

William R. “Bill” Dearing

Shareholder



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Part of being an effective litigator is to understand your client's needs. I place myself in the shoes of my client and approach disputes with an eye toward winning. Representing both plaintiffs and defendants, I have a unique perspective that serves our clients well.

A seasoned and highly accomplished litigator, Bill Dearing's vast experience helps guide his clients to successful results. He has a broad spectrum of trial experience involving sophisticated matters including product liability and complex contract, commercial, and insurance coverage disputes. He is also one of the regions foremost authorities on involuntary commitment hearings and mental health legal issues.

Bill's practice is significant and national. Over the past three decades he has handled a multitude of high-profile cases and has counseled clients from a number of different industries, including businesses involved with mobile construction equipment, conveyors, industrial rock crushers, and augers, as well as hot oil heaters and asphalt plants. He also has extensive experience overseeing serious personal injury claims involving trauma, brain injury, and wrongful death. In addition to serving as lead counsel on dozens of jury and bench trials, Bill has successfully handled numerous appeals, including appearances before the Tennessee Court of Appeals, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

Bill has successfully represented clients in high stakes litigation before juries and judges in a multitude of jurisdictions, including Tennessee, Georgia, Ohio, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Texas, Oregon and California. Overall, he has represented clients in more than 20 states. Bill has won high level jury trials literally stretching across the United States from coast to coast (Los Angeles, CA to Philadelphia, PA). His success rate is remarkable. In addition to numerous defense verdicts, he has obtained several million-dollar-plus jury verdicts and negotiated settlements on behalf of his clients.

With a track record of success in the courtroom, Bill has consistently been recognized by his clients and peers as a go-to resource for excellent results and high levels of client service.

Services

- Litigation and Risk Management
- Personal Injury
- Product Liability Defense

Industries

- Manufacturing

Admissions

- Tennessee
- U.S. Court of Appeals Sixth Circuit
- U.S. District Court Eastern District of Tennessee
- U.S. District Court Middle District of Tennessee
- U.S. District Court Western District of Tennessee

Education

- J.D., The University of Tennessee College of Law, 1990
- B.S., The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, magna cum laude, 1987
- Oxford University, 1987

Bill has achieved an AV rating — the highest level of professional excellence issued by Martindale-Hubbell. He is recognized as “pre-imminent” for his legal ability, communication skills, and integrity.

Experience

\$5 million wrongful death settlement in Dallas, Texas

\$1.7 million brain injury settlement in Chattanooga, Tennessee

\$1.2 million jury verdict in Toledo, Ohio

Successfully represents Astec Industries, Inc. in multiple product cases for 25 years

Multiple favorable jury verdicts, outright dismissals and summary judgments on many high stake cases

A few representative clients:

- Astec Industries, Inc.
- Covenant Transport, Inc.

Associations

Professional

- Defense Research Institute, Product Liability Section
- American Association for Justice
- Meritas Litigation Section

Bar Associations

- Chattanooga Bar Association
- Tennessee Bar Association
- American Bar Association
- Federal Bar Association

Noteworthy

- Chattanooga Downtown Lions Club "Lion of the Decade" Award, 2017
- James Phifer Outstanding Community Service Award by Notre Dame High School, 2015
- Special Sitting Judge, Sessions Court of Hamilton County
- Recipient of James D. Phifer Notre Dame Community Service Award
- Martindale-Hubbell® AV® Preeminent™ Peer Review Rated
- *Who's Who* in American Law
- Chattanooga Lion of the Year
- Chattanooga Lion of the Decade
- East Tennessee Football Hall of Fame

- George L. Hunter Distinguished Community Service Award
- Pi Alpha Delta, Vice Justice

Community

- University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Gary W. Rollins College of Business, Dean's Advisory Council, Past Member
- Lions Club, Past President
- Pachyderm Club, Past President
- Chattanooga Leader Dog Program/White Cane
- Special Olympics
- Football Coach for 25 years
- Salvation Army

Sidebar

One word immediately comes to mind when thinking about Bill - "Coach." Bill coached football for nearly 30 years and ranks as one of Tennessee's winningest coaches for his time with the "Catholic Rams." Bill supports Notre Dame High School, the Tennessee Vols, Texas Christian, and the Atlanta Falcons. There is never a dull moment in the Dearing household. Bill and his wife have five children (three girls and two boys.) The family pets include three dogs, two frogs, one cat, and six chickens. In their free time, the family enjoys water activities at the lake.

Bill was raised in Chattanooga and worked his first job at 15 as "produce boy" at the Red Food Store, a position he held for seven years before entering law school. Bill has devoted significant time to volunteer and civic involvement. He has been an active member of the International Lions Club for over 25 years and has been named "Lion of the Year" and "Lion of the Decade" for his tireless efforts on behalf of the world's largest service organization.