

Chuck Blanchard

1980 winner



Chuck graduated from Lewis & Clark College, and made a change in direction. He attended Harvard University, where he earned a law degree and a masters in public policy degree in 1985. He graduated first in his class at Harvard Law School. Following Harvard, he moved to Washington, D.C. where he served as a law clerk to Judge Harry Edwards on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, and Justice Sandra Day O’Conner on the U.S. Supreme Court.

Following his clerkships, Chuck has had a career split between private law practice and public service. After a stint as a prosecutor with the Office of Independent Counsel Jim McKay, Chuck started his private practice career in Phoenix, Arizona at the law firm of Brown & Bain, which later merged with Perkins Coie. In 1990, he was elected to the Arizona State Senate, where he served two terms. He was Chairman of the Judiciary Committee and Vice Chairman of the Environment Committee during his first term when the Democrats were in the majority. While in Arizona, Chuck was also one of the founders of the Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project, a legal assistance project serving persons in detention facing deportation.

Following an unsuccessful run for Congress in 1994, Chuck moved to Washington, where he served in two positions in the Clinton Administration. He was Chief Counsel to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy from 1997 to 1999. He was nominated to be General Counsel of the Army by President Clinton in 1999, and after his confirmation by the Senate, he served in this position from 1999 to 2001.

Chuck then returned to Phoenix, where he was a partner at Perkins Coie, where he handled antitrust, litigation and election law matters. He took a brief leave of absence to serve as Interim Homeland Security Director for Governor Janet Napolitano in 2003. After the election of President Obama, Chuck moved back to Washington to serve as General Counsel of the Air Force, a position he held from 2009 to 2014.

Chuck is now a partner at the Washington, D.C. law firm of Arnold & Porter, where he handles a variety of national security and government contract matters. He is also on the Board of Trustees of the Aerospace Corporation, a federally funded research and development corporation that focuses on space issues for the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community. He is also active in the firm's pro bono program, including representation of a detainee at Guantanamo.

Chuck is married to Allison, and they have a teenage son. As a family they enjoy travel, with a trip to Morocco coming up soon.