



Ben C. Adams

Chairman Emeritus

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Ben C. Adams concentrates his practice in the areas of estate planning and corporate law.

Mr. Adams helps his clients with estate planning and corporate law matters, with extensive experience drafting wills and trusts, working with families and closely held entities and implementing sophisticated planning techniques. In the corporate area, Mr. Adams has extensive experience in mergers and acquisitions, corporate, partnership and limited liability company formations, shareholder agreements and business contracts.

Chairman Emeritus of Baker Donelson, Mr. Adams served as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Firm for a combined total of 21 years (June 1993 – April 1998; October 2003 – April 2019). Under his leadership, Baker Donelson grew from a firm of around 270 attorneys and advisors across ten offices in three states and Washington, D.C. to become one of the largest law firms in the country, with more than 650 attorneys and advisors across 24 offices in 11 states and Washington, D.C. Throughout the Firm's significant growth, it created and maintained a strong culture as an exceptional workplace, earning a spot on Fortune's "100 Best Companies to Work For" list for nine consecutive years. Mr. Adams garnered multiple honors recognizing his leadership, including being named among "America's Most Innovative Managing Partners" by *Law360*.

Mr. Adams' care for his clients extends to his involvement in the Memphis community. He devotes significant time to the betterment of the city, serving as current Chair of the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission, as well as serving as director and executive committee member of the Greater Memphis Chamber, Chair of the Business Climate Task Force of the Chairman's Circle of the Chamber, and Chair of the Greater Memphis Local Workforce Development Board.

Professional Honors & Activities

- Chairman and CEO of the Firm (October 2003 – April 2019)
- Managing Partner of the Firm (June 1993 – April 1998)
- Named to *Memphis Business Journal's* 2021 "Power 100" list (Memphis' most influential business leaders)
- Recipient – *Memphis Business Journal's* "Best of the Bar" Lifetime Achievement Award (2016)
- Named "Most Innovative Managing Partner" by *Law360* (2012)
- Recipient – CEO of the Year Award by *MBQ: Inside Memphis Business* (2013)
- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® since 2006 for Corporate Law and Trusts and Estates; since 2012 for Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships)
- Named the Best Lawyers® 2025, 2021 and 2013 Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships) "Lawyer of the Year" in Memphis
- Named the Best Lawyers® 2024, 2019, and 2011 Corporate Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Memphis
- Listed in *Mid-South Super Lawyers* (2006 – 2012, 2018 – 2021)
- Listed as among top 50 attorneys in Memphis and among top 100 attorneys in Tennessee by *Mid-South Super Lawyers* (2010 and 2011)
- Named to *Business Tennessee* magazine's "Best 150 Lawyers 2007" in the area of corporate law, and named to "Best 101 Lawyers in Tennessee" 2004 and 2005 editions in corporate law
- Recipient – Lewis Donelson Public Service Award (2024)

- Chair – Memphis Shelby Crime Commission (2009 – present)
- Chair – Greater Memphis Local Workforce Development Board (Vice-Chair, 2024)
- Named to Tennessee Boys & Girls Clubs Hall of Fame (2019)
- Director – Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Memphis, Chair (2011)
- Director and Executive Committee Member – Greater Memphis Chamber
- Chair – Business Climate Task Force of Chamber's Chairman's Circle
- Trustee – Dixon Gallery and Gardens
- Trustee – Hugo Dixon Endowment Fund
- Former Chair – Chamber's Circle of Greater Memphis Chamber (2021)
- Former Chair – Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Memphis Capital and Endowment Campaign
- Former Co-Chair – Church of the Holy Communion Capital Campaign (2016 – 2017)
- Former Member – Vanderbilt Law School Advisory Board (2009 – 2014)
- Former Chair – Memphis Area Legal Services 2007 Access to Justice Campaign
- Former Member – Memphis Tomorrow (Chair, 2015 – 2016)
- Director – Compass Point at WaterSound Owners' Association
- Former Trustee – Elmwood Cemetery, President (2004 – 2006)
- Memphis University School Alumnus of the Year (2005 – 2006)
- Recipient – Ira Samelson, Jr. Distinguished Service Award, Boys & Girls Club of Greater Memphis
- Former Trustee – Memphis University School, Chair (1997 – 2004)
- Former Senior Warden – Church of the Holy Communion (Episcopal) (2003 – 2004)
- Former Chair – Dixie Homes Boys & Girls Club (1993 – 1994)
- Former President – Phoenix Club (1989 – 1990)
- Leadership Memphis – Class of 1990
- Member – Memphis Estate Planning Council
- Member – Tennessee, Memphis and American Bar Associations
- Fellow – Memphis Bar Foundation
- Fellow – American Bar Foundation



Education

- Vanderbilt University School of Law, J.D., 1981
 - Order of the Coif
 - *Vanderbilt Law Review*
- University of North Carolina, B.A. in Economics, 1978
 - Phi Beta Kappa



Admissions

- Tennessee, 1981