

Erwin Fuller Named Citizen Lawyer

06.26.2011

The North Carolina Bar Association has recognized Greensboro attorney W. Erwin Fuller, Jr. with its Citizen Lawyer Award. The award honors attorneys who provide exemplary public service to their communities.

Fuller credits his dedication to public service to growing up in a home and community where “being about the public good” was valued. His father graduated from college during the Depression and worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Franklin County, where Fuller was born, and surrounding counties to assist farmers. Just like the life lessons his father likely experienced, Fuller has learned through his service to “appreciate how difficult various life experiences can be for so many people.” Observing “first hand how others with fewer resources and opportunities . . . have dealt positively and productively with life’s challenges has been a source of renewed inspiration and encouragement” for him.

The common thread through Fuller’s years of service is his association with the First Presbyterian Church. A church member invited him to serve as a trustee for the Greensboro Kiwanis Club, an organization dedicated to children’s needs. The Presbyterian Church later appointed him to serve on the board for Lees McRae College where he was Board Chair. He recently completed nearly a decade of service as a board member for Well-Spring Retirement Community, an organization founded, in part, by the Presbyterian Church.

Fuller first realized the possibility of service as an attorney when he served as a page for the North Carolina General Assembly. There, he witnessed “important people making important contributions to the life of our state.” Among those influential representatives were Terry Sanford (N.C. Governor 1961-65; U.S. Senator 1986-93), John Larkins (Judge, E.D.N.C. 1961-90) and Spencer Bell (Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit 1961-67).

Fuller lives his personal and professional life dedicated to the philosophy that it is not what you say you can do to help, but what you actually do to help that matters. Whether it is his decades of participation with the North Carolina and Greensboro Bar Associations, his years of guidance for philanthropic and educational institutions, or his teaching Sunday School at First Presbyterian Church, Erwin Fuller, Jr. personifies “Citizen Lawyer” and is an example of dedication to community to which we should all strive.