



# JUDICIARY OF GUAM

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 18, 2021

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### **JUDICIARY OF GUAM MOURNS THE PASSING OF RETIRED SENIOR JUDGE PRO TEMPORE RICHARD H. BENSON**

The Judiciary of Guam mourns the passing of former Senior Jurist Pro Tempore for the Superior and Supreme Courts of Guam, the Honorable Richard Hugh Benson. Judge Benson passed away in the early morning of November 17, 2021.

Benson, a 2012 recipient of the Judiciary of Guam's Hustisia Award, made outstanding contributions to strengthening the rule of law throughout our island community during his storied tenure as a judge.

For more than 40 years, he presided over cases throughout the Pacific, establishing a legacy built upon his particular attention to island custom and culture. "If humility were the measure of a man, Judge Benson would be a giant among us," his peers in the Judicial Council of Guam said of him when he was named the recipient of the 2012 Hustisia Award.

A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Benson served for a decade in the U.S. Navy before obtaining his Juris Doctor from the University of Michigan Law School in 1956. In 1970, he was appointed to the Island Court by Governor Carlos G. Camacho, to the newly formed Superior Court of Guam in 1974, and retained by the people of Guam by popular election in 1978. He resigned from this position in 1981 to begin serving as the first Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the Federated States of Micronesia, having notably been appointed by the FSM's first President, Tosiwo Nakayama. He served in that capacity for two decades before retiring from this position in 2001.

From 2001 onward, Judge Benson continued serving the people of Guam as Senior Judge Pro Tempore for the Superior Court of Guam and Senior Justice Pro Tempore for the Supreme Court of Guam. During this era, he also dedicated much of his work toward peaceful conflict resolution through mediation for domestic and civil disputes through the nonprofit organization Inafa' Maolek. He also continued to serve as a temporary justice on appeals and trial matters for the courts of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the FSM Supreme Court.

Within the legal community of our entire region, he was known for being a gentleman, a learned jurist, and a peacemaker. His dignity on the bench will remain legendary. His dedication to the administration of justice, his brilliance, and his geniality will be sorely missed.

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