

Colin J. Witt Memorial

IJA Meeting

6/23/2022

Polk County District Associate Judge Colin J. Witt, of Des Moines, IA, was born on September 10, 1974, in Colorado Springs, CO, to John and Linda Witt. Judge Witt left us far too soon on Sunday, February 23, 2020, following a courageous 19-month battle with Diffuse Large B-Cell Lymphoma. He was 45.

Colin was united in marriage with Jennifer Lofdahl in his parent's backyard in Newton, IA on July 19, 1997. They have one son, Abram. Colin was humble about most of his accomplishments, but very proud of his almost 23 years of marriage to the love of his life and being Abram's father. Colin is survived by his wife, son and parents, sister Kristen (Gearhart) and brother-in-law Ryan and sister Kari (Bricker) and brother-in-law Terry and many other loved ones, friends, and valued colleagues.

Colin grew up in Tempe, AZ, Omaha, NE, and Cincinnati, OH as his dad worked in sales for Maytag. They returned to his family's home state and settled in Newton, IA his sophomore year where he graduated high school in 1992. Colin graduated with honors from the University of Iowa with an English and Political Science Degree in 1996. He then earned his JD from the University of Iowa College of Law in 1999, with distinction. While there he was Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Corporation Law.

Judge Witt served as Law Clerk to Federal Judge Ronald E. Longstaff, in Des Moines before joining the Ahlers Cooney Law Firm in 2002. He was appointed part-time Magistrate for Polk County in 2005. In 2006, he was appointed to the District Associate bench where he chose to serve full time in Polk County Juvenile Court for the duration of his career.

Throughout his judicial career, Colin was dedicated to improving the state of child welfare and ensuring the rights of families. He served on the Iowa Children's Justice Advisory Committee and was a member of the Iowa Juvenile

Court Rules Committee. In this work, he led training for other judges on improving juvenile court practice. He mentored countless attorneys, social workers, and juvenile court officers. He also provided special support and encouragement to law students who were preparing to work in juvenile court. He was a proud member of the National Association of Counsel for Children.

Judge Witt dedicated himself to humbly edifying those around him; shepherding, mentoring and teaching. He loved the outdoors, running, biking and swimming; competing in numerous triathlons, marathons and Ironmans. He rode RAGBRAI with his sisters, brothers-in-law and friends on Team 2Rad. He was an avid Hawkeye fan and especially enjoyed Iowa basketball and football. Autumn Saturdays were usually spent at University of Iowa's Kinnick Stadium cheering for the home team.

Reading, fellowship with friends, and being actively present with his family were among his favorite things to do. Colin lived his life all in. He was a joyful and faithful servant, a man of steadfast faith and integrity. He sought opportunities to be a friend to others and lend a hand.

Judge Witt believed that each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done. Colin had the ability to hold power and tenderness in the same breath; always seeking to see the other and lead with understanding, mercy, and justice. He believed in the power of community. He will be remembered for his kindness, generous spirit, humility, work ethic, keen intellect, and fairness.

Judge Colin Witt was a "judge's judge". Those of us who had the privilege of knowing him and learning from him will forever be inspired to reach beyond our grasps to emulate him.

Mr. President, I ask that this memorial be accepted and placed on the permanent record of the Iowa Judges Association and that a copy of this memorial be provided to Judge Witt's family.