



### **James B. Blackburn III Memorial Fund for Municipal and County Administration**

The Blackburn fund provides scholarship support to a local government official, or officials, enrolled in the UNC School of Government's Municipal and County Administration Course or to support special operating needs of the course.

Jim Blackburn was famous for his keen sense of humor and a dry wit that continually enlivened his work on behalf of North Carolina's counties.

Raised in Michigan and educated at Princeton University, Jim arrived at Fort Bragg in 1971 compliments of the US Army. After discharge, he completed a Master of Public Administration degree at NC State University. During that time, he was attending a 1973 legislative session as an intern lobbyist with the NC School Boards' Association when the executive director/chief lobbyist became ill. Jim stepped in and was able to get the largest school bond issue in state history passed through the legislature. He served another three years as a lobbyist for the School Boards' Association.

In 1984, after earning a law degree from Duke University and working on the NC Legislative research staff, Jim joined the NC Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) as general counsel and chief lobbyist.

Over the next 25 years, Jim supported the position of local governments in North Carolina courts, worked with hundreds of projects and programs, and was active beyond the state's borders with the International Municipal Lawyers Association. He was instrumental in the development of the NCACC's Group Benefits and Risk Management pools. At the legislature, he helped pass three local sales-tax options and participated in the phasing-out of county participation in Medicaid costs. Jim also helped develop numerous training programs for county officials, some of which became models for other states.

Upon his retirement from the NCACC, Jim was presented with the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in recognition and celebration of his lifetime commitment and dedication to public service. He also was honored with the Grainger Barrett Award for Excellence by the Government and Public Sector Section of the NC Bar Association, and with a resolution of appreciation by the NC Association of County Attorneys.

James Breckenridge Blackburn III passed away on March 5, 2012 in Matthews, North Carolina.