

Judge Ben Braun is a widely-respected, experienced judge with over thirty-two years of experience in the law.

Judge Braun has served Will County as an Associate Judge for twelve years. During that time, he has presided over more than one hundred criminal jury trials, hundreds of bench trials, and thousands of hearings in nearly every division of the courthouse. Judge Braun has earned a reputation as one of the state's most versatile and productive judges, and as a result was designated by the Illinois Supreme Court's Education Committee to teach other judges how to better run a courtroom and conduct trials. He was also selected to mentor judges to help improve their performance.

Judge Braun earns among the highest ratings of all Will County Judges. In the most recent retention bar poll in 2015, Judge Braun earned the highest legal ability rating among the county's twenty associate judges. He earned the highest ratings of all six Will County judicial candidates in the 2018 Illinois State Bar Association Judicial Advisory Poll, which measured important standards like integrity, impartiality, and legal ability.

Judge Braun practiced law in Will County for nineteen years before beginning his service as a judge. After passing the Illinois Bar in May of 1987, he began his career at the respected Joliet firm of Stefanich, McGarry, Wols & Okrei, where he was exposed to many different areas of law. This breadth of experience has made him a versatile judge and one of the few current Will County judges who tried a significant number of jury cases on both the civil and criminal sides, with substantial experience in the appellate courts as well. After six years he became a partner in the firm, and he remained there until 2000, when he built his own successful legal practice.

Judge Braun has been recognized for his tireless service to Will County, his home for over twenty-eight years. He served as Board President of Lifeworks, a not-for-profit drug and alcohol treatment center focused on addressing opioid addiction in Will County. He served on the board of Will County Legal Assistance, a not-for-profit providing legal assistance and counseling for low-income litigants, earning their Pro Bono Attorney of the Year award.

A cancer survivor, Judge Braun lives every day grateful for the opportunity to serve his community. He has presented programs to over ten thousand students over the past decade, including educating teens on the consequences of underage drinking, drug use, and underage sexual encounters. He has been a member and officer of the Joliet Kiwanis Club. He served on the board of his religious congregation for ten years, including serving as vice president of the organization for four years. He coached youth baseball for seven years. He is a member of the Will County Bar Association and the Illinois Judges Association, and he ran the Will County Bar Association's Family Law Committee for five years.

The son of depression-era parents who persevered through tough times and always worked multiple jobs, Judge Braun learned the value of hard work. He earned his way through high school and college, working a variety of jobs including driving an ice cream truck, which while a college student led to managing a fleet of trucks throughout the south suburbs and Will County and eventually overseeing terminals in three states. A graduate of the University of Illinois, Judge Braun earned his law degree from Stetson University College of Law.

Judge Braun and his wife, Wendy, a human resources professional, will be celebrating their twenty-fifth anniversary next year. They have two children, Brooke and Ryan, both Lincoln-Way East High School graduates, and now college students at Ball State University and Tulane University, respectively. The family resides in Frankfort with their two dogs, Cooper and Maddie.