

In Memoriam - James T. Williams, Jr. (July 21, 1940 - September 3, 2018)

September 5, 2018



It is with great sorrow that Brooks Pierce announces the passing of our valued partner, trusted friend and mentor, Jim Williams. During Jim's 52 years at Brooks Pierce, he earned the reputation of always being a fair, honest and respectable advocate and a keen litigation strategist. Opponents liked him, judges respected him and juries adored him.

Brooks Pierce had just 11 attorneys when Jim joined the firm after graduating from Wake Forest University School of Law in 1966. He focused much of his career on business litigation, with a special emphasis on representing accounting firms on issues related to professional liability. He led our firm's litigation practice, which grew in size and stature throughout Jim's 52 years of practice. Jim represented our clients in cases that gained national attention, such as *Helen B. Teague, et al. v. Jim Bakker, et al.* (PTL "Lifetime Partnership" litigation), *Burlington Industries v. Edelman, et al.* (takeover/securities litigation), *In re Pedestrian Walkway Failure v. Tindall Corporation* (Lowe's Motor Speedway Pedestrian Bridge Failure), and *Longman, et. al v. Food Lion, Inc.* (shareholder/securities fraud litigation).

Jim's passion for his work and dedication to our clients won him many accolades, including both the James B. McMillan Distinguished Service Award, the highest award bestowed by the North Carolina State Bar, and the Advocate's Award, given by the North Carolina Bar Association's Litigation Section in recognition of leaders in the profession. He was a member of the prestigious American College of Trial Lawyers, for which he served as the North Carolina State Committee chair from 2002 to 2004. He was consistently listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® guide, earning the designation of Greensboro Bet-the-Company Litigation "Lawyer of the Year" for 2013 and 2009. He was listed in *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business* from 2004 to 2018 and *North Carolina Super Lawyers* listed him among the top ten lawyers in North Carolina from 2006 to 2009 and 2011 to 2013. *Business North Carolina* named him to the "Legal Elite" Hall of Fame for Litigation in 2002.

Throughout his career, Jim held leadership roles, formal and informal, within the firm. He served on the Brooks Pierce management committee from 1981 to 2010, including 14 years as chair. He was a mentor to many of our attorneys, instilling the same passion for the law and dedication to our clients that were the trademark of Jim's career. He was

known for his generosity, both with his time and his money, and his desire to ensure everyone was treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

Jim was active in the community throughout his career. He served on the Greensboro Board of Education from 1984 to 1988. In 2004, he was elected to the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro Board of Directors. He served as its chair from 2008-2009. He also served twice on the board of trustees of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (1997 to 2001 and 2006 to 2010). From 2009 to 2012, he served on the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Jim was deeply committed to Wake Forest University, where he played football as an undergraduate on an athletic scholarship before attending law school. His leadership roles with Wake Forest University included his membership on the alumni council, the School of Law board of visitors, the University board of visitors, the Baptist Medical Center Comprehensive Cancer Center board of visitors, and the board of trustees (2002 to 2012). He served as chair of the Wake Forest University board of trustees from 2009 to 2012.

We know that Jim's loss is felt by many, both inside and outside the firm. Our thoughts are with his family and all who loved him, as well as the many people whose lives he touched.