

Founder of Joseph Greenwald & Laake Passes Away From Illness

One of the founding members of a midsize firm serving Washington, D.C., and the suburban Maryland area, who offered pro bono services to 9/11 victims, died Feb. 7, the Maryland State Bar Association reported last week.

Walter E. Laake Jr. was 79.

“Walter E. Laake was deeply committed to the success of Joseph Greenwald and Laake PA, and everyone who worked at the firm. He was always steadfast, warm, kind, dedicated to the law, of strong moral and ethical character, and quite simply a wonderful person,” firm president Paul F. Riekhof said in a statement provided to Law.com. “He was also a brilliantly creative lawyer who achieved momentous results for many clients during the course of his career. Walter was a founding pillar of our firm, and in many ways JGL is his legacy. We will miss him greatly.”

Laake earned his law degree from the University of Maryland School of Law in 1970 and he was the managing partner at Joseph Greenwald & Laake for 27 years. He helped grow the firm from five to 35 attorneys, according to his obituary, which was posted on the bar’s website.

He served as a preeminent personal injury attorney, and also volunteered with the Trial Lawyers for Public Justice and Trial Lawyers Care, offering pro bono services to the victims of 9/11, the obituary said.

In addition to the Maryland State Bar Association, he served as a fellow of the Maryland Bar Foundation, as well as president of the Prince Georges County Bar Association, and president of the Maryland Association of Justice.

Laake is survived by his wife of 54 years, Sandra Laake, and their three children.

