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## ATG announces Ward F. McDonald's retirement

February 06, 2015 | Staff Writer | [PRINT ARTICLE](#) | [EMAIL THIS ARTICLE](#)



Shown here at the recent check presentation to the Ward F. McDonald Scholarship Fund in ATG's Champaign office are (from left to right): Ward McDonald; Professor John Colombo, the Albert E. Jenner, Jr. Professor of Law and the College of Law interim dean; Jerry Gorman, ATG senior vice president and current adjunct professor at the College of Law; and Peter J. Birnbaum, ATG president and chief executive officer.

Attorneys' Title Guaranty Fund, Inc. has announced the retirement of former leader, board member, and board chairman Ward F. McDonald of Mahomet, Illinois.

McDonald helped shape ATG from a concept to a viable business, went on to conduct a successful law practice, and served as an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois College of Law and College of Business. "ATG would not be the success it is today without Ward's efforts," said Peter J. Birnbaum, president and CEO.

"Ward worked tirelessly from the late 1960s—first as a law clerk, then in the company's top position as Executive Vice President—through the early 1980s, then served on our board for decades, always offering thoughtful guidance and leadership."

As Executive Vice President during our early years, McDonald recruited a strong membership base, established impeccable standards, assembled a qualified

and enthusiastic staff, and secured financial backing through the practicing bar. To hear McDonald's story in his own words, view ATG's 50th anniversary video, "Celebrate, Reflect, and Remember," in the segment entitled, Perseverance: History of ATG [here](#).

After leaving ATG to return to the private practice of law, he served on the ATG board of directors and various committees. During the organization's 50th anniversary in 2014, McDonald fittingly served as chairman of the board, then announced his retirement from the ATG board in January 2015.

Ward spoke of his decision in a letter to ATG board and officers, "The time has come for me to resign my position on the Board of Directors.... My fondness for ATG will never wane, nor will my willingness to serve as needed or requested. Words are inadequate to express my thanks and appreciation for the support I have received over the years."

The retirement news came on the heels of ATG's annual donation to the Ward F. McDonald Scholarship Fund at the University of Illinois College of Law (see photo). ATG established the scholarship in 2010 to honor Ward when he celebrated his 40th year in the practice of law. The scholarship is awarded annually to a third-year law student who is in good academic standing and displays a passion and initiative for real estate law. The student is also required to have completed or enrolled in the real estate finance course offered at the College of Law.

"The McDonald Scholarship Fund recognizes Ward's tremendous impact as

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a mentor and inspiration to many young people at the University of Illinois," Ward McDonald Birnbaum said. "During his time at the College of Law, he influenced hundreds of young law students to pursue careers in real estate."

The ATG staff and board of directors extend its thanks to Ward and Diana for the many years of service and guidance.



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