

Fred H. Bartlit Jr., Attorney and Founder of Bartlit Beck LLP, Passes at 94

CHICAGO (August 10, 2026) – Bartlit Beck LLP and the family of Fred Bartlit Jr. are deeply saddened to announce the passing of Fred H. Bartlit Jr.

Fred was a titan of the bar, an inspirational leader, devoted mentor, and a valued friend to many.

Fred was born August 1, 1932, in Harvey, Illinois. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York. He served eight years in the U.S. Army, including his service with the Army Rangers. Following his service in the United States Army, Fred attended law school at the University of Illinois College of Law, where he earned his JD. He graduated first in his class and was Editor of the school's law review.

Fred spent the early portion of his legal career at Kirkland & Ellis LLP before founding Bartlit Beck in 1993 alongside partners Phil Beck, Skip Herman, Don Scott, Jim Palenchar, and Mark Ferguson. Together they sought to revolutionize the way high-stakes litigation was handled in the United States. Fred helped build a firm comprised of experienced, dedicated lawyers focused on winning for their clients, where values like credibility, being a team player, and treating everyone with respect were not buzzwords but instead deeply ingrained into the culture.

Fred was named one of America's "Lions of the Trial Bar" by the ABA Journal and tried over 70 notable cases in more than 24 states, the Virgin Islands, and Scotland throughout his remarkable career during which clients trusted him with their most complex and highest-stakes cases. Fred was selected as counsel by President George W. Bush for the Tallahassee "hanging chads" election contest, and by President Barack Obama as Chief Counsel for the "National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling."

Fred lived life with extraordinary energy, curiosity, and enthusiasm. He embraced adventure and particularly loved exploring exotic destinations. An avid and accomplished skier and golfer, Fred treasured the many hours he spent with family and friends on Vail Mountain and the fairways of his beloved Castle Pines Golf Club. For Fred, these pursuits were about more than sport, they were opportunities to challenge himself, share experiences with those he loved, and create lasting memories.

Fred and his wife Jana shared a deep compassion and love for animals, which inspired their tireless support of the Denver Dumb Friends League. For more than twenty-one years, they devoted themselves to raising millions of dollars through their annual Lulu's Barkin BBQ Benefit. Fred and Jana were champions of the arts as well, and gave generously to the Denver Art Museum, including establishing the Jana & Fred Bartlit Learning and Engagement Center.

Fred's passion for health and physical fitness is another important part of his legacy. He authored the best-selling book *Choosing the Strong Path: Reversing the Downward Spiral of Aging*, through which he shared his belief that strength, discipline, and commitment could help people live healthier and more fulfilling lives. Through the Strong Path program, Fred helped countless

men and women improve their physical fitness and overall health through strength training. Helping others discover their own strength and live healthier lives was one of Fred's proudest accomplishments.

Fred gave generously of his time, wisdom, and energy, encouraging people to pursue their goals, overcome obstacles, and become the very best they could be. His extraordinary record of professional achievement, philanthropy, service, and his belief in the potential of others will continue to inspire all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Fred was a devoted husband and father. He is survived by his wife Jana, and his children Fred H. Bartlit III, Ann Hickey, Susan Rydin, and Katie Dowling Marcus, and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The Bartlit Beck team extends its heartfelt condolences to Fred's family.