

2009 Special Service Awards

Ernest Bland Williams III and Jeffrey S. Turner have been selected for recognition as this year's recipients of the College's Special Service award for their many past contributions to the College and continuing legal education in commercial finance law.

Ernest Bland Williams III, or EIII as he was always affectionately been called, graduated from Vanderbilt University Law School in 1954. After spending two years in the Air Force during the Korean War, EIII began his law practice in his home town of Memphis at Chandler, Sheperd, Heiskell and Williams, a law firm founded by EIII's father, and later served as managing partner of the firm which is now Baker Donelson Bearman Caldwell & Berkowitz.

EIII founded the firm's first Commercial Law Group and chaired the Interest and Usury Subcommittee of the Commercial Financial Services Committee of the American Bar Association. He was a contributing editor of "Interest and Usury" Asset-Based Lending - a Transactional Guide (Matthew Bender & Co.). He taught commercial law for many years at the University of Memphis School of Law, where he was one of the original instructors. But, most importantly, he was one of the founders of the College in 1991 and served as its first president from 1991 to 1993. Without his guidance and wisdom, the College would not be in existence today. EIII passed away this past year and his obituary is posted on the College's website.

Jeffrey S. Turner received his B.A. from the University of Kentucky in 1976 and his J.D. from Duke University in 1979. Jeff practiced law in Los Angeles before his untimely death several years ago, where his eclectic practice spanned the spectrum of corporate and commercial finance, secured transactions, structured finance and securitization of financial assets, intellectual property financing transactions, workouts, bankruptcy and business reorganization.

He was a prolific writer and educator in the field of commercial finance. He was a Chair of the American Bar Association Commercial Financial Services Committee, a member of the Commercial Law Committee and the Executive Committee of the Los Angeles County Bar Association Commercial Law and Bankruptcy Section and a former Chair of that Section, a member and past President of the Financial Lawyers Conference, a past Chair of the Council of Section Chairs of the State Bar of California, a past Chair of the Business Law Section of the State Bar of California and of its Uniform Commercial Code Committee, the Official Observer of the California State Bar Business Law Section to the Revised UCC Article 9 Drafting Committee and a member of its Bankruptcy Issues Task Force, a co-author of the leading treatise "Asset Based Lending: A Practical Guide to Secured Financing," (Fifth Edition, PLI Press 2002), the author of numerous articles on subjects relating to secured lending and commercial finance, and a frequent continuing legal education speaker on subjects relating to secured lending and commercial finance.

Jeff was a Fellow of the American College of Commercial Finance Lawyers and married to Meredith Jackson, another Fellow of the College.

The awards were made at the College's Annual dinner in Vancouver, British Columbia on April 18, 2009.