

PROFILE:

James K. Dorsett, Jr.

1995 Recipient of the Joseph Branch Professionalism Award

James K. Dorsett, Jr., a partner with Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, has been named to receive the Joseph Branch Professionalism Award. Presented annually by the Wake County Bar Association to a lawyer held in the highest esteem by members of the Bar and the community, this award was established in 1990 in honor of the late Chief Justice Joseph Branch. Mr. Dorsett will receive the Professionalism Award at the October 3 monthly luncheon meeting of the Wake County Bar Association.

A past-president of the North Carolina Bar Association, Mr. Dorsett obtained his A.B. degree *cam laude* from Davidson College in 1938. He then attended the UNC School of Law and obtained his J.D. degree with high honors in 1941, also serving as Editor-in-Chief of the *North Carolina Law Review*. After practicing law in Raleigh briefly in 1941, he was called to active duty in the United States Army in January 1941 and served until December 1945. Mr. Dorsett participated in the D Day landing in Normandy and in the campaigns of the 7th Corps from Normandy to the Elbe River in Germany including the liberation of France and the Battle of the Bulge. He was promoted to the rank of Major and received the Bronze Star and Croix de Guerre Medals.

Following the war, Mr. Dorsett resumed the practice of law with his current law firm until 1970, when he became General Counsel, Executive Vice President and Director of Wachovia Corporation in Winston-Salem. He worked with Wachovia until 1978 when he rejoined Smith Anderson in Raleigh, where he continues to practice.

Mr. Dorsett has been a trustee of Davidson College and the UNC Law School, and was given a "Distinguished Alumnus Award" by both institutions. He also served on the Board of Visitors of Wake Forest University School of Law and as a trustee of Peace College. The auditorium of the new North Carolina Bar Center in Cary was recently named the "James K. Dorsett, Jr. Auditorium."

Mr. Dorsett and his wife of forty-five years, Anna Lee, have four children and are grandparents of eleven grandchildren. Their two Sons are lawyers and their daughters are married to lawyers. An active member of White Memorial Presbyterian Church in Raleigh since 1946, Mr. Dorsett has served as Chairman of the Board of Deacons and as Elder.

According to U.S. District Judge Franklin T. Dupree, Jr., "Jim Dorsett is a lawyer's lawyer, For the more than fifty years that he has graced our bar he has set standards of zealous advocacy, honesty, integrity, intelligence, courtesy; wit, affability and dedication to the administration of justice. . . Throughout his professional career he has busily engaged himself in Bar Association, law school, civic and community activities, all directed toward improving our profession, our community and the administration of justice.

(The 1995 Award Committee was chaired by 1994 award recipient Charles Blanchard.)