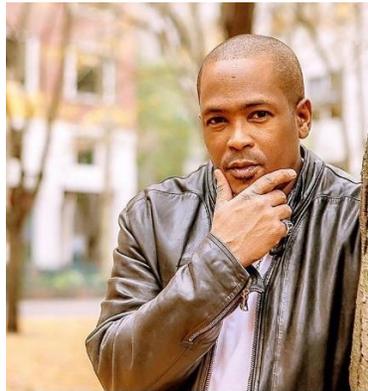




BESLA MOURNS THE PASSING OF EDWARD L. WOODS, ESQ.



November 12, 1969 - December 16, 2017

The Black Entertainment and Sports Lawyer Association (BESLA) mourns the passing of Edward L. Woods on December 16, 2017. Ed, a dedicated husband, father, friend and mentor to many, will be missed. Recognized and respected as one of the top entertainment attorney lawyers and business leaders in the country, Ed's successful career spanned over two decades. Ed, a Queens, NY native began practicing law in New York City in 1994 and had a resume that is as lengthy as it is diverse. Ed worked with some of the biggest names in the entertainment and sports industries, including Sean "Diddy" Combs, The Hitmen, Usher, Allen Iverson, DMX, Stephanie Mills, JAY-Z and Kelly Price. He was a champion for his clients, family, friends and BESLA. Ed was a long-time, dedicated member of BESLA, which he joined as a law student. Ed was a leader within BESLA and served on BESLA's Board of Directors between 1999-2010, where he ascended to become Chairman of BESLA's Board of Directors from 2008-2010. Prior to becoming Chairman, Ed also served as BESLA's Board of Directors President (2006-2008) and Vice-President (2002-2005). He was also a frequent speaker for the organization and helped bring

several prominent industry leaders and artists to the organization. In addition to his law practice, Ed was a motivational speaker, television personality, author, and an adjunct entertainment law professor at Howard University School of Law. His book [Woodchips](#) was published in October 2016.

BESLA Chair Elke Suber noted: "Ed was a one-of-a-kind, charismatic leader for BESLA. He devoted his time and talent to promote and uplift BESLA and its mission to advance the legal profession and provide opportunity to young lawyers of color in the entertainment and sports industry. His presence will be missed."

Ed was a proud alumnus of Hampton University, where he earned his Bachelor of Sociology in 1991, and of Howard University School of Law, where he earned his Juris Doctor in 1994. Ed is survived by his wife, Gwendolyn Niles, and his son Che Woods. The Woods family is accepting donations in lieu of flowers in the name of Ed Wood's son Che at: [Ed Woods Memorial Fund](#)

**BESLA sends sincere condolences to the
family and friends of Attorney Edward L. Woods**

When I met Ed and noticed his intelligence, commitment, and energy to BESLA, . . . I recognized in him someone who could provide the next generation of leadership. I observed with satisfaction and backed his efforts as he rose through the organization to become the leader I hoped he would become. He contributed tremendously to BESLA's continued growth and the organization will miss his leadership, boundless energy, and humor. **Larkin Arnold**

My heart is heavy for losing Ed, and for Gwen and family. **Amy R. Goldson**

[H]is legacy will still last forever in the happy memories of those of us who survived him; and it is also true that some of us will be telling "Ed Woods stories" for the rest of our lives to eager new BESLA recruits. **Flash Wiley**

We all knew Ed as a "do it this way warrior" who championed for his clients, family, friends and BESLA. Ed will be missed, but his legacy will endure. **Kendall Minter**

I got to know Ed when he first got involved in BESLA and recommended him for the Board. He was a delightful young man and a good friend, with whom I was in frequent contact. Needless to say my wife and I extend our heartfelt condolences to his family. **Leroy Bobbitt**

Ed was an energetic, charismatic leader for BESLA. **Michael Ashburne**

A devastating loss for his family, friends and BESLA. Ed did much to keep the BESLA spark glowing and he inspired so many. **Ray Tisdale**

I am so deeply hurting right now-just thinking of all of the time we spent together how [Ed] grew into the accomplished professional [he] became and graduated through the BESLA family from "BESLA babies" to chairman of the board. **Joi Rideout**

We have lost a strong, vibrant voice. **William Strickland**

Ed's energy penetrated many lives. . . . What a loss. **Peter Haviland**

To Ed, my BESLA partner, words can't express how deeply I am saddened by this news. **Tracy Burnett**

Ed was our Supernova, packing much into his short time here with us. Let's find comfort in realizing that while his work on Earth is done, his journey has just begun. **Ronda Robinson**