

STEPHEN W. SESSUMS

CURRICULUM VITAE

CURRENT POSITION:

Founding Partner

AREAS OF PRACTICE:

100% of Practice devoted to Marital and Family Law

BAR ADMISSIONS:

Florida, 1959

EDUCATION:

Doctor of Jurisprudence, 1959
University of Florida Levin College of Law
Gainesville, Florida
with honors, Class Rank #1
Editor-in-Chief University of Florida *Law Review*,
President Florida Blue Key Leadership Fraternity

Bachelor of Arts, 1956
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida

LEGAL EXPERIENCE:

Sessums Black, P.A. 1980 – 2007, 2016 – Present

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

The American College of Family Trial Lawyers
Diplomat Emeritus, 2013 – Present
Diplomat, 1993 – 2013

American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers
President, Florida Chapter, 1985 – 1987
Chair, Bounds of Advocacy Revision Cmte., 1998 – 2001
National Board of Directors, 1985 – 1988
Chair, Bounds of Advocacy Committee, 1987 – 1991
Chair, Client Relations Committee, 1991 – 1994
Fellow, 1978 – 2013

Family Law Section of The Florida Bar
Chair, Bounds of Advocacy Committee, 2002 – 2004
Section Chair, 1981 – 1982, 1982 – 1983
Member, 1973 – 2012, 2016 – Present

The Florida Bar

Member, 1959 – Present
Member, Family Law Rules Committee, 1993 – 1998
Member, The Florida Bar/Bench Commission, 1990 – 1992
Chair, Certification for Marital and Family Law, 1987 – 1988

Supreme Court Commission on Matrimonial Law

Member, 1982 – 1987
Chair, Subcommittee on Procedure and Support Enforcement.

Supreme Court Committee on Rules for Mediation and Arbitration

Member, 1987 – 1987

Florida Judicial Council, Family Court Sub-Committee

Member, 1989 – 1990

Hillsborough County Bar Association

President, 1977 – 1978
Honorary Member, 2008 – Present
Member, 1961 – 2013

Hillsborough County Bar Foundation

Emeritus Trustee, 2017 – Present
President, 2004-2005
Trustee, 2002 - 2013

Bay Area Trial Lawyers Association

President, 1967

Stetson University College of Law

Adjunct Professor of Law, 1984 – 1988

University of Florida Law School

Interim Assistant Professor of Law, 1959

**PROFESSIONAL
RECOGNITIONS:**

2016 – 2019, AV preeminent Rating from Martindale Hubbell

1983 - 2008, Listed in The Best Lawyers in America, Nafier and Smith [1983 was the inaugural publication year]

2008, Herbert G. Goldberg Memorial Award from the Trial Lawyers Section of the Hillsborough County Bar Association for Distinguished legal career

2006, Lifetime Achievement Award, Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers

2004 - 2005, Legal Elite in Family Law by Florida Trend Magazine

2004, Service to the Community Award from the Florida Chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts

2000, National Fellow of the Year by the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers

1993, Received the Board Member of the Year award from the Florida Council for Community Mental Health

1987, Listed as one of 43 of the nation's top divorce lawyers in National Law Journal, Vol. 10, No. 10

**AUTHOR/
LECTURER:**

“The Bounds of Advocacy – its Beginning and Evolution,” Commentator, Family Law Section, The Florida Bar, Summer 2016.

Author, with Judge John Lenderman, of Chapter 1, Professionalism and Ethics, Dissolution of Marriage Manual, Florida Bar, 2006.

Family Law Superstars, “How Family Law Should be Practiced in the 21st Century,” Family Law Section, The Florida Bar, 2000.

“Ethics and Professionalism” American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, Annual Institute 1999.

"How to Take and Defend Depositions" Pennsylvania Bar Association, Family Law Section Summer Meeting 1996.

"Preparation of Experts and Witnesses for Trial" American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, Seventh Annual Institute, 1995.

