

Luis Rovira ('50) Former Colorado Chief Justice Luis Rovira was born in Puerto Rico, raised in New York City, and entered CU Law School in 1942. His education at CU was interrupted by World War II, during which he served in the European theater of operations, rising to the rank of Army lieutenant. When he returned to CU in 1946, he served as president of the student body and led student efforts to racially integrate Boulder businesses. From 1951 to 1975 he served as a U.S. major in the Judge Advocate General Corps of the U.S. Air Force Reserves.

After receiving his law degree in 1950, Rovira practiced in Denver for 25 years, including at Akolt, Campbell, Turnquist & Shepherd, where he established his expertise in the fields of public utilities regulation and oil and gas law. During the 1950s he was appointed to a team of 11 lawyers to defend, pro bono, a group of seven Communists indicted for conspiracy under the Smith Act. The case drew national attention.

In 1976, Rovira was appointed to the Denver District Court, and three years later was elevated to the Colorado Supreme Court. In 1990 he was elected by his fellow justices to serve as the chief justice. His longtime friend and colleague, Court of Appeals Judge Robert J. Kapelke ('66), described Justice Rovira as "intelligent, wise, and compassionate."

Justice Rovira has always been an active bar member and has served on numerous committees. He was president of the Denver Bar Association from 1970 to 1971 and was a member of the Colorado Bar Association Board of Governors from 1955 to 1958 and

from 1969 to 1971. He was also an active member of the American Bar Association, the American Arbitration Association, the American Judicature Society, and the International Society of Barristers. He is well-known for his tireless dedication to serving a vast number of mental health and disability organizations. Since his recent retirement from the bench, Rovira joined the Judicial Arbitrator Group.

Justice Rovira has been recognized extensively by CU, the Law School, the legal profession, and the community. He received the CU Alumni Recognition Award in 1963, the Denver Area Labor Federation/AFL-CIO's Outstanding Citizen Award in 1976, the Law School's Honorary Order of the Coif in 1981, the Legal Center of Denver Award in 1985, the CU Distinguished Service Award in 1987, CU's Distinguished Alumni Award in 1990, and the William Lee Knous Award in 1993, which is the Law School's highest award.

Behind this man is his wife, Lois Ann, of whom he is quite proud. Lois Ann is a graduate of Rutgers University, a former teacher, and is interested in politics and social, economic, and legal issues.



Luis Rovira with his wife, Lois Ann