



Avery McKnight
Shareholder

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Avery D. McKnight is a shareholder at the firm's Tallahassee office. Avery has represented both public and private employers in state and federal court since his return to private practice with the firm in 2016. A strong advocate for his clients, his practice focuses primarily on representing management in employment litigation and providing preventative advice and counseling to help management avoid fruitless litigation costs. His experience, passion, and loyalty allow him to understand his clients' business, legal, and reputational concerns and make him a well-trusted counselor and advocate. Avery's approach to litigation reflects an intentional and deliberate effort to effectively and efficiently turn "lemons into lemonade." He believes in the strong advocacy of his clients and management rights.

A fifth-generation native of Gainesville, Florida, Avery attended the University of Florida (1983-1985) and graduated from Florida A&M University in 1987. He earned his law degree from the Florida State University College of Law in 1992. Upon graduating from law school, Avery worked in the State Attorney's Office in Tallahassee and was subsequently hired in the General Counsel's Office at Florida A&M University. Avery served in the FAMU General Counsel's Office for more than twenty years including as Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel.

Foremost, he is happily married to Chiquita and is the proud father of Elliott, Alexia, Sydney and Danielle.

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Profession Recognition and Associations

Leadership Florida Class XXXI
Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce Leadership Class 28
National Association of College and University Attorneys
NCAA Member and Delegate, 2004, 2010 and 2011
Tallahassee Barristers Association
Tallahassee Bar Association
Florida A&M University National Alumni Association – Former General Counsel and Chaplain
Florida State University Alumni Association
Church of God By Faith, Inc. – Ordained Elder
Florida Bar, April 1993

Court Admissions

United States Supreme Court, January 2003
United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, April 1997
United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida, July 1995

Education

Florida State University College of Law, (J.D. 1992)
Florida A&M University, *magna cum laude* (B.S., Data Processing 1987)

Honors and Awards

Martindale-Hubbell AV Rated Attorney
Florida Trend's Legal Elite, 2008 – 2013
FBI Citizens Academy Program, 2013
LIVE Communications, Inc., African-American Honoree, 2011
NAACP Achiever, 2002
Virgil Hawkins Fellowship, Florida State University, 1989 – 1992
E.I. Dupont Scholarship, Florida A&M University, 1987
Honor Roll, Florida A&M University, 1987
Dean's List, Florida A&M University, 1986, 1987
Presidential Recognition Award, University of Florida, 1985

Community Involvement

PowerHouse Church of God By Faith, Pastor and Founder, 1997 – Present
Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare, Inc., Board of Directors, 2011 – 2020
The Character Center Board of Directors, 2007 – 2020
The University Center Club Board of Directors, 2006 – 2019
The University Center Club Nominating Committee, 2014
FSU College of Law Class Agent for Fundraising, 2013 – 2014
Big Bend Hospice Community Outreach Council, 2001 – 2011
CD Album entitled "Awakening", 2008
Freewill Tour – Big Bend Hospice, Habitat for Humanity, 2001
CD Album entitled "Caught in the Middle", 2001