



William Fox

founder and chairman,
Fox, O'Neill &
Shannon SC

**Legal degree
obtained from:**
Marquette University
Law School, 1961

Fox builds career on smart decision

Like many college seniors, William Fox said, he was not sure what to say when his roommate asked him about his plans after graduation.

Recalling a conversation from more than 50 years ago, Fox said his roommate said he was applying to Harvard Law School and that law was a great profession. Fox said he thought that sounded like a good idea.

"So I went to Marquette Law School," he said. "Turned out to be good advice."

Not too long after that chat with his roommate, Fox was running his own law firm. After graduating from Marquette, he took a job with Cahill & Binder, a two-person firm that specialized in estate planning and tax.

"A few years later, Larry Binder died and there were just the two of us," Fox said. "Throughout the '60s, we built the firm to

around 12 lawyers. In the '70s, a group of lawyers left the firm. And in 1975, John Cahill left the city of Milwaukee.

"Thus, we started with the remaining lawyers a newer firm and renamed ourselves once again. O'Neill and Shannon were with me before and after the name change and remain with me today."

During his career, Fox, has specialized in representing privately held businesses in the areas of business operations, business planning, business-crisis management, estate and succession planning, and tax law.

He also has focused on local civic and community organizations. Since 1968, he has been on the board of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee. He is a member and past chairman of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and has served on the boards of the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, Milwaukee County Research Park,

National Center for Housing Management, Milwaukee Art Museum, Circus World Museum and Great Circus Parade.

Diane Slomowitz, a shareholder with Fox, O'Neill & Shannon, said Fox understands that effective leadership is neither "dictatorial nor unilateral."

"Bill knows that leadership by fiat won't work, because effective leadership requires that everyone involved be invested," she said. "By listening to his clients and his attorneys, Bill learns their interests, insights and desires, and uses that information in deciding the best way for all to move forward."

Even at age 79, Fox said, he learns something new every day.

"Some from prior mistakes," he said, "some from planning, some from the joy of learning."

— Andy Turner