

**Immediate Release:**

**June 9, 2014**

**LSBA Honors Exceptional Louisiana Pro Bono Work**

**NEW ORLEANS** -- The Louisiana Supreme Court hosted the Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA), 29th Annual Pro Bono Awards Ceremony on May 20<sup>th</sup>. LSBA President Richard Leefe and members of the Louisiana Supreme Court presented the awards to the 2014 Pro Bono Publico and Children's Law Award recipients as LSBA President-Elect Joseph "Larry" Shea, Jr. announced the award winners. The ceremony was held in the Louisiana Supreme Court Building in New Orleans, and was followed by a reception.

The Pro Bono Awards Ceremony honors attorneys and other public interest legal professionals from around the state who provided exceptional pro bono services to Louisiana's indigent, who may not otherwise have received adequate representation or access to the legal system. The awards and the 2014 recipients follow:

**Children's Law Award:**

Family and Youth Counseling Agency  
T. Darlene Bewley

**Law Student Award:**

Savannah Steele, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center  
Khalid Samarrae, Tulane University Law School  
Tyler Whittenberg, Tulane University Law School  
Brittany Mckeel, Southern University Law School

**Friend of Pro Bono Award:**

P. Michael Breeden III  
Gary M. Carter, Jr.  
Ian M. Ellis  
Julie M. Lafargue  
Wendy Hickok Robinson  
Hugh R. Straub  
K. Wade Trahan

**Pro Bono Publico Award:**

Office of the Attorney General- Alexandria Litigation  
Phillip J. Antis, Jr.  
Robert T. Binney  
R. Alan Breithaupt  
Booker T. Carmichael  
Michele M. Echols  
Entergy Corporation Legal Department, New Orleans Office  
Michael D. Ferachi

Valerie Gotch Garrett  
Catharine O. Gracia  
Kenneth W. Jones, Jr.  
Judith R. Kennedy  
Robert C. Owsley  
Sherrye K. Palmer  
Sandra L. Sutak  
Zebulon M. Winstead  
Amy M. Winters

**Career Public Interest Award:**

Gregory L. Landry

**David A. Hamilton Lifetime Achievement Award:**

Mark C. Surprenant

**Leah Hipple McKay Memorial Award:**

Brian D. Lenard

For the fourth year, the **Children's Law Award** was awarded at this ceremony. The LSBA Children's Law Committee developed the award to recognize any Louisiana attorney or Louisiana based organization that has provided outstanding services in the field of Children's Law.

Family and Youth Counseling Agency  
Lake Charles

The Family and Youth Counseling Agency (Family and Youth), established in 1970, is a non-profit organization providing affordable and professional human services to children, families and individuals in the parishes of Allen, Beauregard, Jeff Davis, Calcasieu and Cameron in Southwest Louisiana. It is the belief of the Agency that all children, families and individuals possess the ability to solve their own challenges and live full and healthy lives when support is available. The Agency's business model supports Family and Youth's mission of providing affordable and professional support through programs and services dedicated to advocacy, counseling and education for Southwest Louisiana children, individuals and families. The business model promotes and supports the integration of key service models under the Family and Youth umbrella, including: Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Children's Advocacy Center (CAC), The Counseling Center, Human Services Response Institute (HSRI), Autism Support Alliance, The Leadership Center for Youth (TLC), Performance (employee assistance and business services), and Children and Families Action Network (CFAN).

T. Darlene Bewley  
New Orleans

T. Darlene Bewley graduated from Loyola University School of Law in 1987 and has represented child and adult victims of domestic violence her entire career. She previously

worked as a staff and managing attorney for Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, The Pro Bono Project and as an independent contractor to the Court Improvement Program. Bewley was a member of the adjunct clinical faculty at the Louisiana State University Medical Center from 1992-2004. She received her appointment as an assistant professor in the Division of Law and Psychiatry on July 1, 1997 and was visiting Clinical Faculty at Loyola University School of Law.