"Ethics, Professionalism and Attorney's Fees", Master Seminar, The Florida Bar, June 1994.

"Adversarial Cooperation: A Concept that Works", 9 Journal of American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, 1993.

"Organizing the Family Law Practice", Family Law Section, The Nevada Bar, 1992.

"Ethical Considerations for the Matrimonial Law Lawyer", American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers Twelfth Annual Institute and Colorado State Bar, Family Law Section, 1990.

"The Paper Chase: Practical Tips on How to Collect, Control, Organize and Use Financial Documents in Divorce Cases", Florida Academy of Trial Lawyers, 1989.

Case Law Update: Eleventh Annual Institute, American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, 1989.

"Divorce and Antenuptial Agreements, Drafting and Enforceability", Professional Educational Systems Seminar, 1989.

"Organizing the Family Law Practice", American Journal of Family Law, Vol. II, No. 4, Winter 1988.

"Organizing a Family Law Practice", National Meeting, American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, 1988.

"Equitable Distribution in Dissolution of Marriage: Consideration of Contingent Tax Liabilities of Assets in Valuation and Distribution.", with Melvyn B. Frumkes, The Florida Bar Journal, April and May, 1987, Vol LX, No. 4 and 5.

"Adversarial Cooperation: A Modern Litigation Necessity", The Florida Bar Journal, May, 1985.

Moderator, "The Skilled Trial Judge's Observations about Matrimonial Litigation", Sixth Annual Institute, American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, 1984.

"Putting the Spouse Through - A Good or Bad Investment?" (with Laura L. Sessums), The Florida Bar Journal, June, 1984.

"Case Law Update", Fifth Annual Institute, American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, 1983.

"Equitable Distribution and Its Effect on Property Acquired by Gift or Inheritance.", The Florida Bar Journal, April, 1983.

"Equitable Distribution, As of What Date is Property Included and Valued?", The Florida Bar Journal, March, 1982.

"Dissolution of Marriage Trial: The Bench and Bar's Viewpoint", 1981.

"Family Law Practice Techniques from Seasoned Practitioners", 1981.

**COMMUNITY
ACTIVITIES:**

Meals on Wheels of Tampa

Amy Shimborg Volunteer of the Year Award, 2017
Volunteer, 2007 – Present

Hillsborough Educational Association

Volunteer & Mentor, 2011 – Present
Chair, Take Stock in Children Committee, 2017 – 2019

Northside Community Mental Health Center, Inc.

Founding Director
President, 1982
Director, 1975 – 1995

United Way Suncoast

Executive Committee, 1974 – 1980
Vice President for Planning, 1974 – 1976
Chair, Professional Service Division, 1973 – 1974

American Red Cross of Tampa Bay

President, 1970 – 1972
Disaster Committee Chair, 1966 – 1969
South Florida Div. Advisory Council Chair, 1971 – 1972
South Florida Division Advisory Council, 1970 – 1972
Member, National Resolutions Cmte., 1972 – 1975
Centennial Celebration, Chair
Committee on Commemorative Materials
Subcommittee on Planned Giving, Southeastern Area

Hillsborough County Public Schools

Chair, Bi-Racial Committee, 1971 – 1972

University of South Florida

Member, Board of Directors of University Chapel
Fellowship, 1963 – 1975

Children's Cancer Center

Member, Board of Directors, 1980 – 1983

Southwest Florida Blood Bank

Director, 1979 – 1983

*The Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults of
Hillsborough County [Entity dissolved 1991]*

Past Vice President
Past Member, Board of Directors

PERSONAL:

Married to Diana Sessums

Daughter, Laura, is a medical doctor practicing in the field of general internal medicine

Son, Mark, is an attorney and Senior Partner with the Sessums Law Group with offices in Tampa, Lakeland, and Sebring, Florida

Son, Michael, is a Founding Director of IBEX Partners, a Global Consulting, Public Affairs, and Communications Firm in Washington, D.C.