

## Outstanding Alumni: Mr. William M. (Bill) Lawrence '85



**What advice would you give students as they prepare for college and the challenges of our world today?** Find a curriculum and pursue a career that genuinely interests you, so that you will be motivated to study, work hard, and excel. Careers require more time and dedication than one can imagine while in high school, and life passes too quickly to be trapped in a non-rewarding career.

**How did attending Anniston Academy / The Donoho School make a difference in your life or your education?** *Educational difference* - Donoho's challenging academic environment prepared me well for the academic rigors of college and law school. For example, in law school, students earned each class grade based solely upon their score on one comprehensive final examination, which covered an entire semester's material, without the aid of any other grading factors. During my first semester of law school, I recall thinking how Ann Boozer's English Literature class prepared me well for the voluminous reading law school required; and, following my first semester exams, I recall thinking how the voluminous material Redge Thagard had required us to study for 12th grade history exam prepared me well to digest significant amounts of study materials. *Life difference* - I met my wife Karen in 1980 when she transferred to Donoho at the beginning of our eighth grade year. She asked me to the Junior/Senior Dance our junior year. We have known each other for 39 years, been married for 28 years, and have two smart and talented children - Cameron and Meghan.

**What was your favorite school tradition?** My favorite tradition about Donoho was its well-rounded experience. Donoho's first priority was unquestionably providing an outstanding and challenging academic environment, which it achieved, but, unlike many other private schools, it also provided wide-ranging opportunities in sports and other extracurricular activities. My hand still cramps when I think about having to write, "I have neither given nor received help on this test."

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Mr. Lawrence graduated from Donoho in 1985. While he was at Donoho, he excelled in academics as well as school athletics. He ranked in the 90th percentile for both the NEDT and the PSAT, played varsity soccer from 7th through 12th grades, and played varsity tennis from 8th through 12th grades lettering in both each year. He received sportsmanship awards, best defensive player, and most

valuable player awards all in soccer. From Donoho, he attended Auburn University where he was named to the Dean's List more than ten times and graduated with a B.A. in Psychology, minor in Political Science. Mr. Lawrence continued his studies at the Cumberland School of Law of Samford University. He received his Doctorate of Jurisprudence after being named to the Dean's Honor Role all six semesters of law school. Mr. Lawrence was named a Cordell Hull Teaching Fellow at the Cumberland School of Law - a position named after alumnus Cordell Hull, who was President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Secretary of State and a Nobel Peace Prize recipient. He was also awarded membership on *The American Journal of Trial Advocacy*, which is the United State's oldest law review dedicated to the advancement of trial advocacy, based upon academic record in law school.

Mr. Lawrence began his career as a Judicial Clerk for the Honorable Robert B. Propst, Senior United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama. Then for the last twenty years has served in Birmingham, currently an attorney practicing at Burr & Forman - a southeast regional law firm with more than 350 attorneys and 19 offices in Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North & South Carolina, and Tennessee. His emphasis is focusing on wireless telecommunications as well as business practice focused on representing publicly and privately held companies in a wide range of matters.

We hope all of our Donoho graduates become lifelong learners while working to better the community around them, Mr. Bill Lawrence is an outstanding example of what this should be. Mr. Lawrence has been published in major law journals over the last fifteen years. He has won numerous awards and honors such as being named to *Best Lawyers* rankings of the *Best Lawyers in America* for four consecutive years (2016-2019) in its Corporate Law category and three consecutive years (2017-2019) in its Business Organizations category. Awarded *Martindale-Hubbell* AV Preeminent Peer Review Rating, which is its highest peer rating and one that only 10% of all attorneys reach. The more than a century old rating signifies that a lawyer's peers rank the lawyer at the highest level of professional excellence for his legal knowledge, communication skills, and ethical standards.

On top of his professional life, he volunteers in his community serving on multiple board of directors also receiving awards from his involvement with the American Heart Association. Mr. Lawrence is a two-time recipient of the AHA's "Outstanding Service Award". He is also a founding member of the Junior Board of Directors of Alabama Landmarks, Inc. which owns and is dedicated to the preservation and renovation of The Alabama Theatre and Lyric Theatre in downtown Birmingham. What a great example and testament to The Donoho School he truly has shown to be.

Mr. Lawrence is the son of Mr. Fred Lawrence and the late Mrs. Alice Lawrence of Anniston. He resides in Birmingham with his wife and fellow classmate Karen, his son Cameron, and his daughter Meghan. Please join us in congratulating Mr. Bill Lawrence, Class of 1985, as The Donoho School 2019 Alumnus of the Year.

~ September 2019

Other:

<https://www.burr.com/attorney/william-m-lawrence/>

[Bill Lawrence Bio](#)