

## NCADA Recognizes Founding Members William K. Davis and J. Robert Elster

The NCADA is pleased to recognize two of the organization's founding members as the Association commemorates its' 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2007 - J. Robert Elster and William K. Davis.

On Thursday, May 31, 2007, the NCADA's Board of Directors unanimously voted to honor the life and career of J. Robert Elster, the second president of the Association, by renaming the Award for Professional Excellence as the *J. Robert Elster Award for Professional Excellence*. This Award is intended to recognize NCADA members who exemplify the highest standards of professionalism, integrity and ethics and conducts him or herself in a civil, courteous manner with all persons. The recipient must exemplify sustained excellent individual service to individual and corporate defendants in civil litigation, to the Bar and to the community.



J. Robert Elster

J. Robert Elster epitomized the criteria outlined in the Award's description. Elster was highly respected, always courteous, and an excellent trial attorney with the utmost integrity practicing for over 40 years as a member of the firm now known as Kilpatrick Stockton. He was Co-Chair of the firm at the time of his death. Elster handled hundreds of jury and bench trials and appeals in courts at all levels, federal and state. He was a Fellow of the American College of Trials Lawyers, was listed in Best Lawyers in America, Legal Elite in North Carolina, and North Carolina Super Lawyers. He served his profession as a member of the NC Bar Association's Board of Governors and its Special Committee on Tort Reform; served his country as a U.S. Marine; served his community as an active Rotarian, a member of the boards of Summit School and Forsyth Country Day School; served his Church as a member of the Board of Trustees of Centenary United Methodist Church; and he was a beloved and devoted husband, father and grandfather.



William K. Davis

Recipient of the *J. Robert Elster Award for Professional Excellence* for 2007 is William Kearns Davis of the Winston-Salem law firm Bell Davis & Pitt. Davis served as the first president of the NC Association of Defense Attorneys from 1977-1979. Along with J. Robert Elster, thirty years ago, Davis was one of a handful of visionary defense lawyers who saw the need for a North Carolina association for defense practitioners who gathered at the Howard Johnson's restaurant in Greensboro to plan this new organization.

Davis received his undergraduate from Davidson College in 1960, his MBA from the University of North Carolina in 1961, and in 1966 graduated from Wake Forest University School of Law where he served as Editor-In-Chief of the *Law Review*.

Davis has maintained a highly successful law practice representing individual and corporate defendants in civil litigation for over 40 years. He has been recognized by his peers by a listing in The Best Lawyers in America and North Carolina's "Legal Elite." Davis has served his profession as a President of the North Carolina State Bar; Member, North Carolina Courts Commission; member, Board of Directors of the North Carolina Legal Services Corporation; Board of Directors of North Carolina Prepaid Legal Services Corporation; Chair of the North Carolina State Bar's Board of Continuing Legal Education; founding member of the Chief Justice Joseph Branch Inns of Court; member of the North Carolina Board of Law Examiners; and, a permanent member of the Fourth Circuit Judicial Conference.

Davis has also given back to his community as a member of the Board of Directors for Youth Opportunity Homes; National President of Wake Forest University Law Alumni Association; member of the Board of Directors for Young Life of Winston-Salem; member of the Davidson College Board of Trustees; National President of the Davidson College Alumni Association; and served on the Board of Directors for the Rotary Club of Winston-Salem.

The NCADA is pleased to recognize two of its first presidents and founding members through this Award.

The North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys brings together civil trial attorneys to promote the exchange of information, ideas, and litigation techniques, and to strengthen the practice, improve the skills, and enhance the knowledge of lawyers defending individuals and businesses in North Carolina. The NCADA represents nearly 1000 civil litigation attorneys in North Carolina. For more information about the N.C. Association of Defense Attorneys, please contact the Association office at (919) 657-1576 or visit [www.ncada.org](http://www.ncada.org).

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