An active volunteer, Bewley's community involvement included participation in the Children's Hospital Institutional Review Board, FIRST Program, Pediatric AIDS Program, and with the Gillis Long Poverty Law Center. She was also a member of the Task Force for Representation of Children and Parents in Child in Need of Care cases, and the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) Children's Law Committee and several Court Improvement committees. Bewley is a Louisiana Bar Foundation fellow. She received the Gillis Long Poverty Law Award and was a recipient of the LSBA's 2005 Pro Bono Publico Award.

Through the Access to Justice Committee, the LSBA included the **Law Student Pro Bono Award**. This award recognizes a law student from an ABA-accredited law school in the state of Louisiana who has demonstrated a dedication to providing legal services to the poor. One award may be given at each of the four Louisiana Law Schools.

Savannah Steele  
Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Savannah Steele's commitment to public interest work began in high school and blossomed during her years at Florida State University. As a first year student at the LSU Law Center, Steele was very active in pro bono and community service projects sponsored by the Law Center's Public Interest Law Society (PILS). As Community Service Chair for PILS, Steele organized the Law Center's fall Day of Service, its spring "Paws for a Cause" service event, and a host of other community service projects, all while interning for the Louisiana Public Defender Board and participating in the Law Center's Immigration Clinic. As a third year student, Steele participated in the Law Center's Mediation and Juvenile Law clinics, while also serving as an energetic and effective president of PILS. As president, Steele spearheaded two new and important initiatives. In the fall of 2013, she organized and hosted the Law Center's first Public Interest Careers Conference, which gathered experts from around the country to explain to students how to find, obtain and afford pro bono legal jobs and careers of all types. In the spring, she helped organize the Law Center's very successful participation in the national "Dance Marathon" event benefitting the Children's Miracle Network.

Brittany Jaleesa Mckeel  
Southern University Law Center

Brittany Jaleesa Mckeel is a second year law student at Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge. She is originally from Shreveport and received a BA in political science with a minor in Spanish from the University of Louisiana in Monroe.

Being involved in the community, while striving for excellence, has always been very important to Mckeel. She believes that without pro bono services, many individuals will not receive justice. After her first year of law school, Mckeel interned with the Baton Rouge Bar Association. She volunteered with the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation's Thirst for Justice Walk-in Clinic and the 19th JDC Family Court Self-Help Resource Center. She performed client interviews for case placement, client intake and assisted self-represented litigants with the completion of court forms. This volunteer work developed her interest in pro bono and inspired her to encourage others to volunteer with such a great cause. Mckeel is eager to dedicate her time towards pro bono work now, and throughout her career as an attorney

Khalid Samarrae  
Tulane University Law School

Khalid Samarrae was born in Baghdad, Iraq. He graduated from the University of New Orleans in 2010 with a degree in political science. He was admitted into Tulane University Law School in the fall semester of 2011 and is graduating in May 2014.

Samarrae met Tyler Whittenberg, a fellow Tulane classmate who was beginning to organize the Stand Up for Each Other (SUFEO) program at Tulane. At Whittenberg's suggestion, Samarrae began working with SUFEO. The student-led organization represents youth who have been wrongfully suspended and expelled from New Orleans public schools. SUFEO has provided direct representation to over 100 youth, receiving positive outcomes in 85% of the cases; recruited and trained over 150 law students to advocate for youth; and conducted community outreach to empower students and parents with the skills needed to exercise their educational rights. SUFEO attempts to address the devastating impact of biased discipline policies, school push-outs, and the over-criminalization of youth of color.

Samarrae took on the role of Client Representation Coordinator for SUFEO. With the help of fellow advocates, he designed and implemented a training program for new volunteer-advocates that would educate them in how to represent children at these school hearings and how to write appeals. Samarrae worked to recruit and train law students to work as SUFEO advocates. Besides representing youth at their school hearings and writing appeals, Samarrae worked as an administrator, maintained a database of volunteers and clients, and ensured that every case had properly trained volunteer law students.

Tyler Whittenberg  
Tulane University Law School

Tyler Whittenberg is a recent graduate of Tulane University Law School, which he attended with the intent to improve his skill set as an advocate for education equity. He has dedicated his academic and professional careers to education equity and ending the school-to-prison pipeline.

