

Attorney Lea Holliday Puts Engineering Training to Good Use

Savannah Morning News – by Jan Skutch.

Savannah attorney Leamon “Lea” R. Holliday III left Georgia Tech with a degree in electrical engineering but never left the analytical mindset behind during his more than 40 years as a lawyer.

So when he expressed shock recently at being named the recipient of the Savannah Bar Association's Judge Frank S. Cheatham Jr. Professionalism Award, it was like Holliday — genuine.

“I didn't expect it at all,” Holliday said.

Although others including his wife and law partners knew of the award, “Nobody told me and I'm so oblivious. It's kind of funny in a way.”

That humility is key to understanding Holliday. It has been a hallmark of his legal career.

Also a hallmark has been the high regard in which his fellow attorneys hold him.

“He can disagree with you without being disagreeable,” retired judge Ron Ginsberg, Holliday's law school roommate, told the lawyer group at the award ceremony.

The award is named for the late Cheatham whose career as a community leader, lawyer and longtime Chatham County Superior Court judge were marked by integrity, competence and fairness.

“This is the highest honor a lawyer in Savannah can receive,” said attorney Patrick O'Connor, himself a former award winner.

Holliday is “an outstanding lawyer and a better person,” O'Connor said. “He's one of the most highly respected lawyers in Savannah and has been for years.

“He cares about his profession and he cares about people and that's a good combination for a lawyer.”

A 1963 graduate of Savannah High School, Holliday earned his undergraduate degree in 1967 from Georgia Tech. He graduated cum laude from the University of Georgia law school in 1970.

He joined the firm of Bouhan, Williams and Levy in January 1971 and helped it move into the Armstrong House adjacent to Forsyth Park, where he has practiced virtually his entire career.

That firm joined with the Inglesby, Falligant, Horne, Courington and Chisolm firm in January and remained in the same site. Holliday is now managing partner of the firm, the same position he held with the Bouhan firm but without the title.

There his clients have included Savannah Electric and Power Co. and its successor, Georgia Power; Union Camp and its successor, International Paper, among others.

He has represented the Savannah-Chatham school system since 1991.

Attorney James “Jim” Pannell, another Cheatham award winner, called Holliday “a bedrock” in the firms he has worked and is “one of those guys who can be trusted with anything.”

“He represents his clients very well but at the end of the day in virtually every case the person or party respects him.”

For Holliday, the profession fits his personality.

“The whole legal practice has changed significantly,” Holliday, 67, said. “I think it is better because it is different. I like different things and different challenges.

“That's why the practice of law is a great thing. It is never static.”

Attorneys

- Leamon R. Holliday