

275 Sandra

Sandra Day O'Connor broke barriers. Sandra Day grew up on a cattle ranch in Arizona; at 10 she could brand a calf and fire a rifle. She graduated from Stanford University Law School in 1952, near the top of her class. No law firm would interview her.

O'Connor spent decades working in the Arizona State Senate, state superior court, and court of appeals. In 1981 she became the first woman appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court in its 200-year history.

Considered a moderate conservative, Justice O'Connor also proved herself to be an advocate for women's rights. She wrote the majority opinion in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, which upheld the court's earlier abortion rights decision, in *Roe v. Wade*, despite intense pressure from Republicans.

O'Connor is also remembered for voting in favor of ending the Florida recount of votes in the contested 2000 presidential race (*Bush v. Gore*), though she later questioned the Court's decision to take the case.

“ . . . Each one of us will be a leader at some time in our lives. Whether we lead a family, a group of friends, a larger group, or a major segment of society, each of us will act in ways to influence others.” Sandra Day O'Connor, *The Majesty of the Law*, 2003