



Virginia State Bar

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In honor of Black History Month, today we recognize the Hon. William T. Stone Sr. of Williamsburg, and his daughter, Jacquelyn E. Stone of Richmond and their many remarkable “firsts.” Born in 1931, William Stone attended segregated schools before graduating from Central State University, a historically Black college and university (HBCU) in Ohio. Since state law at that time did not permit him to attend law school in Virginia, Stone put himself through law school at American University while working at a number of federal jobs, including as a police officer at the U.S. Treasury Department. In 1962, Stone, an entrepreneur who also managed his family’s funeral home business, established his own law firm, Stone & Associates, first in Newport News, and later moving the firm to Williamsburg. Stone is remembered for being the first Black lawyer to open a firm in the Williamsburg area, and his firm was also Virginia’s first integrated law firm. In 1968, he was appointed to the Ninth Judicial Circuit as a substitute judge, becoming the first Black judge to serve on the bench in Virginia since Reconstruction.

As a judge, he continued to practice law, run the family business — which was the oldest and longest running Black-owned business in Williamsburg — and mentor Black lawyers and businesspeople as part of his commitment to the community. In 2018, a section of the Pocahontas Trail (Route 60) was named the Judge William T. Stone Memorial Highway in his honor, after he passed away in January that year. Judge Stone’s only daughter, Jacquelyn, has continued her father’s series of legal firsts. After graduating from the University of Virginia, Ms. Stone received her law degree from Harvard Law School in 1985, and was the first Black female lawyer hired at McGuireWoods LLP that same year. Practicing in the areas of business immigration, government affairs, and corporate law, Ms. Stone was elected to partnership in McGuireWoods in 1994, becoming the first Black woman partner in a major law firm in the Commonwealth. McGuireWoods, which is Virginia’s largest law firm, has 265 lawyers in the Commonwealth and 1,100 lawyers practicing in 21 offices in the U.S. and globally. Ms. Stone’s accolades are too numerous to mention, but perhaps most telling of her character is her 2021 award from The American Lawyer of “Best Mentor,” a national award honoring her dedication to helping others succeed in the legal profession, all while helping to bring diversity and inclusion to the highest levels of the law. Ms. Stone created the Diversity & Inclusion Committee at McGuireWoods. The firm recently renamed their top Diversity & Inclusion award after Ms. Stone. This award honors other lawyers who contribute to the advancement of diversity and inclusion. Like her father before her, Ms. Stone has not only blazed trails through determination and hard work, but she has also shone a light on the path for others to follow.

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