

TURNER W. BRANCH

August 22, 1938 to August 4, 2016



Turner W. Branch passed on August 4, 2016. Turner was born in Houston Texas on August 22, 1938 to James A. and Juanita W. Branch. Turner attended the Marist School in Atlanta, Georgia graduating in 1956. Turner then attended the University of New Mexico graduating in 1960 with a B.A. in Political Science. While at UNM Turner also served as student body president and a member of Phi Sigma Alpha, the Political Science Honors Society. Prior to attending law school, Turner served for three and a half years in the U.S. Marine Corps, commissioned as a second lieutenant. Following his military service, he attended Baylor Law School, where he was a section editor of the Law Review. He received the T.R. McDonald Award as the outstanding student at the law school and graduated in 1965. Upon graduation from Law School Turner returned to Albuquerque to practice law. In 1986 Turner along with his wife Margaret founded the Branch Law Firm, now one of the oldest

personal injury firms in New Mexico. Throughout his career, Turner took on challenging and controversial cases involving personal injury, wrongful death, products liability, as well as catastrophic class actions and mass torts against pharmaceutical companies on a national and international basis. Turner also helped shape New Mexico law when, in 1976, he was lead counsel in the landmark decision of Hicks v. The State of New Mexico, which for the first time allowed injured individuals to recover damages for the state's wrongful conduct. Turner was selected by U.S. Senator Tom Udall and Attorney General Paul Bardacke to represent the State of New Mexico's interest in a 2.1 Billion Dollar settlement against the tobacco industry. Turner recently celebrated his 50th year in practice as a plaintiff trial lawyer. Turner was a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates and was actively involved in the American Association for Justice (AAJ) including being a member of the Leaders Forum and President's Club and was a frequent speaker for AAJ CLE programs. He also served as a trustee on AAJ's National College of Advocacy. Turner was known for his open mind and heart; his generosity to family, friends, and strangers; and for the way he defined success. He was known for saying, "I think success is being able to know you've given it your very best and looking in a rearview mirror of life and saying I did my best." Turner is survived by his wife and law partner, Margaret Moses Branch; son Brian Branch and his wife Dawn Chavez Branch; daughter Rebecca Branch and her husband Clyde DeMersseman and grandchildren Nicholas, Samuel, Victoria and Branch.



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