

1966

Dr. Lois (Downs) McBride

Class of 1904

Judge Lois McBride, a native of Mercer, Pa., was appointed by Gov. Gifford Pinchot to the Allegheny County Domestic Relations Court in 1931. In 1935, voters in Allegheny County elected her to her first of two 10-year terms on the bench. She retired in 1961 after 30 years of domestic relations experience.

After 1958, McBride handled the 'desertion and non-support' branch of the Domestic Relations Court. She was the first judge to devote full-time efforts to the domestic matters springing from divorce and legal separation. Prior to that time, desertion and non-support cases were rotated among county judges.

Prior to her law career, she founded and served as first president of the Women's Political Educational Association, an organization designed to educate women in their civic rights, duties and obligations as voting citizens. Following World War I, she drew upon her training as a social worker to instruct women in various phases of welfare work through the YWCA. After World War II, McBride served as chief of the U.S. Citizens' Service Corps, in charge of the Victory Gardens drive for the Allegheny County Council of Defense. She was a member of the Allegheny County and Pennsylvania Bar Associations, the American Judicature Society and the National Association of Women Lawyers.

She passed away.

Additional degrees: Law degree, University of Pittsburgh; Honorary Doctor of Laws, Grove City College

