

When I was a youngster growing up, there was a little advertising jingle that I used to frequently hear, which went something like this- Double your pleasure, double your fun, chew Doublemint, Doublemint, Doublemint gum!

Tonight, we get to double our pleasure, not by chewing Doublemint gum but by recognizing a 2nd recipient this year of this Association's Distinguished Service Award.

Our 2nd award recipient is a Virginian by birth but a Tar Heel by choice- his family's choice initially but later his personal choice as well- he moved to Greensboro with his family when he was 8 years old and spent many of his early growing up years as a Gate City resident while his father started and then maintained a successful business enterprise which lasted for multiple decades.

He left Greensboro to attend Woodberry Forest School and Williams College before graduating with honors from Vassar College in Massachusetts in 1974 with a degree in English. He came home to North Carolina to enroll as a law student at UNC from which he received his J.D. degree in 1975, after which he served as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy from 1975 to 1977.

With his military service completed, our honoree returned to Guilford County to begin a distinguished legal career with a public service emphasis by serving first as an Assistant DA for the 18th Judicial District for 4 years and then for 4 years as

an Assistant U.S. Attorney followed by service as the U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of N.C. from 1986 to 1993.

With the election of President Clinton, our honoree left the U.S. Attorney's Office to become a member of the Stern & Klepfer law firm here in Greensboro for 5 years until he was elected as a member of the N.C. Court of Appeals in 1998 and as a member of the N.C. Supreme Court in 2000 where he served with distinction until 2016, at which time he was the Senior Associate N.C. Supreme Court Justice.

Throughout all his years of public service, both here in Greensboro and in Raleigh, our honoree has maintained a close connection with this community and with the Greensboro Bar. He has maintained his membership in this Association all these years, and he has attended our meetings and participated in our activities as much as his court schedules would permit. He's a past GBA officer and a speaker from time to time at our membership meetings. When he was engaged in private practice here in Greensboro, he was a Guilford Inn of Court member as well as a Board member of the Greensboro Criminal Defense Association. He's a long-time member of the Board of Directors of BarCARES and not surprisingly, he's a Board Certified Specialist in both State and Federal Criminal Law and in Criminal Appellate Practice. He's also served on the Vestry at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church here in Greensboro where I understand he is a current or past Lector.

He is or has been a member of various professional organizations and committees, he's a solicited author and speaker, and he even returned to the classroom and earned a LL.M degree from the University of Virginia in 2004. By any measure our honoree has been an involved and valuable contributing member of both the legal profession and society in general.

When the GBA Board established in 1993 the award that we present tonight, the attributes that it recited that it intended for this award to recognize included a deep devotion and constant commitment to the law, to the administration of justice, and to highest ethical standards of professionalism as well as conspicuous service to the legal profession and to the community. Our 2nd award recipient this evening is Robert H. Edmunds, Jr., former Senior Associate Justice of the N.C. Supreme Court, a person who in the judgment of the GBA Board has admirably demonstrated in the course of his years as an attorney and jurist all those attributes that the GBA Distinguished Service Award was created to recognize and affirm.

Justice Edmunds, we salute and honor you this night, and we present this handsome plaque with your name on it to you, with our gratitude for your years of public service and our warmest good wishes for enjoyment and satisfaction in all your future endeavors.