

“OUR FAMILY PROTECTING YOURS.”

A TRIBUTE

Steven Brook Millard

On the Occasion of His Thirtieth Anniversary at the Bar

MAY 22, 1996 — MAY 22, 2026



Presented with admiration by

MATT FELLER & THADDEUS WENDT

on behalf of the entire Feller & Wendt team

FELLER & WENDT

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

UT • ID • AZ • NM • WA

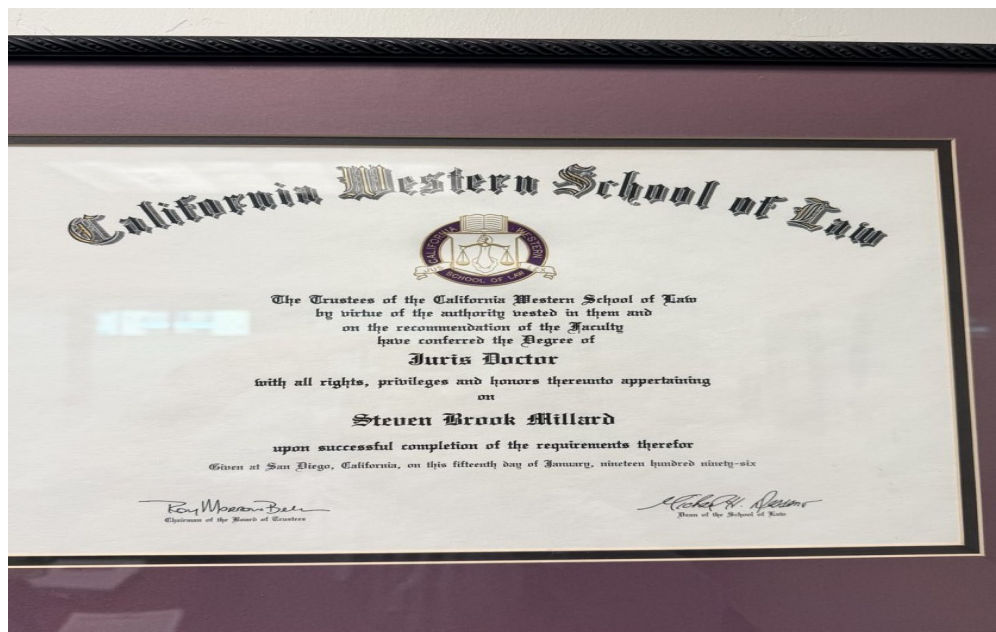
Thirty years ago today, a young attorney named Steven Brook Millard stood before the Supreme Court of Utah and the United States District Court for the District of Utah and took the oath. The same morning. Two courts. One date that would, three decades on, mean a great deal more than it could have meant then.

May 22, 1996. The Telecommunications Act had passed three months earlier and no one quite knew what it would do. The Supreme Court had decided *BMW v. Gore* two days before — its first attempt to put constitutional brakes on runaway punitive verdicts. Justice Scalia was on the Court. PACER was a curiosity. Westlaw came in over a phone line, and most of what a lawyer needed was still printed and bound. The fax was indispensable. A “document production” was something you carried in a banker’s box. And somewhere in a Utah courtroom, Brook Millard was sworn in.



I. The Path

Brook came to the law the way the best lawyers often do — having lived a little first. He had earned a B.S. in Finance from the University of Utah in 1991, where he had also been a seven-time letterman in the hammer throw. One imagines that the iron-and-wire discipline of that event — the patience, the rotation, the unforgiving release — left some mark on the way he tries a case. Then off to San Diego, where California Western School of Law conferred his J.D. on January 15, 1996. By May, he was sworn.



