

Mark Everett Morrison

Memorial Resolution Dauphin County Bar Association

March 20, 2019

Greetings to the Judges of our Court, to Mark's beloved wife and fellow attorney Kathy Weaver Morrison, to his brother Derricott Morrison, to his former coworkers and his colleagues at the Bar.

"What a wonderful guy. Respectful, kind, courteous. He genuinely cared." Those are the words of a defense attorney describing Mark while, as an Assistant District Attorney, Mark was doing his best and succeeded in putting that lawyer's client in jail.

Mark Everett Morrison lived life the way most of us aspire to, until we get tangled in the everyday annoyances, challenges and pressures that can cause us to fall short - as lawyers, leaders, spouses, parents, friends, confidantes and human beings. Then there was Mark.

Mark was born March 24, 1960 to the late Honorable Clarence C. Morrison, a former President Judge of this court, and his wife, Grace Fulton Morrison. Mark attended Harrisburg Academy, Susquehanna Township High School, Bucknell University and Dickinson School of Law, and was admitted to the Bar in 1985. During law school, Mark met fellow student Kathy Weaver, the love of his life. They married in 1984 and celebrated 34 years of marriage last summer. Mark's legal career began at the Dauphin County District Attorney's office, then headed by the Honorable Richard A. Lewis. While at the DA's office, Mark helped found the Dauphin County Victim Witness Program and served as its board president. Mark then spent ten years as a Senior Deputy Attorney General and Harrisburg Chief of the Torts Litigation Section in the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General. While serving there, Mark

taught continuing legal education classes and served on the board of the Pennsylvania Bar Institute. Mark's government service continued at the U.S. Department of Justice, where Mark served as Assistant U.S. Attorney, Managing Attorney and Civil Division Chief for the Middle District of Pennsylvania Office. Recognizing Mark's commitment and ability to support others, Mark was pursued and then became a trained crisis peer counselor after the Oklahoma City bombing. Following the 9/11 attacks, Mark spent several weeks in New York supporting and counseling colleagues in the U.S. Attorney's Office in NY and in NJ where they watch the catastrophe unfold before their eyes. Life in perspective. Mark retired as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in May 2017, and on occasion assisted at the Law Offices of Stephen C. Nudel, PC; Mark and Steve were friends since high school. Mark passed away on October 7, 2018, at the age of 58, with his wife Kathy, his adult daughters Sarah and Celia, and his brother Derricott by his side.

Mark devoted his entire professional life to pursuing justice. Mark understood, as few do, the truth of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s statement that the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends towards justice. In his entire professional career Mark relentlessly but cheerfully bent this arc towards justice, and countless people are better for it. As a career public servant, Mark never lost sight of the needs of the people he served, or those with whom he served. Law and litigation is a profession marked by conflict, and conflict often brings out the very worst in people. But Mark rose above the bitterness and pressures that so often define litigation and trial work. He looked upon opposing counsel as an adversary but not an enemy. He was collegial and rarely found a reason not to take the high road. Mark was at heart a peacemaker, counselor and comforter - whether it was through a kind word, a gentle gesture or one of his trademarked hugs. Unlike nearly all lawyers, Mark was gifted at managing office operations and personnel matters, and took on these additional duties not as an unpleasant chore but as another way to make a positive difference. Mark

never said "that won't work," but "tell me how you think that is going to work?" – the message was the same. Mark was a deep and original thinker – someone whose take you wanted to hear and often couldn't predict. And he was a great judge of character. With humor, nonjudgmental practicality and patient persistence, however, Mark could almost always bring out the "better angels" in those around him.

Mark was an early adopter of technology. He started using e-mail while others were grouching that they could just walk down the hall or call on the phone to communicate. Mark knew what the future held but, rather than forcing the issue, he simply sent simpler and simpler instructions to his coworkers, in unusual fonts to keep their interest. The day he used "children's font," everyone got the message that it was time to grow up and master this new system. Again, unlike most lawyers, Mark found joy in learning and savoring new technology, from custom computers to multi-function watches to his beloved electric car. He was a proud adopter of technology, and his ability and patience to teach and show others was limitless.

