

WILLIAM N. LAFORGE

Bill LaForge is an attorney, Washington office managing shareholder and government relations practice group leader with the Winstead law firm. A registered lobbyist, he specializes in federal government relations, and represents businesses and other organizations with public policy interests before the United States Congress and federal executive branch agencies. For more than 30 years, Mr. LaForge has been involved with the public policy arena at local, state, and federal levels. As a prosecutor and a deputy chancery court clerk in the Mississippi Delta, a senior congressional policy advisor in Washington, and a private practitioner since 1990, he has extensive experience in government relations and public policy advocacy.

On Capitol Hill, Mr. LaForge served as senior legislative counsel to Republican and Democratic lawmakers in both houses of Congress. He was chief counsel of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, and culminated his government career as Chief Legislative Counsel and Chief of Staff to United States Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi. Previously he served as Congressional Liaison for the Peace Corps and as a legislative assistant to Mississippi Congressman David Bowen. He has also advised and organized political campaigns for major office holders in both political parties.

Mr. LaForge is a member of the bars of The District of Columbia and Mississippi. He is Past National President of the Federal Bar Association, and a member of the board of directors of the Federal Bar Building Corporation. A frequent speaker on the topics of government, public policy, and the operations of Congress, he holds an academic appointment as an adjunct professor at George Washington University, where he has taught courses in the fields of commercial law, public policy, lobbying and business-government relations for more than 25 years. He has been a visiting professor of law in Russia, Poland and Bulgaria. He has served as a trustee of the Delta State University and the Pi Kappa Alpha educational foundations, and he is past national president of both the Delta State University Alumni Association and the Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity.

Mr. LaForge grew up in Cleveland, Mississippi, where he attended the public schools and graduated with honors from Delta State University. He earned his law degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law, received an LL.M. in international law from Georgetown University, and studied international law at Cambridge University. He received fellowships to study government and public policy in the European Union and at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and he is the recipient of an honorary doctorate of laws from the Stetson University College of Law. An avid runner and a triathlete, Mr. LaForge has completed 61 marathons, including 24 Boston Marathons, and he has logged more than 66,000 miles running. He was named 1999 Athlete of the Year by the University Club of Washington. He and his wife, Nancy, have two children – Caroline, a graduate of Creighton Law School, and Clayton, a graduate of Emory and a law student at the University of Richmond. They reside in Oak Hill, Virginia, near Washington, D.C. He is the author of a book, Testifying Before Congress, published by TheCapitol.Net in 2010.

While a student at Delta State, Mr. LaForge was a faculty scholar, president of the student government association, and charter president of Omicron Delta Kappa national

leadership honorary. He was a co-founder of the Student Body Presidents Council of Mississippi, a first-place medalist in national intercollegiate debate, and a Mississippi Youth Congress award winner. He was selected for inclusion in Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges, was chosen as one of his college fraternity's most outstanding undergraduates in the nation, and was one of the first four students inducted into Delta State's Student Hall of Fame.

As a DSU alumnus, Mr. LaForge has served as national president of the Delta State University Alumni Association and a trustee of the Delta State University Foundation. He was selected Delta State's Alumnus of the Year in 1992 and a charter member of the Delta State University Alumni Hall of Fame in 2007.