Whittenberg and fellow classmate, Khalid Samarrae, created the Tulane Law School Stand Up for Each Other (SUFEO) program. The student-led organization represents youth who have been wrongfully suspended and expelled from New Orleans public schools. SUFEO has provided direct representation to over 100 youth, receiving positive outcomes in 85% of the cases; recruited and trained over 150 law students to advocate for youth; and conducted community outreach to empower students and parents with the skills needed to exercise their educational rights. SUFEO attempts to address the devastating impact of biased discipline policies, school push-outs, and the over-criminalization of youth of color. Whittenberg logged hundreds of pro bono hours personally advocating for over 30 youth and parents.

Whittenberg has accepted a position as Special Projects Attorney with the Youth Law Center in San Francisco, where he will continue advocating for education equity and an end to the school-to-prison pipeline.

**LSBA Friend of Pro Bono Award** recognizes any individual (attorney or non-attorney), law firm, or organization that has made a major contribution to the enhancement and promotion of pro bono legal services to the poor.

P. Michael Breeden III  
New Orleans

P. Michael Breeden III received his undergraduate degree from the University of New Orleans and his J.D. from Loyola University College of Law. He is a member of the Breeden Law Firm, specializing in Consumer Protection and committed to protecting the rights of everyday Louisiana residents who find themselves in the midst of foreclosure procedures, consumer protection matters or personal injury situations.

Breeden is an experienced civil litigator who serves as the lead volunteer on Louisiana Appleseed's Consumer Rights Project, which trains attorneys representing clients affected by the National Mortgage Servicing Settlement. The project is conducted in partnership with the Louisiana Bar Foundation, the Office of the Attorney General, and statewide legal aid and pro bono organizations. Breeden's work with Louisiana Appleseed also includes spotting and formulating solutions to systemic issues impacting Louisiana consumers adversely affected by the foreclosure crisis.

Gary M. Carter, Jr.  
New Orleans

Gary M. Carter, Jr. serves as senior counsel for Entergy Corporation in New Orleans. He is a member of the company's litigation section and the in-house trial team, where he handles and tries commercial and casualty cases throughout the state.

Carter is the co-leader of Entergy's Legal Department's Pro Bono Initiative. In this role, he is responsible for encouraging and supporting the department's pro bono efforts. He has led planning and strategy meetings, developed projects and assisted attorneys with their pro bono efforts. Carter has also helped lead and regularly staff the Self-Help Resource Center (SHRC) at Orleans Civil District Court, providing pro bono assistance for unrepresented domestic litigants.

Ian M. Ellis  
New Orleans

Ian M. Ellis is an appellate litigator and former judicial law clerk to Hon. Sandra C. Jenkins of the Louisiana Court of Appeal, Fourth Circuit. Ellis is being honored for his education policy work with Louisiana Appleseed, a state-wide nonprofit that seeks to increase access to justice, opportunity, and education within Louisiana by fostering systematic change. Ellis became involved with Appleseed's Custody by Mandate Project upon moving to New Orleans in the fall of 2012. The organization had learned that many students living in nontraditional custody arrangements were unable to enroll in certain public school districts through the use of statutorily created custody by mandate procedures; those school districts refused to honor properly executed custody by mandate affidavits. Ellis authored a policy paper examining the validity of these districts' policies and identifying an array of solutions that might improve vulnerable students' access to Louisiana public schools.

Julie M. Lafargue  
Shreveport

Julie M. Lafargue has practiced law for over 30 years in Shreveport, focusing her practice on expropriation and governmental litigation. She is a member of the law firm of Abrams & Lafargue. As president of the Shreveport Bar Association, she re-energized the Shreveport Pro Bono Project, calling upon members of the bar to "Partner with the President" to represent veterans, homeless, and victims of domestic violence. The following year as Shreveport Bar Foundation Vice President, Lafargue facilitated a cooperative agreement between the Pro Bono Project and Legal Services of North Louisiana to provide volunteer attorneys who could represent clients referred from Legal Services. In addition to encouraging attorneys to volunteer their services to the needy, Lafargue regularly works at outreach programs for the elderly, homeless, veterans, and victims of domestic violence.

Lafargue was nominated for this award by Magistrate Judge Roy S. Payne.

