William F. Cunningham

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Mr. Cunningham received his legal education at DePaul University College of Law, graduating in 1971. He began his legal career with the Law Offices of Gates W. Clancy, who had offices in Geneva, Illinois and Chicago, Illinois. He worked there for three years and almost from the moment he walked in the door, began handling all types of civil trial litigation. Shortly after joining Mr. Clancy, the firm began handling medical malpractice cases for the Medical Protective Company. This began his focus on defending medial professionals. The Clancy law office, at that time, had cases all over the Northern portion of Illinois and in his time there, Mr. Cunningham handled matters in Cook, Kane, DuPage, Lake, Will, McHenry, DeKalb, Kendall, Grundy, LaSalle, Livingston, Winnebago, Boone, and Stephenson counties. In 1974, he joined the firm of O’Reilly & Quetsch, which was then compromised of Roger K. O’Reilly and James F. Quetsch. In 1975, Mr. Quetsch left the firm to become a judge in Kane County where he served with distinction, including a term on the Illinois Appellate Court in the Second District for the State of Illinois. In 1978 Mr. Cunningham was made a partner in the firm which then became known as O’Reilly & Cunningham and then practiced together with Mr. O’Reilly until October of 1995. At that time, he started a firm with Mark C. Meyer and Kevin J. Vedrine and that firm will celebrate its 25th anniversary this year. In that span, Mr. Cunningham has tried over 125 civil jury cases and handled numerous appeals.

He is admitted to practice in the State of Illinois and is a member of the US District Court of the Northern District of Illinois and in 2003, Mr. Cunningham was admitted as an attorney and counselor of the Supreme Court of the United States.

During his years of practice, Mr. Cunningham has handled all forms of civil litigation with special emphasis on the trial practice of professional negligence cases, particularly those involving the medical profession. He has also tried cases involving products liability, the Structural Work Act of the State of Illinois, and numerous other civil jury trials involving catastrophic injury. He also has been retained to defend medical malpractice carriers when suits are filed. He has successfully defended two cases of alleged bad faith. He was asked to be on the Birth Trauma Team of CNA Insurance, being one of nine attorneys from the country retained to review their most severe cases and aid in their defense throughout the Midwest. He is also a member of the ISMIE Mutual Legislative Committee. In addition, he has handled cases alleging professional negligence of attorneys, architects, engineers, and accountants.

Mr. Cunningham has spoken to numerous groups over the years on the subject of various aspects of civil jury trials, particularly in the medical negligence area and has also spoken to numerous insurance companies, including Medical Protective Company, ISMIE Mutual Insurance Company, and The Doctors Company. He spoke at the annual PIAA meeting in Seattle with regard to the subject of bad faith litigation and has addressed that topic in lectures before a number of insurance companies. He has served as a guest lecturer at St. Xavier University for the Graham School of Business. In 2000, Mr. Cunningham was inducted as a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers. Membership to the American College of Trial Lawyers is reserved for those considered to be in the top 1 percent of trial attorneys in any given state and member is available only invitation. The American College, according to its by-laws, only awards membership to those who are considered “unquestionably and eminently qualified.”

Mr. Cunningham and his wife, Rae, have 12 grandchildren and live in Geneva, Illinois.