Mark's pragmatic approach was never too far away. In a private daydreaming session about winning the life-changing Powerball lottery jackpot, Kathy was excited about using the money for charity. Mark was very fond of the charitable use – for Kathy's half.

Mark had an uncanny ability to walk in another person's shoes, to know what they were thinking and feeling. And to care! When Mark asked how you were doing, he was genuinely interested, took time to listen, and probably had some idea of how you were doing before he even asked. During his time in the DA's Office, he suspended his occasional trips to a nearby restaurant because he would run into people drinking that he had prosecuted for driving under the influence of alcohol. This, amazingly was not because he faulted their poor judgment – it was because he knew how uncomfortable they felt to run into him there!

Mark lived life to the fullest in his personal as well as his professional life – as a husband, father, son, brother and friend. He didn't strive to be a good man – he consistently was one, every day. He brightened the lives and hearts of those closest to him. Beyond family, which came first always, Mark had brothers in Phi Kappa Psi fraternity and the 21 Club, an esteemed organization of 21 African American men who socialize and lend personal support to each other. Mark was voted into the Club unanimously by all 21 members and later served as President - he and his father have been the only father-son members. Club 21 offers the affirmation to a time period when black professionals were not welcomed in too many places. The acknowledgement Club 21 can gather today because of what others did years ago is a symbolic representation of Mark at his core.

Oliver Wendell Holmes remarked that "many people die with their music still in them...because they are always getting ready to live. Before they know it, time runs out." Mark lived with purpose, and shared his music, his example and his very best with all throughout his life.

Mark's life would have been remarkable for anyone. But I'd like to talk for a moment about the challenges Mark faced. At 58, Mark had lived an exceptionally long life, because his death was caused by complications from sickle cell anemia. Sickle cell anemia is a terrible disease, a time bomb that Mark knew about his whole life. Sickle cell describes the shape of blood cells. For most people in this room oval cells glide easily when the heart pumps. For Mark, his cells were in part sickled or crescent moon-shaped. As his heart pumped, those cells would scrape and hook and link together. Crises occurred throughout Mark's life when Mark would get run down and the cells would hook together and clog his blood vessels. The only way out of that was hospitalization, morphine for the pain and intravenous fluids to flush the system. Each hospitalization was life-threatening, as was any type of surgery. And each day he lived took a toll on Mark's vital organs. The average age lifespan of

a male with sickle cell anemia is now 42. When Mark was in high school in the mid-1970s, it was under age 30.

Mark made it his life's work to defy these odds. We can't beat nature, but Mark bent it a bit. He planned his life to be with those he loved, do what he loved and not miss anything. He dwelled on the positive. Anyone who mistook his kindness for weakness, or energy level for lack of passion, was soon proven wrong – Mark was confident and competitive. He made few concessions to the seesaw of his health – he didn't "take it easy" despite his parents' best advice. Most of Mark's career involved extensive travel and managing large legal organizations. His entire career included the stress of trying cases to juries. Mark could not be a good athlete – not very "sporticularly inclined" as he put it – but he golfed and attempted to sail and enjoyed watching sports. He dreamed up various adventures and talked Kathy, or somebody, into going along. He found joy and humor in the moment. He faced the end bravely. As he defied his personal odds, we all won by having him as part of our lives.

Mark also encountered racism. This wasn't much of a topic of conversation with him. But he was a 20-something chased out of an establishment in Cumberland County, a 30-something heckled in South Carolina, a 40-something whose invitation to golf at a private club in Williamsport was retracted after his would-be companion met him in person. For every incident we know, there are probably many we don't. Mark could have stayed in his comfort zone in Dauphin County where he was known and respected, but he didn't. He traveled often to rural parts of our state and beyond for both work and pleasure. His last trip was to Alaska. He chose his church because he chose that church as the right one for him. He saw others in prayer and would see the good them, and that is how he hoped to be seen as well – not as a minority attending the church. Mark was a religious man who believed in the good, or at least redeemability, of all people. Mark's grace in dealing with the challenge and burden of racism, while getting involved to make

progress and as a mentor, spoke to his character and ability to overcome obstacles.