Wendy Hickok Robinson  
New Orleans

Wendy Hickok Robinson is Assistant General Counsel in the Litigation Group at Entergy Services Inc. She graduated from Yale University with a BA in Russian and from Columbia University School of Law. Following her graduation, Robinson served as a law clerk for Hon. Jerry Buchmeyer, U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Texas. She was awarded a Public Interest Fellowship from Skadden Arps, which she pursued at New Orleans Legal Assistance Corporation. Robinson then joined Gordon Arata where she became a partner in the commercial litigation section. Since 2010, Robinson has worked in-house on significant litigation for Entergy, as well as serving as co-chair of the Legal Department's Pro Bono Initiative. She handles numerous pro bono cases and leads the Criminal District Court Self-Help Desk. Robinson serves on the Boards of Directors of the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center and the Pro Bono Project. She is also currently president of the New Orleans Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

Hugh R. Straub  
New Orleans

Hugh R. Straub is a graduate of SUNY Maritime College and Tulane Law School. His ship casualty practice began at the admiralty firm of Terriberry Carroll and Yancey. Thirty-four years later, Terriberry merged with Phelps Dunbar and Straub became a Phelps partner. He took of counsel status in 2012.

With encouragement and the help of a young Phelps' lawyer, Straub accepted the pro bono defense of a teenager charged with murder. Currently, Straub participates twice weekly at the Self-Help Resource Center at Orleans Civil District Court, a service he finds particularly rewarding. Additionally, he oversees a weekly free citizenship program and provides free notary services through the public library. He is active in the Order of St. Lazarus, the Episcopal Church and the Louisiana Interchurch Conference.

K. Wade Trahan  
Lafayette

K. Wade Trahan is a partner with the firm of Ottinger Hebert L.L.C. in Lafayette. He has practiced general civil litigation in the Acadiana area for 24 years. He is also an adjunct professor of Business Law at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He obtained his law degree from the Southern University Law Center and his undergraduate degree in geology from the University of Southwestern Louisiana.

Trahan participates in the Homeless Experience Legal Protection (H.E.L.P.) Program administered by the Lafayette Parish Bar Association. He has been volunteering with the program since 2007. In 2013, he assisted 108 clients for the H.E.L.P. Program and handled

multiple probate matters for indigent individuals. Because of his service, he has received the “Top H.E.L.P. Award” for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013. In 2013, he was also presented A Pro Bono Century Award by the Louisiana State Bar Association.

Trahan also donates his time to the Down’s syndrome Association of Acadiana and is an Extraordinary Minister at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church.

**Pro Bono Publico Award** recognizes an attorney, or law firm, that has provided pro bono legal services to the citizens of Louisiana that meets or exceeds the aspirational goal of providing 50 hours of pro bono services per year, as established in Rule 6.1 of Louisiana’s Rules of Professional Conduct.

Office of the Attorney General - Alexandria  
Alexandria

The Office of the Attorney General, Alexandria Litigation satellite location was opened in 1995. The office serves the litigation needs of the Office of Risk Management in nine parishes: Avoyelles, Rapides, Natchitoches, Grant, Winn, LaSalle, Catahoula, Vernon and Concordia. The office provides litigation defense in the areas of Road Hazards, Medical Malpractice, Civil Rights, General Liability, and Workers’ Compensation to state agencies such as the Department of Transportation and Development, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, State Charitable Medical Service Providers, and various state employers and employees.

In addition, the attorney’s in the Alexandria office believe their expertise and talents can be used to provide representation to those in the community who would otherwise be without access to the legal system and counsel. In particular, Leanne Bridges, Paula Miles, Victoria Murry and Laurel White, have volunteered over 100 pro bono hours to Central Louisiana Pro Bono Project, in their will clinics, divorce clinics and help desk at the courthouse. Additionally, the individual attorneys have accepted other cases such as divorces and name changes.

Phillip J. Antis, Jr.  
New Orleans

Phillip J. Antis, Jr. is a Member of Gordon, Arata, McCollam, Duplantis and Eagan, LLC, where he focuses his practice on commercial litigation. He received his undergraduate degree from James Madison University, and received his law degree from Tulane University Law School in 2004.

