

## Law alum called ideal appellate choice

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President Barack Obama nominated Luis Felipe Restrepo, a Tulane Law School alumnus, to the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. (Photo from the Temple University James E. Beasley School of Law)

If anyone has the credentials and temperament for the federal bench, it's Judge Luis Felipe Restrepo, say lawyers who've known and worked with him.

President Barack Obama nominated Restrepo, a 1986 [Tulane Law School](#) raduate, to the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Nov. 12. He has been a U.S. district judge since June 2013 and served as a U.S. magistrate judge in Pennsylvania's Eastern District for seven years before that. The Philadelphia-based 3rd Circuit Court covers Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey and the Virgin Islands.

"I don't know a more ethical, more moral, more kind person in the whole world," said New Orleans attorney Tony Gelderman, a friend since their Tulane Law School days. "He's an exceptional human being."

Born in Colombia, Restrepo was 2 when his family moved to the United States, and he grew up in the Washington, D.C., area. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1981 and later taught at Penn and Temple University law schools as an adjunct professor..

"Phil is a widely respected member of the Philadelphia legal community and a distinguished Tulane alumnus," said Tulane University President Michael Fitts, who spent 14 years as law school dean at Penn. "He has developed an excellent reputation over the years, and he will be a great addition to the federal appellate bench. Phil is also just a warm and engaging guy."

After graduating from Tulane, Restrepo became a public defender in Pennsylvania. Later, he started a two-partner firm where he practiced criminal defense.

Friends described him as good-natured and unassuming, idealistic but also street-smart, even-tempered, an engaged listener and a devoted family man.

"He's just a natural leader. He's the right person to be a judge," said Ann Gorton Boyd, a 1986 Tulane Law School graduate and an attorney-adviser in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission general counsel's office.

Restrepo faces a Senate confirmation hearing and vote. He was confirmed to the district bench without opposition.

*Linda P. Campbell is Tulane Law School's director of communication.*

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