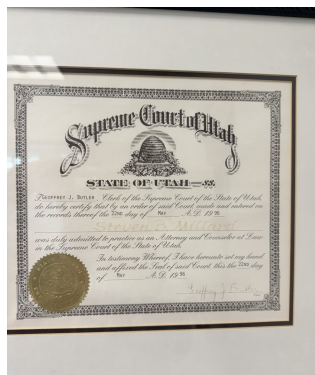
Juris Doctor, California Western School of Law, January 15, 1996.

His early years were spent on the defense side. Richards, Brandt, Miller & Nelson, and then Dunn & Dunn, where he learned the trade representing employers, insurance carriers, and the workers' compensation system. It is, in the experience of every good plaintiff lawyer who has ever taken the time to think about it, the single best apprenticeship a trial lawyer can serve — to understand the adversary's tools before turning them.

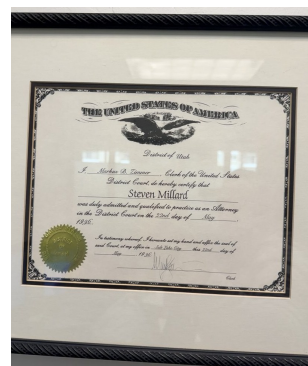
In October 2000, Brook made the choice. He joined Eisenberg & Gilchrist and Brayton Purcell as an associate representing plaintiffs in asbestos injury, personal injury, wrongful death, products liability, and medical and legal malpractice. By 2007 he was a shareholder. That same December, he and James E. Morton hung the shingle for Morton & Millard, PLLC, where he broadened his work into business and intellectual property litigation. James Morton died not long after — a wound this profession knows too well — and in July 2009 Brook joined the Wrona Law Firm, where he tried personal injury, wrongful death, construction defect, and legal malpractice matters. In December 2015 he brought his experience to Robert J. DeBry & Associates. He later headed the personal injury practice at Smart Schofield Shorter. And then he came to us.

Along the way: Chairman of the Board of Directors of Lawyers Helping Lawyers since 2005, recognized for outstanding service in December 2010. Member of the Board of Governors of the Utah Association for Justice. President of UAJ, 2014–2015. Utah Supreme Court Appointment Mentor in the New Lawyer Training Program. Recognized by America's Top 100 Attorneys in personal injury, medical malpractice, and wrongful death litigation. Admissions to the Utah and Idaho bars, the federal district courts of both states, and the Tenth Circuit. Three published articles in the Utah Trial Journal across two decades.

Thirty years ago today, in the same morning:



*Supreme Court of the State of Utah — signed by Geoffrey J. Butler,
Clerk.*



*U.S. District Court for the District of Utah — signed by Markus B.
Zimmer, Clerk.*



II. What He Has Seen

Thirty years is a long stretch in any profession. In ours, it has been a different country every decade.

The world he entered. When Brook took his oath, the bar still ran on paper and personal relationships. Discovery meant Bates-stamping by hand and shipping bankers' boxes. Daubert was three years old and lawyers were still working out what it actually required of an expert. *BMW v. Gore* had just been decided. The tobacco Master Settlement was two years away. The McDonald's coffee verdict had become — unfairly, by any close reading of the case — a national punchline weaponized by an organized tort reform PR campaign that would shape jurors for generations. A young plaintiff lawyer in 1996 was about to spend a career rebutting cartoons.

The 2000s. September 11 changed the federal courthouse — its security, its docket, its sensibility. Sarbanes-Oxley arrived in 2002 and the Class Action Fairness Act in 2005, the latter pulling most class actions into federal court and rearranging the leverage points for plaintiff firms. Brook was, by then, in the middle of one of the largest mass torts in American history: asbestos. He had picked an excellent vantage to learn how complex litigation actually moves. In 2006 the Federal Rules formally acknowledged that documents had become electronic. In 2007 and 2009, *Twombly* and *Iqbal* raised the price of getting through a motion to dismiss. None of these were small things. Cumulatively, they redrew the map.