Antis is Gordon Arata’s Pro Bono Coordinator, working with the Pro Bono Project to assign attorneys to pro bono cases. He has personally represented several pro bono clients in litigation and family law matters. In 2013, The Pro Bono Project bestowed its Distinguished Service Award to him. Antis recognizes that in many pro bono cases, clients require only a few hours of his time, but those few hours can make a big difference in his client’s life. During the past



several years, he has provided pro bono representation to a client who has struggled with difficult issues of custody and visitation with his former spouse. Antis often volunteers at the Self-Help Resource Center at CDC. He is also deeply involved in his church's community outreach activities, which has included helping to host thousands of volunteers from around the country who assisted in the rebuilding of homes in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

Robert T. Binney  
Slidell

Robert T. Binney is a graduate of the University of New Orleans and Mississippi College of Law. He has been practicing law for one year and has established a private practice in Slidell. He is a member of the 22nd JDC Bar Association.

Binney's practice focuses primarily on family law, an area of practice that he has been interested in since law school. He has dedicated numerous hours of volunteer time in this much need area at Southeast Louisiana Legal Services' North Shore Pro Bono Project. As an eager and enthusiastic young attorney, Binney has demonstrated dedication to legal services to the poor. He has accepted 12 pro bono cases in the past year (his first year of practice). In providing legal services to these indigent clients, he has gone above and beyond the usual scope of representation. Binney personally searched for the whereabouts of defendants for service purposes to spare the clients the expenses of curator fees.

R. Alan Breithaupt  
Monroe

R. Alan Breithaupt has practiced civil litigation in Monroe since 1993. He is a Member of Breithaupt, Dunn, DuBos, Shafto & Wolleson, L.L.C. Breithaupt earned his JD from Southern Methodist University School of Law in 1993. He has served multiple terms as the secretary-treasurer of the Fourth Judicial District Bar Association, and also served as the president in 2013.

During his term as the local bar president, Breithaupt helped establish the Northeast Louisiana Bar Foundation for Morehouse and Ouachita Parishes. The fundamental purpose of the organization is to create an infrastructure that will enable local volunteer attorneys to coordinate their pro bono efforts in a manner that will optimize the resources available to underserved, indigent civil litigants.

Booker T. Carmichael  
Baton Rouge

Booker T. Carmichael is in private practice in Baton Rouge. He is a 2000 graduate of Grambling State University and 2003 graduate of Southern University Law Center. Under the supervision of Chapter 7 Bankruptcy Trustee Dwayne M. Murray, Carmichael became the first law student to ever practice and/or be admitted in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of

Louisiana. Since graduation from law school, Carmichael has established a Bankruptcy Law Clinic at his alma mater which provides for the legal needs of low-income individuals in financial straits while simultaneously allowing law students to gain them hands-on experience in this area of the law. Through these means, he has encouraged many new attorneys to volunteer and become active in the Baton Rouge Bar Association's Pro Bono Project. On behalf of the Southern University Law Clinic and his private practice, Carmichael has accepted 28 pro bono bankruptcy cases and donated over 136 hours of time.

Michele M. Echols  
Covington

Michele M. Echols is a Tax Law Specialist certified by the Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization. She concentrates her law practice in the areas of taxation, estate planning, successions and corporations. She graduated from Loyola School of Law in New Orleans and received an MBA from Loyola in 1998. Echols received an LL.M. in Taxation from the University Of Florida School Of Law in 1999. She received her BBA from Loyola (cum laude).

Echols is a member of the Covington Bar Association and the Northshore Estate Planning Council. She is a past president of the Professional Women of St. Tammany (PWST), where she volunteers for Habitat for Humanity and raised thousands of dollars for scholarships. While attending law school, Echols was a volunteer with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. She is a past board member for Hope House, the Children's Advocacy Center of St. Tammany and Washington parishes. In October 2012, Echols' firm was awarded the Southeast Legal Services North Shore Pro Bono Project Award for assisting individuals in the community with legal matters.

