

SOUTH CAROLINA LAWYERS WEEKLY

James W. “Wally” Fayssoux Jr.

Fayssoux Law Firm • Greenville

James Fayssoux is a lifelong resident of Greenville. He and his wife, Catherine O’Leary Fayssoux, a former prosecutor for Greenville County, have two sons, John Hammond Fayssoux and James Beckwith Fayssoux.

Fayssoux played soccer for The Citadel and was a member of the Summerall Guards and the Honor Court. After graduating in 1996, he attended the University of South Carolina School of Law. He returned home to practice law and eventually opened the Fayssoux Law Firm with his father. He represents plaintiffs in civil litigation and he has obtained several of the largest personal injury verdicts in the Greenville County courts.

Why did you become a lawyer? I idolized my father and because I honestly had no earthly idea what was next during my senior year at the Citadel. I decided to explore a Marine Corps contract

and early acceptance to law school and figured whichever said “yes” first was the route of choice. Thankfully, for some reason USC thought I was qualified.

What was your most memorable case?

No question about it – *U.S. v. Garren*. This was a week-long jury trial in federal court in which my state trooper client was charged with depriving a suspect of civil rights and intentionally ramming him with his cruiser. My client faced losing 15 years of his life and watching his children grow up. I believed with all my soul that he was truly innocent and had merely made a foolish comment but never acted with malice. He had done the right thing his entire life and because of one adrenaline-fueled remark at the wrong time on a video camera, became a pawn in a much bigger political game.



The jury came back with a “not guilty” on all charges in less than two hours. I have never loved my job more, nor had a greater faith and belief in our system than when I watched my client walk out of that federal court house with his family.

What’s one thing about the legal system that needs to be changed?

An increased effort to preserve and respect the form and sanctity of the jury trial. It guarantees necessary safeguards for the protection of the rights of person and property and is a system that must be preserved in its essence.

Hardly anyone knows... I named my youngest son after my favorite hunting spot in Colorado. I am a rabid bow hunter and my greatest persuasive argument was somehow begging, pleading, badgering my very tolerant wife into naming my son, James Beckwith “Beck” Fayssoux after Mount Beckwith, an obscure peak in the West Elk Wilderness Area of Colorado.

What do you tell young people who are considering a career in law?

Enter the law school with the understanding that the rewards of practicing law may not always present themselves in the form of financial gain. There are far easier ways to earn a substantial living.

2013
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Law

An independent panel of judges selects honorees from nominations across the state based on a variety of factors including professional and civic excellence.