

PERSONAL INFORMATION AND
Curriculum vitae
OF JOEL WYMAN COLLINS, JR.



I was born December 8, 1943, the fifth of six children to Joel Wyman and Anne Pickens Collins. I attended the public schools in Chester, South Carolina until the 11th Grade, when I enrolled at Riverside Military Academy in Gainesville, Georgia. After one year there, I enrolled at Clemson University. I earned the rank of Eagle Scout as a member of Troop 62 in Chester on November 14, 1957. Also, in 1957, my family was selected as Chester's First Family of the Year.

While at Clemson University, I majored in English and minored in history. I served as the President of the Chester County Clemson Club and Secretary of the Student Body during my senior year. I was a member of Tiger Brotherhood. Also, during my senior year, I was selected as my fraternity's Greek of the year. My fraternity was known as Phi Kappa Delta. It is now Kappa Alpha order

I entered The University of South Carolina School of Law in the fall of 1965. I am proud to be one of the graduates of the Class of 1968. In college, I earned a commission in the United States Army, Infantry Branch. I obtained a deferment to go to law school. In 1968, I received a branch transfer to the Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAGC). I was sworn in as a member of the South Carolina Bar on September 11, 1968.

Upon finishing the JAG school, my first tour of duty was at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. While I was there, my son Joel, III was born at the base hospital. While at Fort Leavenworth, I prosecuted about fifteen courts martial cases, including a murder case.

After Fort Leavenworth, I served in Viet Nam. I was assigned to the United States Army Americal Division, the largest infantry division in the history of the United States Army, based at Chu Lai in I Corps. While in Viet Nam, I received the Army Commendation Medal and the Bronze Star Medal.

With the assistance of my executive officer, Major Mike Downs, I was selected to serve at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, where I spent my last two years of military service. I was an Assistant Professor of Law, teaching Constitutional Law and International Law. While there, I wrote a small book, published by the USMA Press, entitled "The Junior Officer's Guide to the Legal Aspects of Command."

Upon being discharged from the Army, I joined the American law firm of O'Haire and Fiore, headquartered in Frankfurt, Germany. My office was a satellite office in the City of Fuerth, a suburb of Nuremberg.

In 1975, I was hired as an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of South Carolina. There, I prosecuted white collar criminal cases, including governmental program fraud and marijuana smuggling cases. I received two Distinguished Service Awards from the Attorney General of the United States, a Special Achievement Award and a Certificate of Appreciation from the Drug Enforcement Administration. When I left the United States Attorney's office, I joined the Nelson Mullins, Greer & Scarborough Law Firm. After three years practicing with that firm, I established my own private practice in 1982.

On April 1, 1984, Stan Lacy and I formed the firm of Collins & Lacy. We are proud of the growth and successes of our firm, and we still celebrate April Fool's Day as our anniversary.

With regard to community service, I was the lay leader at Salem United Methodist Church for eight years. For several years, I taught the middle school boys' Sunday School class. I am a charter member of the Rotary Club of Lake Murray-Irmo, which was organized in 1989. In 1996-97, I served as President of the Club. In 2001, the Club named me Rotarian of the Year. I am a Paul Harris Fellow.

I am a member of the John Belton O'Neill Inn of Court, an honorary organization which includes judges, law professors and law students. I am a member of the Department of Juvenile Justice organization known as Friends of DJJ. They presented me with the Champion for Children Award in 2006 and the Bridge Builders Award in 2007.

I am a member of the Fourth Circuit Judicial Conference.

I am a Clemson IPTAY Life Member. My wife, Rhonda, is an IPTAY representative. I received the Clemson College of Liberal Arts Distinguished Graduate citation. I served many years on the College of Liberal Arts Alumni Advisory Board, which later became the Humanities Alumni Advisory Board. I chaired that Board for approximately ten years. I served several years on the President's Advisory Board. I established the Joel W. Collins, Sr. Scholarship for English majors and the Anne Pickens Collins Scholarship for history majors. I founded the

William T. Howell Pre-Law Society. I received the Clemson Fellows Award in 2001. I received the Clemson Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award in 2001.

The University of South Carolina School of Law awarded me the James Petigru Medal, also known as the Compleat Lawyer Award in 2005.

Over the years, I developed a college course on the United States Constitution. I taught it during Maymester 2007 at Clemson. In the fall semester of 2010, I taught this course at the South Carolina Honors College, part of the University of South Carolina.

Since 1992, I have been a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates. I served as the South Carolina Chapter President in 1993-1994. I was the South Carolina Chapter representative on the ABOTA National Board of Directors from 1995 to 2003. I was elected to the Board of Trustees for the ABOTA Foundation in 2004. I later became Secretary to that Board. I served as President of the Board of Trustees of the ABOTA Foundation in 2008. In 2009, the ABOTA Foundation awarded me the Masters in Trial Award.

Also in 2009, the South Carolina Chapter of ABOTA gave me the Chapter Service Award. I have helped with ABOTA's James Otis Lecture Program presented at the South Carolina State House on Constitution Day, September 17, of each year.

In 2008, I was asked to chair a committee known as "Great Schools 08" to support a school bond referendum in Lexington – Richland School District 5. This bond referendum was passed by the voters in the 2008 election.

I am an Admiral in the Irmo Navy, a mostly social organization of men in the Irmo area. I have been a member of the National Safety Council Board of Directors for many years. I served as President of the National Safety Council South Carolina Chapter Board of Directors from January of 2005 to June of 2006. This organization sponsors the Alive @25 Program, which teaches young drivers and passengers to be safer.

I helped establish a scholarship at The Citadel in memory of the late United States District Judge Falcon B. Hawkins. There is also an award at The Citadel known as the Falcon B. Hawkins Leadership Award. Both the scholarship and the leadership award are given to a veteran student. Judge Hawkins was a veteran student when he attended The Citadel after World War II.

In 2009, I helped establish a scholarship at Winthrop University known as the Collins Sisters' Scholarship. It honors my three sisters, JoAnne C. Dixon, Nancy C. Anderson and Margaret C. Boshamer and also my wife, Rhonda P. Collins, all Winthrop graduates.

In 2010, I helped establish the Edward K. Hardin, III Pre-Law Society at Wofford College in Spartanburg. This society honors former Probate Judge and former Wofford Trustee, the late Edward K. Hardin, III, of Chester, South Carolina.

I am a Fellow of the International Society of Barristers and currently serve as the South Carolina Membership Chair.

I serve as a Trustee on the Walker Foundation which supports the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind.

From 1996 until approximately 2006, I served on the Board of Directors of the International Society of Primerus Law Firms. Collins & Lacy was the first South Carolina firm to join Primerus. I was the National Membership Chair for Primerus. Others in our firm, especially Gray Culbreath and Christian Stegmaier, have assumed leadership roles in the International Society of Primerus Law Firms.

My wife, Rhonda, and I reside at Lake Murray about 15 miles from Columbia. We have three adult children and six grandchildren.