

October 28, 2011

Former D.C. Magistrate Arlene Robinson, 72, Was 'Tireless Advocate'

Former D.C. Superior Court Magistrate Judge Arlene Robinson, 72, died Oct. 26 at the Washington Hospice in the District.

Robinson was appointed to Superior Court in 1994 and chaired the court's Mental Health Commission, which determines whether mentally ill people meet the criteria for commitment to the mental health system, according to a D.C. Superior Court press release.

"Arlene was a quiet, forceful and tireless advocate for children, families and vulnerable adults as an attorney, as a magistrate judge and as a long-time resident of Washington," said D.C. Superior Court Chief Judge Lee F. Satterfield in the release. "Her work transformed the way that the most vulnerable in the District experience justice."

Robinson retired in 2002. From 2006-2010, she served as acting chair to the District of Columbia Board of Social Work. She also served as an independent contractor for the Justice Department's Public Safety Officers Benefits Program. She was diagnosed with gall bladder cancer in August 2010, according to the release.

Prior to her service as Superior Court magistrate, Robinson was in the Peace Corps, taught at the University of the District of Columbia, worked in the D.C. Office of Corporation Counsel and was a founding member of the District of Columbia's Safe Shores Children's Advocacy Center, according the release. She earned her J.D. from Howard University School of Law.

Robinson is survived by her husband of 44 years, William; her two daughters, Anne Elizabeth Robinson of New York, NY, and Cynthia Robinson-Rivers of Washington, DC, and her son, Reginald Robinson of Washington, DC; her four grandchildren; and two sisters and one brother.

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