D. from Cornell Law School.

FIRM BRIEF Founded in 1948, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and affiliates (skadden.com) is widely considered one of the world's most highly respected law firms. Skadden has 22 offices, approximately 1,700 attorneys and more than 50 distinct areas of practice. The firm's clients include approximately 50 percent of the Fortune 250 industrial and service corporations, as well as financial and governmental entities, start-up companies, and nonprofits.

When you joined Skadden in 2010, what excited you about the firm and made you feel it would be the right fit?

When I was a judge, the Skadden lawyers who appeared before me always impressed me tremendously. Their court filings were well-written and thoughtful and consistently demonstrated their command of the complex

issues raised in each case. I was excited about the prospect of working alongside such high-caliber attorneys on clients' most challenging litigation and government enforcement issues, at a global firm committed to exceptional client service and collaboration. The firm's focus on public service and promoting diversity and inclusion both at the firm and throughout the profession also struck me. Since joining Skadden, I've had ample opportunity to lead and participate in many remarkable initiatives in these areas,

including its fellowship program for law school graduates pursuing public service, its paid internships for first-year law students, particularly those of diverse backgrounds, and a seminar for Skadden partners on cultivating talent and diversity through inclusive leadership.

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Was your experience in government an advantage in joining Skadden?

I gained a unique perspective from public and private sector positions I held during my 20-plus years prior to joining Skadden. I think these experiences made me particularly qualified to handle high-profile government enforcement and investigations matters, because I've held every role (from investigator to prosecutor to judge) in these types of proceedings and have firsthand knowledge of how these situations unfold. Since making the transition from federal judge to a partner at Skadden, I often have drawn upon my prior experience when advising clients on their most high-stakes and challenging matters. In recent years, for example,

we have obtained non-prosecution agreements for Swiss banks participating in the DOJ's Swiss bank program; served as lead litigation counsel for Toyota Motor Corp. and Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. in defense of individual and class action lawsuits in federal and state courts arising from purported incidents of unintended acceleration; and overseen an independent review of Rutgers University's handling of issues leading up to the dismissal of its head basketball coach.

As you mentioned earlier, Skadden is focused strongly on diversity. How is having a diverse workforce at Skadden critical to serving your clients?

Developing and maintaining a diverse and inclusive workforce both within Skadden and in the broader legal community is a priority of ours. We strongly believe that a diversity of experiences, knowledge, and skills facilitates innovation, and we encourage our lawyers to bring their individual skills and unique perspectives to the table when serving clients. It goes without saying that the global community is increasingly interconnected. Cultural competency helps us provide clients with advice that facilitates their worldwide business objectives.

Skadden also has been focused on preparing students from underrepresented groups for success. Will you talk about the vision of the Skadden, Arps Honors Program in partnership with the City College of New York?

I'm proud to be on the board of CCNY's – Joe Flom's alma mater – Colin Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership, and to be a facilitator for the Skadden, Arps Honors Program in legal studies at CCNY. The program was founded in 2008 with the goal of helping to increase the number of law students from low-income, underrepresented racial backgrounds by guiding them through the process of applying for and preparing for law school. A select group of juniors and seniors attend a two-year schedule of courses, have an opportunity to build meaningful relationships with Skadden lawyers, and receive individualized tutoring in writing and assistance with LSAT preparations. Program participants are able to apply for summer internships at a variety of legal employers, including Skadden. More than 150 students to date have received the program's full benefits – over 60 are now in or have graduated from law schools including Yale, UPenn, NYU, Fordham, and others. ●