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Rik graduated from the University of Georgia in 1974 with a Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, and with a Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, in 1977. He was admitted to the Georgia Bar in 1977.

Rik began his legal career as a general civil litigator and state court prosecutor. Since 1990, Rik's practice has concentrated on toxic tort and personal injury litigation, both as a trial lawyer and a litigation manager.

Rik has appeared as trial counsel in asbestos cases in more than ten states. He has served as first chair trial counsel in asbestos trials in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas. Rik has tried asbestos cases to verdict in single settings, aggregations and consolidations.

Rik served as regional litigation manager for Pittsburgh Corning's asbestos litigation for the Southeastern United States, including Georgia, Florida, Alabama, South Carolina, North Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. In that capacity Rik tried cases, managed litigation, and participated in regional and national strategic planning and budgeting. Rik has negotiated settlements with virtually all of the active asbestos plaintiffs' firms in the Southeast and with most of the national asbestos plaintiff firms.

Rik also served as a principal contributor on the post-trial and appellate strategy and briefing team for Pittsburgh Corning Corporation which resulted in the reversal of hundreds of verdicts entered via "extrapolations" and "mini-trials" in the 1990 Cimino consolidated/class action procedure in the United States District Court in Beaumont, Texas. (See Cimino v. Raymark Industries, Inc., 151 F.3d 297, (5th Cir. 1998)).

Rik has earned a reputation among the plaintiffs and defense bar with whom he has dealt over the years for his abilities and integrity. His reputation as a candid and principled opponent has served his clients well.

Since 2000, Rik has directed the national management of discovery and witness development for an engineering firm, and in 2002, Rik became national coordinating counsel for a major construction firm's asbestos litigation. As such, he remains actively involved with plaintiff and defense counsel and in expert witness and strategy development and trial management on a national scale.