



# Life Fellows Spotlight

## William G. Paul

### Life Leadership Fellow

William G. Paul, Oklahoma Life Leadership Fellow, is an Of Counsel attorney in the Oklahoma City office of Crowe & Dunlevy. Mr. Paul is a past Chair of the Fellows, past ABF Board Member, and past President of the American Bar Association. Mr. Paul is the most recent Fellow to become a [Life Leadership Fellow](#).

**Q: What does being a Fellow mean to you?**

A: It means that I have the privilege of being a member of one of the most prestigious groups in the American legal profession. For decades the very best among us have been selected for induction as a Fellow.

**Q: What inspired you to make such a substantial commitment to the ABF?**

A: When, as Chair of the Fellows, I served as a member of the Board of ABF I had the opportunity to become very familiar with the work of ABF and came to know the quality of the research being done for planned publications. I became convinced of the great value of this work and the relationship between law and society which the ABF explored. I became convinced that it was worthy of the significant support of the legal profession and in particular of the tremendous support afforded by the Fellows of the ABF. The leadership of Robert MacCrate and of Bill Neukom in making substantial gifts to ABF has also been inspirational to me.

**Q: Where were you born and raised?**

A: In a small town, Pauls Valley, Oklahoma (population 6,000) in south central Oklahoma. I was born there and lived there until I finished college at the University of Oklahoma. The town was founded in 1847 by my great-great grandfather whose name was Smith Paul.

**Q: What type of law do you practice and how did you become interested in this area?**

A: Although I continue to be Of Counsel to my firm, my current practice is quite limited, primarily to family matters. Until 1986 I was a litigator. I had always wanted to be a trial lawyer. I was on the varsity debate team at the University of Oklahoma and had a real love for oral advocacy. In 1986 I became Senior Vice President and General Counsel of Phillips Petroleum Company, which position I held for 11 years. After returning to my firm I specialized in arbitration and mediation.

**Q: If you hadn't pursued a career in law, what would you have done?**

A: I'm not sure. I just wanted to be a lawyer. A career in public service would have been to my liking. But probably it would have been a career in business or perhaps in medicine, but my family did not have the resources to enable me to attend medical school.

**Q: What do you do when you're not practicing law?**

A: Mostly I read, and watch the wonderful shows on public television. When I was physically active, I went on hunting trips and fishing trips with friends.

**Q: Anything else you'd like to share with us?**

A: Being an ABF Fellow has been one of the most enjoyable aspects of my professional career. I always looked forward to gatherings of the Fellows, both in Oklahoma and nationally. I felt I was being included in the very best of our profession and I enjoyed the relationships.