

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS \* OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS**



**Chief Judge Cornelius R. “Neil” Alexander, Jr.**

Chief Judge Alexander was a highly regarded public servant who committed his life to fighting discrimination. Thus, unsurprisingly, he served in his capacity for twenty (20) years, before his untimely death in 2007.

Chief Judge Alexander was, perhaps, best known for his groundbreaking 2001 decision in *Roland Pool and Michael Geller v. Boy Scouts of America*, a case that centered around a discriminatory policy of the National Boy Scouts of America’s (“Boy Scouts”) that prevented gay individuals from becoming members. Specifically, Chief Judge Alexander and the D.C. Commission on Human Rights ruled that the Boy Scouts’ membership policy violated the District of Columbia Human Rights Act, and two gay men were reinstated to their leadership positions.

In a Metro Weekly article memorializing Chief Judge Alexander’s remarkable life and career, his longtime friend remarked: “[Neil] loved fighting for social justice. He dedicated his whole career to fighting discrimination in Washington and in the gay community. Neil was fighting for what’s right...”

Chief Judge Alexander earned a bachelor’s degree from Howard University and his Juris Doctor degree from Rutgers University School of Law. He worked as a staff attorney at the Federal Trade Commission and an Attorney Advisor at the District’s former Office of Personnel before assuming his role at the Commission.

An avid volunteer, Chief Judge Alexander served as President of the Maryland and District of Columbia Association of Administrative Adjudicators, even co-chairing the National Association of Administrative Law Judiciary’s annual conference shortly before his death. Chief Judge Alexander was also a well-known leader within the LGBTQ+ community and served as a board member on several local and national boards including the former Center for GLBT in Metro DC.

After his death, the Commission created the Cornelius R. “Neil” Alexander Humanitarian Award, an award that honors individuals who, among other things, contribute greatly to human and/or civil rights efforts. The Award is given out each year at the Commission’s Annual Award Ceremony.