Entergy Corporation - New Orleans Office Legal Department  
New Orleans

In 2012, Marcus V. Brown, Entergy's new General Counsel, began a Pro Bono Initiative to increase the amount of help lawyers provide to some of the most vulnerable citizens in its service territories. The participation rate of the Legal Department's 75 lawyers quadrupled and pro bono hours more than tripled to 1,517 hours in 2013 alone. Volunteers staffed clinics and handled many individual cases: adoptions, divorces, wills, successions, and even assisting a French-speaking victim of human trafficking.

Entergy Corporation's Legal Department in the New Orleans office is being recognized for taking responsibility for the Orleans Parish Civil District Court's Self-Help Resource Center (SHRC). Each week, four to six Entergy attorneys staff the SHRC and assist self-represented litigants with domestic cases. The Department also helped develop form pleadings, has taken the lead on recruiting and training new volunteers, and set up an efficient system to sign up and track volunteers. Entergy's leadership has made the SHRC the first stop for unrepresented individuals in Orleans Parish, a critical service in a city where many residents live below the poverty threshold, and free legal service programs are overwhelmed.

Michael D. Ferachi  
Baton Rouge

Michael D. Ferachi is a member of the Baton Rouge office of McGlinchey Stafford. His primary emphasis is on commercial litigation. Ferachi has never refused to handle a case for the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation's pro bono project, and he has never returned an incomplete active case to the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation. In addition to handling pro bono cases himself, Ferachi was involved with the drafting of his firm's pro bono policy. The policy not only encouraged attorneys to handle pro bono cases, but it also allowed them to use the hours they worked on the pro bono matters to be credited toward their firm's internal budgets. Ferachi is also very active in his church's ministry providing food for the homeless.

Valerie Gotch Garrett  
Lafayette

Valerie Gotch Garrett is in private practice in Lafayette. She is a graduate of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Southern Law School. Garrett has served as a contract attorney for Acadiana Legal Services, as a criminal public defender in the 15th Judicial District Court, and as a Criminal Justice Act Panel federal public defender.

Garrett has provided extensive amounts of pro bono work in the family law area. She has served as a Lafayette Volunteer Lawyer (LVL) pro bono attorney since 1996. In 2013 she handled over 10 cases, including divorces, custody, and protective order cases. Garrett has also served on the Lafayette Airport Commission, the Louisiana State Bar Association's Diversity and Children's Law Committees, the Family Law Section of the Lafayette Parish Bar, the American Women's Business Association, and the Upper North Lafayette Advisory Council. She is an active member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce.

Catharine O. Gracia  
New Orleans

Catharine O. Gracia is in-house counsel at Entergy Corporation in New Orleans. She has been a volunteer with The Pro Bono Project since 1987. As part of The Project's title-clearing program, Gracia carved out a niche by serving as curator for absentee co-owners so title could be consolidated and heirs could get Road Home funds and insurance proceeds. She served as curator for multiple heirs, thereby decreasing the time and effort involved in locating a curator for each absentee. Gracia also handles interdiction cases for The Pro Bono Project, an emotionally taxing area in which few attorneys are willing to do pro bono work. Gracia has been an enthusiastic volunteer at the Self-Help Desk in Orleans Civil District Court, where she assisted self-represented litigants, particularly in family matters, with the seemingly overwhelming task of maneuvering their way through an unfamiliar and daunting court system.

Kenneth W. Jones, Jr.  
Lafayette

Kenneth W. Jones, Jr. is a graduate of The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina. He earned his law degree at the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center and began practicing law in 1995; he is currently in private practice in Lafayette. His work focuses on civil and commercial litigation, governmental liability and insurance defense, corporate and contract law, and personal injury cases.

Jones began performing pro bono work as an associate at his first law firm, Laborde & Neuner. He quickly learned that giving a voice to the voiceless and providing quality representation are indeed privileges and very rewarding experiences in the practice of law. An active member of the Lafayette Volunteer Lawyers (LVL) program ever since, Jones has represented many clients in domestic and other pro bono matters, both for the LVL and independently. He is a past president of the LVL and an ongoing member of its Protective Order Panel. In 2013, the LVL honored Jones with its Outstanding Attorney Award and its Top Protective Order Award for his volunteer work with the program.