Mark and Kathy's love and devotion was on display in those difficult days in the hospital. Kathy was strong and supportive and Sarah and Celia were optimistic, each with a foot constantly grounded in reality. Clearly genetics at work. Perhaps Mark's greatest legacy is his contribution in leaving this world with two bright lights in Sarah and Celia.

Conclusion

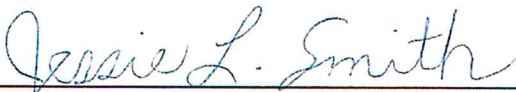
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, in the passing of Mark Everett Morrison, the Bar, the Court and the community have lost a friend, a mentor, an advocate, a distinguished professional colleague and a valued citizen. We offer our sympathies and condolences to his widow, daughters, brother, other family members and many friends and associates.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we reaffirm for ourselves that the life example that he gave us - of accomplishment, virtue, compassion, service to others, strength and perseverance in adversity, and a full and balanced life - is one that we would do well to emulate.

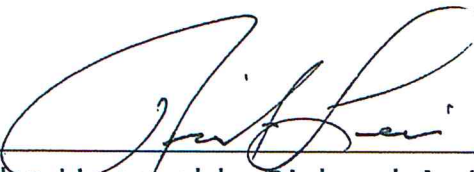
AND RESOLVED FURTHER that copies of this Memorial Resolution be placed in the records of the Dauphin County Court and the Dauphin County Bar Association, including its website, and that the original and a copy be filed with the Office of the Prothonotary, and copies transmitted to his family members.

Respectfully submitted, this 20th day of March, 2019, by this

Resolution Committee:




Jessie L. Smith, Esquire, Chair



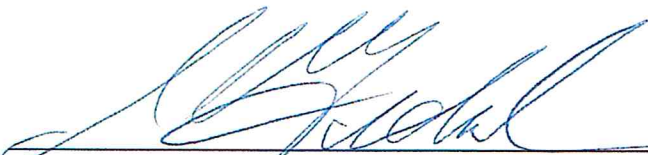
The Honorable Richard A. Lewis



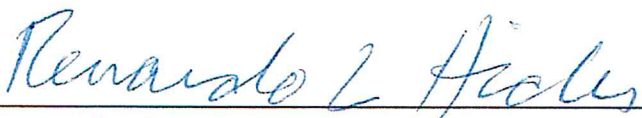
The Honorable Martin J. Carlson



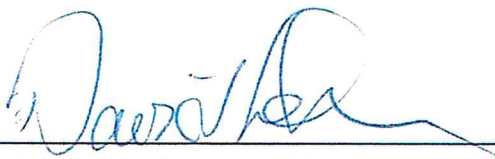
Kathy Weaver Morrison, Esquire



Stephen C. Nudel, Esquire, Presenter



Renardo L. Hicks, Esquire



David E. Lehman, Esquire, Memorial Committee Chair

COMMENTS OF Renardo (Rick) Hicks in Support of the Dauphin County Bar
Association Memorial Resolution for Mark Everett Morrison
3/20/2019

As a father,

As a husband,

As a brother,

As a son,

As a friend,

As an attorney,

As a member of the Dauphin County Bar,

As a former Deputy Attorney General,

As a member of the Club 21,

And as an Educated, Black, Man (which some might say is an endangered species)
living in America, in Pennsylvania and in Dauphin County,

I rise in support of this Resolution for Mark Everett Morrison.

He, like me, was all of those things.

But as you have heard from the Resolution he was a great deal more!

His conscience was the strongest element of his character.

His affections were genuine and honest.

His nature was both simple and complicated, but always sincere.

He was himself!

Such a character and nature was both admirable and heroic.

His struggles in silence made him a powerful role model and a leader.

His Commission on earth has been expanded to the universe!

FOR ALL OF THESE REASONS, TODAY, MARCH 20, 2019,

I STAND IN SUPPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE DAUPHIN
COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION FOR MARK EVERETT MORRISON!

Renardo L Hicks