

Firm Mourns the Loss of S. Gene Fendler

10.26.20

S. Gene Fendler passed away suddenly on October 21, 2020, doing something he had loved to do for the better part of his life – flying his airplane. We are shaken and already miss him. For forty-five years, Gene was a pillar of Liskow & Lewis and of the Louisiana legal community. He worked as a trial and appellate lawyer in both casualty and business matters, taking many lawsuits to verdict or judgment in state and federal courts throughout Louisiana as well as Texas, Illinois, and Massachusetts. His success as a trial lawyer resulted in his induction into the American College of Trial Lawyers and the American Board of Trial Advocates.

Gene's legal career began when he graduated first in his law class at LSU Law in 1973 after serving as editor-in-chief of the Louisiana Law Review. He completed a federal judicial clerkship with Judge Alvin B. Rubin of the federal courts before starting with Liskow & Lewis in 1974. Gene then spent his entire legal career with our firm, serving in virtually every leadership capacity, including several terms on the firm's Board of Directors and Compensation Committee, and mostly memorably as President and Managing Partner. Under his leadership as President, Liskow & Lewis opened its office in Houston, Texas, and emerged from the Hurricane Katrina catastrophe stronger than ever.

Over the years, Gene remained in close contact with LSU's Paul M. Hebert Law Center, having been selected as a member of the Law Center Hall of Fame, teaching trial advocacy there for several years, and appearing as a guest lecturer to law students in the fields of tort law, maritime law, and the art of cross-examination. Since its founding, he served on the Planning Committee for the annual Alvin B. Rubin Seminar on Maritime Personal Injury at the Law Center. Gene delivered numerous lectures at the seminars on torts, civil procedure, and professionalism. He also served as a member of the Law Center Alumni Board of Trustees for 14 years and as its President for 10 of those years. In 2019, Gene was named a Distinguished Alumnus of the Year by the Law Center. Recipients of this award are recognized for rare distinction in professional achievement, high ethical standards, and loyalty to the LSU Law Center.

Gene's service to the wider community included duty as Captain in the Louisiana Army National Guard, as President of his synagogue, and as President of the University of Virginia Alumni Club of Louisiana.

Gene leaves behind his mother Rae Kaplan Lilienthal, his wife Linda, his daughters Julia (Nico) and Abby (Billy), and two granddaughters. He was preceded in death by his son, Benjamin.

In addition, multiple generations of his friends and partners at Liskow & Lewis grieve as each of us is better for experiencing his kindness, humility, wisdom, and mentorship.

Gene, you were the best of us, and we will never forget you.