Judith R. Kennedy  
Lafayette

Judith R. Kennedy, a 1997 graduate of the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center, began her legal career by clerking for Hon. John M. Duhe, Jr. at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. She is a Junior League of Lafayette sustainer, a member of the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist parish council, and a member and officer of Friends of the Humanities. She is also a member of the Louisiana Bar Foundation, having served on or chaired its Domestic Abuse Grants Committee for several years.

After two years with a firm, Kennedy opened her solo practice in 2001, focusing on domestic issues and family law. From the beginning of her practice, she accepted appointments and volunteered for pro bono cases, including representation of victims of domestic violence. In addition to holding various positions in the Family Law Section of the Louisiana State Bar Association, Kennedy has been recognized as an outstanding volunteer attorney by the Lafayette Volunteer Lawyers since 2000 and last year received its 2013 Solo Practitioner Award. She is a firm believer in giving back to her community.

Robert C. Owsley  
Natchitoches

Robert C. Owsley is a senior attorney with the Murchison and Murchison Law Firm in Natchitoches, and specializes in family law and civil litigation. He earned his law degree from Tulane University and his undergraduate degree from Louisiana State University. He worked for Kisatchie Legal Services/Legal Services of North Louisiana (LSNL) from 1996 through 2004. After leaving to join his present firm, he recognized the continued need for legal services for the poor and indigent. As such, he offers his services pro bono to individuals with family legal issues in North Louisiana. LSNL staff members say Owsley never refuses to accept a case and treats his pro bono clients with the same respect and level of service he provides his own, paying clients. In recognition of his pro bono service, he has received the Pro Bono Attorney of the Year Award from LSNL from 2004 through 2013.

Sherrye K. Palmer  
St. Amant

Sherrye K. Palmer is a solo practitioner working primarily in the area of bankruptcy law. She maintains an office in St. Amant, La. and practices across the Greater Baton Rouge area. Prior to embarking on her career as a lawyer, Palmer worked as a registered nurse, small business owner, business administrator and civil servant. She is a member of the Baton Rouge Bar Association, Louisiana State Bar Association, American Bar Association, Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity International, the Health Law Society, American Nurses Association, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Harley Owners Group and Ladies of Harley.

Palmer volunteers with the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation Pro Bono Program. Since admission to the bar in May 2011, she has donated numerous hours of pro bono service, of which 63 hours were performed in 2013. Palmer's pro bono work includes extensive client representation and advice or counseling at the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation outreach clinics. She has consistently promoted pro bono service among her fellow volunteers, including her fellow young lawyers.

Sandra L. Sutak  
New Orleans

Sandra L. Sutak is a volunteer with The Pro Bono Project and is an essential part its program to represent neglected and abused children in the Juvenile Court of Jefferson Parish. A thoughtful and compassionate advocate, Sutak has represented eight children in the past three years, and has contributed over 400 hours in doing that work. Some of her cases have been heartrending, like the infant who came into care after testing positive for cocaine at birth. Sutak was also a great help in training future volunteers by participating on a CLE training panel with other attorneys from her firm, Krebs, Farley & Pelleteri. The panel discussed courtroom procedures and customs, as well as the unique challenges in handling Children in Need of Care (CINC) cases. These challenges have become more pronounced in recent years, in large part because Louisiana has cut the number of caseworkers at the Department of Child and Family Services by 19% since

2009. Sutak is grateful for the opportunity to work with the dedicated members of The Project in ensuring stability and permanency for child clients, and is honored to be recognized for her work.

Zebulon M. Winstead  
Alexandria

Zebulon “Zeb” M. Winstead is managing partner of Crowell & Owens, LLC. His primary work concentrates on closely held family enterprises, estate planning and succession work. Winstead obtained his law degree from Tulane University School of Law in 2002 after completing his undergraduate studies at the University of Mississippi in 1999. He moved to Alexandria immediately after completing the Louisiana bar exam and has practiced law there for the past 12 years. He is also licensed to practice law in the state of Mississippi.

