

Simeon R. Acoba

Associate Justice Simeon Acoba, Jr., (ret.) (B.A. '66 Manoa) was appointed to the Supreme Court of Hawaii in May 2000. He served until his mandatory retirement age in 2014. Prior to his appointment to the Supreme Court, he was an associate judge on the Intermediate Court of Appeals from 1994 to 2000, a circuit court judge from 1980 to 1994, and a per diem district court judge from 1979 to 1980.

Acoba is currently a lecturer at the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He is a member of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents, having been appointed as a regent from October 2014 to June 30, 2017, to serve the remaining term of a regent who had resigned in 2014. He currently serves on the academic and student affairs committee, the intercollegiate athletics committee, the budget and finance committee, and is a director on the board of the University Clinical Education and Research Associates, a separate non-profit corporation that is affiliated with the University medical school.

Acoba started his career as a law clerk to Chief Justice William Richardson of the Hawaii Supreme Court, and was a special assistant to UH President Harlan Cleveland. He then served as a deputy attorney general, and later was engaged in the private practice of law. During his practice, he also served as a special deputy attorney general for the Hawaii division of occupational safety and health; the campaign spending commission; and the Hawaii public utilities division; a Hawaii State House of Representatives majority attorney; and an adjunct professor at the Richardson School of Law.

He was the founding chair of the Hawaii Access to Justice Commission, a 22-member board with representatives from the three branches of government and other legally related entities, from 2008 to 2010 and was again appointed Chair of the Commission by the Chief Justice in 2016. Appointed by the President of the Bar, Acoba is co-chair of the Hawaii State Bar's Judicial Administration Committee that is composed of judges and attorneys. He also serves as a director on the boards of the Hawaii Justice Foundation and of the Mediation Center of the Pacific.

Acoba is the 2013 recipient of the national Dwight D. Opperman Award for Judicial Excellence from the American Judicature Society, the Distinguished Service Award from the Honolulu Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Filipino Community (FilCom) Center, the Golden Gavel Award and the President's Award from the Hawaii State Bar Association, the Fellow of the Pacific Award from Hawaii Pacific University and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the UH Founders Alumni Association. He and his wife Carolyn have three children and two grandchildren.