



***Biography of Bruce B. Blackwell, Esquire***

A fifth generation Floridian, Bruce B. Blackwell was raised in rural Marion County. He graduated from Florida State University with a B.A. in 1968, and received numerous leadership honors and awards including the Hall of Fame, Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK), Order of Omega, Gold Key, service as Senior Class President, Outstanding Senior of Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity, and Founding Chair for the predecessor of the first Student Alumni Association.

After graduation he served as an officer in the United States Air Force with distinction, initiated the first Interracial Council on any USAF base in the United States and was named to *Outstanding Young Men of America*, 1972 edition. In his last two years of active duty he served as the protocol aide to Vice Admiral Walter H. Baumberger, Commander, United States Taiwan Defense Command in Taipei, Taiwan.

He returned to Florida State in 1972 to pursue a law degree and worked as an administrative aide to the Comptroller of the State of Florida, a statewide elected Cabinet officer, during his first year, and later clerked for two prominent Tallahassee law firms during his second and third years of law school. While in law school he received a number of American Jurisprudence book awards signifying the highest academic average in several classes, and graduated with honors. In 1974, he received the Coyle E. Moore, Jr. Award from ODK signifying the most outstanding male student leader at Florida State University.



Before entering a private trial practice in 1981, he was an attorney for Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Co., and later an antitrust attorney with AT&T. He was the youngest lawyer asked to be a member of the trial team in the antitrust suit to break up the Bell System. He then spent almost a year with SunBanks of Florida, Inc., during a period of rapid expansion to a statewide banking system. He is now a partner with the six lawyer law firm of King, Blackwell, Downs & Zehnder, P.A., which specializes in complicated civil litigation. He has been admitted to practice in Florida, Georgia, and New York, formerly served as an Adjunct Professor of Law at the Woodrow Wilson College of Law in Atlanta, Georgia, and has been a frequent lecturer at seminars on legal ethics and substantial trial related seminars within the profession.

He was for many years a Master in the George C. Young First Central Florida American Inn of Court, and from 2000 through 2007 was the Counselor to the Inn. The Inn is a legal society dedicated to promoting professionalism and civility in the practice of law. In March 2003, Mr. Blackwell was the second member of his firm to receive the annual Orange County Bar Association's William E. Trickett, Jr. Professionalism Award. Mr. Blackwell has been named to The Best Lawyers in America since 2006, and in 2009 and for 2010 in the categories of Commercial Litigation and Bet the Company Litigation. He has been listed by *The American Lawyer* as a Top Commercial Litigator for 2006-2010, the *Orlando Business Journal's* "Best of the Bar" for 2006, by *Florida Trend* magazine on all the first six statewide lawyer peer reviews in 2004-2010 as one of Florida's "Legal Elite." In 2009 he was named as one of forty-eight lawyers statewide to the Legal Elite Hall of Fame. He has been similarly listed as a Florida Superlawyer since 2007.

Mr. Blackwell has previously served as the President of the Orange County Bar Association, Co-Chair of its first Gender Bias Committee, Chair of the Ninth Circuit's Grievance Committee, Chair of the Ninth Circuit's Fee Arbitration Committee, and from 1998-2001 as the Co-Chair of the Orange County Bar Association Fair Judicial Campaign Practices Committee. He and his firm received a 2009 OCBA President's Award for long-term service to the OCBA over the past twenty years.

He formerly served on the Board of Governors of The Florida Bar ("BOG") from 1994-1998. He previously chaired The Florida Bar's (TFB) 1986 Mid-Year Meeting, and The Florida Bar Annual Meeting for 1997. He was Co-Chair for the BOG Disciplinary Review Committee, and liaison for the Practice Management Section and The Equal Opportunities in the Profession Committee. During his BOG service, he also chaired The Solo and Small Firm Special Committee. He was previously appointed by the Florida Supreme Court to its Pro Bono Services Committee overseeing pro bono services statewide, and by the former Chief Justice in 1998 to serve on a select committee to study the need for additional District Courts of Appeal. In late 2006, he was appointed by the Chief Justice to serve on the Chief Justice's Advisory Committee for two years, and in June 2007 was named as a Trustee of The Florida Supreme Court Historical Society and will commence a term as President of that organization in June 2010. Most recently, he has been named to the United State's Eleventh Circuit Court Planning Committee for the 2011 meeting of the Eleventh Circuit in Orlando.

On April 15, 2008, Mr. Blackwell was the recipient of the 2008 American Bar Association's (ABA) Grassroots Advocacy Award for his sustained and effective lobbying efforts to the United States Congress on behalf of the poor throughout the United States. He is the first Floridian to receive this national award. In June 2008, the Florida Council of Bar Association Presidents awarded him the statewide 2008 Outstanding Voluntary Bar President Award, their highest award. Also in June 2008, Mr. Blackwell was the recipient of the 2008 Judge James G. Glazebrook Memorial Outstanding Member Award by The George C. Young First Central Florida American Inn of Court. The award represents the Inn's highest award for service to the law profession and to the Inn. In 2009 he was the recipient of the Florida State University College of Law Alumni Service Award, its highest alumni award for service.

He served from 1998 through 2009 as a member of The Florida Bar Foundation Board of Directors and helped oversee the disbursement of more than 25 million dollars in legal aid grants statewide each year on behalf of the lawyers of Florida. He concluded his term as President on June 30, 2008, and remains an Endowment Trustee through 2012. He previously chaired the Legal Assistance for the Poor/Law Student Assistance Grant Committee, the Budget and Finance Committee, and for several years was Chair of the Administration of Justice Committee recommending grants for systemic legal issues in Florida. In 2002, he received The Foundation's President's Award for Excellence.

He was honored with the 1996 Judge J. C. "Jake" Stone Legal Aid Society Distinguished Service Award which represents the annual outstanding pro bono service award for the Ninth Circuit, and received the President of the Florida Bar's 1997 pro bono service award for the Ninth Circuit. He was honored by The Florida Association for Women Lawyers (FAWL) with its annual 1998 Friend of FAWL Award. He has been profiled in *Who's Who in American Law* since 1996, and *Who's Who in America* for many years.

He served for many years as a member of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee for Lawyers Action, a statewide PAC for Florida lawyers to ensure fair and impartial courts and protect the core values of the legal profession and practice of law. He concluded that service in 2010.

Mr. Blackwell has previously served in 1985-86 as the National President (Chair) of the Florida State University Alumni Association, as President of The Florida State University College of Law Alumni Association for 2006-2007, was formerly Chair of the Winter Park Civil Service Board, President of the Orlando Touchdown Club, a member of the Session for First Presbyterian Church of Orlando (FPCO), Chair of its Nominating Committee and Congregational Life Commission, and from 2007-08 served as the FPCO Dean of its College of Elders. He has previously served on numerous other civic and religious boards over the past thirty years in the greater Orlando area.

Mr. Blackwell has been married for more than 40 years to Julie McMillan Blackwell, and together they have two daughters, Blair Allison Blackwell, a 1996 graduate of Princeton University, and Brooke Blackwell Castino, a 2000 graduate of Vanderbilt University. He has two granddaughters, Emma Kate Castino, born September 30, 2007, and Allison Marie Castino, born February 5, 2010.