The 2010s. *Citizens United* in 2010. *Wal-Mart v. Dukes* in 2011. *Concepcion* and *Italian Colors* expanding the reach of arbitration clauses to the point that, for many consumers, the courthouse door no longer opens. The opioid MDL began consolidating in 2017. *Bristol-Myers Squibb* tightened personal jurisdiction. The “vanishing trial” became not a thesis but a statistic: fewer than two percent of federal civil cases would ever see one. Litigation funding moved from cottage industry to institution. The smartphone — introduced in 2007 — became the single most important source of evidence in any case involving a human being.



The Honorable Sonia Sotomayor, Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

And in the middle of that decade, in January 2015, the President of the Utah Association for Justice sat down to lunch with a Justice of the United States Supreme Court. Brook wrote about it afterward in a piece titled, simply, “We Are All Just People.” He had been struck, he said, by how warm and unpretentious Justice Sotomayor was — by her sharp wit, her playfulness, and the human candor with which she spoke about the weight of accepting President Obama’s nomination after a confirmation process she had found heartbreaking. What changed her mind, she told him, was her support system — the friends and family who told her this opportunity was not a choice but a duty, not for her but for so many others. Brook’s essay was about civility. About the fact that lawyers, advanced degrees and all, are just people who need to treat each other better. That sentence is worth pausing on. It was the thesis of his presidency, and, if you have watched him work, it is the thesis of his practice.



The framed tribute presented to Brook by the Utah Association for Justice for his service as President, 2014–2015, alongside his “President’s Message” in the Utah Trial Journal.

The 2020s. A pandemic that moved depositions and hearings, and in some cases trials, onto Zoom — and which has not entirely left them. Utah’s 2020 regulatory sandbox, the first in the country to permit nonlawyer ownership of law firms — a quiet revolution still unfolding. Dobbs in 2022. The arrival of generative AI in legal practice in 2023, the first sanctions for fabricated citations within months, and the rapid emergence of new local rules in courts across the country. Closer to home, Gardner v. Norman, 2025 UT 47 — which Brook and Matt Feller had the privilege of presenting at UAJ — clarifying that, in Utah, recoverable past medical damages are measured by what was negotiated, not what was billed. A doctrinal shift with practical consequences for every personal injury case tried in this state.

Through every one of these changes, Brook has stayed at the work.



III. What Has Not Changed

In thirty years, the rules have moved, the tools have moved, the cases that defined an era have been decided and supplanted. What has not moved is what the work is actually for.

A client walks into a lawyer’s office because something has gone wrong in their life and they

need somebody to stand between them and a force much larger than they are. That has not changed. The fact that the lawyer they need is one who will tell them the truth, work the file, and try the case — that has not changed either. Brook has been that lawyer for thirty years.

He has also been the lawyer that other lawyers call when their own life has gone wrong. The plaque on his wall from Lawyers Helping Lawyers — December 10, 2010, “for your passionate commitment to helping lawyers who are in need” — is, we think, the one we would point a young attorney to first. There is no fee on those cases. No client list. No marketing value. Just the quiet, persistent, twenty-plus-year decision to take the calls.



Utah Lawyers Helping Lawyers — Recognition of Outstanding Service, December 10, 2010.



IV. The Anniversary

So today, thirty years to the day from the morning Geoffrey J. Butler signed the certificate that made Steven Brook Millard a lawyer in the State of Utah, and Markus B. Zimmer signed the certificate that made him a lawyer in this federal district, we mark the moment. We do it with gratitude — for the cases tried, the lawyers mentored, the colleagues helped, the families served. We do it with respect — for a career that has bent toward the harder work at every fork in the road. And we do it with the knowledge that the next thirty years in this profession will be shaped, in part, by what the next generation learns from how Brook practiced the first.

Brook — congratulations. It is an honor to have you on this team. To learn from you. To grow

alongside you. And, quite simply, to just be with you. You are a remarkable attorney, and more importantly a remarkable man, teammate, and friend.

With admiration,

Matt Feller & Thaddeus Wendt

Founding Partners

Feller & Wendt