

Jackson Attorney Named Law Alumnus of the Year

Contributed by Jennifer Farish
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William F. Goodman Jr.

OXFORD, Miss. - A Jackson attorney who has had a lasting impact on the state's legal community has been named the University of Mississippi School of Law Alumnus of the Year.

William F. Goodman Jr. completed his law degree at Ole Miss in 1951 and has practiced at the law firm of Watkins & Eager since 1953.

Goodman has served his community and state in numerous capacities during his 50-plus years as an attorney. A Jackson native, Goodman has been honored with invitation-only memberships in the Mississippi Bar Foundation, American Bar Foundation, American Academy of Appellate Lawyers and American College of Trial Lawyers. For 25 consecutive years, he has been listed in The Best Lawyers in America.

"Bill Goodman is perhaps the most highly respected member of the Bar in Mississippi," said Samuel Davis, dean of the UM law school. "It seems trite to say it, but he is a real lawyers' lawyer, a highly skilled advocate, the personification of professionalism and the epitome of a Southern gentleman."

Goodman has played an important role in fundraising for a new law school facility, which is expected to be completed in 2010. Besides his professional accomplishments, he served for many years as a director and member of the executive committee for Trustmark Corp. and Trustmark National Bank. He also was on the board of the Jackson Chamber of Commerce and president of the Country Club in Jackson.

"Receiving this award was unexpected and undeserved but much appreciated," Goodman said. "One measure of any school is the extent of its alumni support. The University of Mississippi law school stands high in the minds and hearts of alumni. Indeed, we believe it is on the verge of being recognized as perhaps the leading public law school of the Deep South."

Goodman added that the annual alumni award gives the school a symbolic way to honor all of its committed graduates.

Goodman and his wife, the former Edwina McDuffie of Aberdeen, have three children and six grandchildren.

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