



March 26, 2001 Wyandotte Distinguished Graduate Inductee



David J. Cooper Class of 1953

Mr. Cooper was the first person on either side of his immediate family to graduate from high school. He then continued his education with degrees from the University of Michigan (B.A., with Distinction, in the Honors Program in English Literature, 1957), and the University of Michigan Law School (Juris Doctorate, 1960).

After a short stint in the U.S. Army (Infantry), Mr. Cooper began a long and distinguished career as a trial lawyer. He joined the Detroit law firm, which became Garan, Lucow, Miller, Seward, and Cooper, P.C., where he specialized in personal injury civil litigation, with a sub-specialty in medical malpractice. Here he remained in an active trial practice for thirty-five years. As a Senior and Executive Partner, he was a significant factor in the firm growing from five lawyers when he joined it, to eighty-five when he retired from the law firm, with numerous satellite offices throughout the state.

During his career, he became the principal defense counsel for many area hospitals, as well as physicians and pharmaceutical companies. Also a specialist in the defense of legal malpractice litigation, Mr. Cooper has often served as the personal defense counsel for other prominent law firms when *they* were sued. In addition, and somewhat unusually for a "defense lawyer," Mr. Cooper has served as the counsel for plaintiffs in scores of cases, recovering substantial sums for his clients. This background represents a rather varied career as a trial attorney.

Mr. Cooper was admitted to practice in Michigan in 1961, to the U.S. Court of Appeals (6th Circuit) in 1972, and the U.S. Supreme Court in 1974. He has tried to verdict over two hundred major lawsuits, while resolving in the neighborhood of two thousand others without trial. He has personally handled approximately 30 appeals before the Michigan Court of Appeals and 10 or more before the Michigan Supreme Court (including writing all of his own Briefs.) In 1971, at the age of 35, Mr. Cooper was elected President of the Association of Defense Trial Counsel, a statewide organization. Since the inception of the publication of *Best Lawyers in America* in 1987, Mr. Cooper has been continuously listed in its Trial Lawyer section.

As of 2001, Mr. Cooper is retired from his law firm but not from the practice of law. He currently focuses his time (when not traveling) to serving as a private arbitrator, mediator, and expert witness in matters that fall into his areas of expertise.