

Shannon named Sault Tribe Chief Judge

Patrick M. Shannon, JD, EdD, MPH, was recently welcomed by the Sault Tribe's Chippewa Tribal Court as its new chief judge.

He began working with Michigan tribal communities in August 1980 on the landmark fishing case *U.S. v. Michigan*, which resulted in the official recognition of tribes' inherent ability to regulate themselves and have their own courts.

"Wade Teeple called me from the Bay Mills Tribal Community and wanted to know if I would be their prosecutor because they were in the midst of litigation with the state and others, and I was running for the county prosecutor at the time, and I thought yeah, ok."

He was elected county prosecutor of Michigan's Chippewa County for five terms while also working as a prosecutor for different tribal courts. "I was elected county prosecutor and was a tribal prosecutor and testified in one hearing in *U.S. v. Michigan* in front of federal Judge Noel Fox. That's how it started. It was about sovereignty and the ability to self-regulate," he said.

On May 7, 1979, Judge Fox affirmed the treaty-guaranteed fishing rights of three Michigan tribes: Sault Tribe, Bay Mills Indian Community and Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. Shannon said, "We are unique here in this county – why do they call it Chippewa? You have the feds, the Canadian authorities, tribal, state, and county — there isn't another jurisdiction like this where you have this overlap. A lot of the things that were developed statewide were developed here."

Shannon served as a judge for the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe of Michigan from 1999 until 2022. He holds his Juris Doctorate from the University of Detroit School of Law, bachelors in business and a doctorate in education from Central Michigan University, and master in public health from the University of Michigan.

Shannon also served as a special assistant United States attorney and was elected as the president of the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan in 1992. Currently, Shannon serves as a board member of the Michigan Association of Treatment Court Professionals and is the former chair of the Mackinac Straits Health System and a former member of the American Hospital Association Governance Committee.

He and his wife Mary Anne Shannon RN, MSN, Ph.D. reside in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. They have two grown sons, Thomas and James. After retiring in 2022 and returning home to the Sault, Shannon said he realized he missed his friends and colleagues.

"We had an apartment in Mt. Pleasant and I was sitting on the couch watching Drew Barrymore and I'm asking myself, what's happening to me! I'm taking advice from Drew Barrymore!"

Shortly after that, he received a call from Judge Allie Maldonado saying they needed a prosecutor in Petoskey. "I was their first prosecutor in 1994 and the first prosecutor for the Grand Traverse Band. So, I accepted that job and was there almost three years and just left there to come here," he said. "My family said it was time to come home."