

W. Gary Vause (1943-2003)



Inaugural Inductee into the Labor and Employment Law Section Hall of Fame June 2012

W. Gary Vause, dean and vice president of Stetson University College of Law and a renowned legal scholar, at the time of his death, was well known in the field of labor and employment law. Before coming to Stetson, Dean Vause managed his own law firm in Hartford, Conn., specializing in labor and employment law. When Dean Vause first joined the Stetson faculty and before his decanal appointment, he taught Labor Law and Collective Bargaining, as well as other courses at Stetson. Fortuitously, in 1975, the year Dean Vause joined Stetson, the first statewide public-employee collective bargaining act for Florida public employees went into effect. Also, the Legislature created the Florida Public Employees Relations Commission (Commission) and gave the Commission the responsibilities of administering the registration and certification of public-employee labor unions and adjudicating unfair labor practices. Dean Vause's previous legal experience under Connecticut's public-employee-relations law enabled him to quickly become established as a highly sought after legal resource for Florida labor lawyers. He was soon selected to become a Special Master by the Commission, which authorized him to hear and recommend solutions to impasses that had developed in public-employee collective bargaining.

Dean Vause rapidly became a popular speaker at programs and seminars sponsored by the Labor and Employment Law Section of The Florida Bar. He also became a member of the Executive Council of that section and contributed greatly to it for several years. Even after no longer serving on the Executive Council, he continued to support its activities. Dean Vause wrote articles and books on Florida labor law, which have contributed greatly to the understanding of the subject. These writings included: *Labor Dispute Resolution in the Public Sector*,¹ *The Special Master in Public Labor Disputes*,² *Labor Arbitration in State and Local Government*,³ *PERC Deferral to Arbitration*,⁴ *The NLRB Policy on Deferral to Arbitration—Deference or Abdication?*,⁵ *Impasse Resolution in the Public Sector—Observations on the First Decade of*

¹ W. Gary Vause, *Labor Dispute Resolution in the Public Sector*, 53 Fla. B.J. 52 (1979).

² W. Gary Vause, *The Special Master in Public Labor Disputes*, 53 Fla. B.J. 123 (1979).

³ W. Gary Vause, *Labor Arbitration in State and Local Government*, (Fla. St. U. Ctr. for Empl. Rel. & L. 1981).

⁴ W. Gary Vause, *PERC Deferral to Arbitration*, 56 Fla. B.J. 818 (1982).

⁵ W. Gary Vause, *The NLRB Policy on Deferral to Arbitration—Deference or Abdication?*, 58 Fla. B.J. 461 (1982).

*Law and Practice under the Florida PERA,*⁶ *Impasse Resolution in the Public Sector,*⁷ *The Good Faith Obligation in Public Sector Bargaining—Uses and Limits of the Private Sector Model,*⁸ and *Labor and Employment in Florida—Law, Policy, and Practice.*⁹

One of Dean Vause's significant contributions to Stetson was his tireless effort in helping Stetson become recognized as a leading law school for labor studies. In the 1980s, he created a nationally recognized Annual Labor Law Conference hosted by Stetson. From its creation, fifteen conferences were held, and they brought together prominent members of the National Labor Relations Board, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, National Mediation Board, Florida Public Employee Relations Commission, Florida Commission on Human Relations, lawyers, management representatives, and union leaders as conference speakers to Stetson. This Conference was one of the first of its kind in labor law and contributed in a large way to Stetson's becoming a nationally known law school.

Another of Dean Vause's significant contributions to Stetson's prominence in labor law was the creation of a working partnership with the Labor and Employment Law Section of The Florida Bar (Section). Throughout the years, the Section and Stetson jointly sponsored numerous seminars and trainings in substantive labor and collective bargaining topics. In addition, the two organizations co-sponsored a week-long Employment Law Trial Skills program designed to provide Florida lawyers with an intense, total immersion learning experience in the art of presenting an employment case to a jury.

Coincidental to his recognition as a labor law expert, Dean Vause became a popular labor arbitrator, which was a role he ably performed along with his other faculty responsibilities. He regularly served in both public-sector and private-sector labor disputes. As always, Dean Vause pursued the highest level of attainment whenever he became involved with any activity. Accordingly, after arbitrating countless labor disputes, he was accepted to membership in the prestigious National Academy of Arbitrators.

This tribute has been adapted from Singletary, Cary, *W. Gary Vause: Educator, Scholar and Southern Gentleman*, 33-1 Stetson L. Rev. 59 (Fall 2003).

⁶ W. Gary Vause, *Impasse Resolution in the Public Sector—Observations on the First Decade of Law and Practice under the Florida PERA*, 37 Fla. L. Rev. 105 (1985).

⁷ W. Gary Vause, *Impasse Resolution in the Public Sector*, 36 L. Rev. Dig. 33 (May–June 1987).

⁸ W. Gary Vause, *The Good Faith Obligation in Public Sector Bargaining—Uses and Limits of the Private Sector Model*, 19 Stetson L. Rev. 511 (1990).

⁹ W. Gary Vause, *Labor and Employment in Florida—Law, Policy, and Practice* vol. 1 (Stetson U. College L. Ctr. for Lab.-Mgt. Dispute Res. 1989).