When serving as the president of the Alexandria Bar Association, Winstead and the local judges founded a Self-Help Resource Center in the 9th Judicial District Court for individuals who are unable or unwilling to hire an attorney. Winstead also volunteers hundreds of hours a year representing the abused and neglected children of Rapides Parish as a volunteer Children In Need of Care (CINC) attorney and continues to take referrals from the Central Louisiana Pro Bono Project. He is also active with the Louisiana Bar Foundation as the chair of the Central Community Partnership Panel, and with the state bar serving as a member of the Client Assistance Committee along with other state bar activities. In recognition of his pro bono work, Winstead received the 2013 MVP award from the Central Louisiana Pro Bono Project, Inc.

Amy M. Winters  
New Orleans

Amy M. Winters has been a volunteer attorney for The Pro Bono Project since 2010. She is a partner in the Business & Commercial Litigation Practice Group at Jones Walker LLP, which she joined in 1994. With more than 25 years of legal experience, Winters focuses her practice on the health care industry, family law and general litigation. She is qualified and registered as a Mediator pursuant to the Louisiana Mediation Registry for Child Custody and Visitation and is a member of the Panel of Mediator for the Family Law Courts of Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans.

In her work for the Pro Bono Project, Winters has consistently helped with some of the more difficult family law matters, including custody battles. Her dedication to assisting with such complicated cases is one necessary step to helping families create better lives. Winters was honored by The Pro Bono Project with a Distinguished Service Award in 2013 in recognition of her pro bono work and more than 100 hours of service in disputed custody battles and contested family law cases.

**Career Public Interest Award**, recognizes any individual (attorney or non-attorney) in the state of Louisiana who has devoted at least 10 years of his/her career to public interest legal work; demonstrated excellence in his or her work; demonstrated leadership within his/her organization; and provided significant service on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised.

Gregory L. Landry  
Lafayette

Gregory L. Landry's public interest legal career spans 3 decades, most of it devoted to fighting to ensure that his indigent clients at Acadiana Legal Service Corporation were provided fair opportunity in Louisiana's courts. Landry, working initially as a paralegal, soon yielded to his desire to practice public interest law and earned his JD from LSU Law School. As a staff attorney at Acadiana, he was soon promoted to Branch Office Manager; he has served as leader of the Litigation Unit since 1988.

Landry has brought his expertise, leadership, legal and technology skills to numerous justice community organizations, including The Advocacy Center and several LSBA Access to Justice Subcommittees. He has shared his knowledge through hundreds of educational programs for the general public and practicing attorneys. His help is regularly sought by co-workers and outside advocates for the disadvantaged. Landry has not limited his service to these pursuits. Annually, he contributes over 200 pro bono hours serving on various non-profit boards/committees and conducting training on legal issues, strategic planning, and grants.

**David A. Hamilton Lifetime Achievement Award** recognizes a Louisiana attorney who demonstrates a commitment to the provision of legal services to the poor, has made significant contributions to enhance the pro bono movement in Louisiana over their lifetime, and has shown significant leadership and service on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised.

Mark C. Surprenant  
New Orleans

Mark C. Surprenant, the 2013-14 President of the New Orleans Bar Association and a partner at Adams and Reese LLP, has devoted countless hours to numerous pro bono and community organizations since he began practicing law in 1977. Surprenant served as chair of The Pro Bono Project's Board of Directors; was on its Board for over 10 years and is currently a member of its Resource Development Committee. He consistently handles pro bono cases through The Project. Surprenant, a member of Louisiana State Bar Association's Community Action Committee since its inception in 1996, served as chair from 1996-99, and again from 2009-12. In 1988, he created H.U.G.S. — Adams and Reese's corporate philanthropy program — and in 2000, he established CA&RE — the firm's pro bono program. His most recent honors include the Loving Cup Award from The Times-Picayune (2013); the William Reece Smith, Jr. Special Services Pro Bono Award from the National Association of Pro Bono Professionals (2013); and the Pro Bono Award from the Legal Services Corporation (2013).

The **Leah Hipple McKay Memorial Award for Outstanding Volunteerism** is presented to an individual who has displayed a deep commitment to civic involvement and made significant long-term volunteer contributions.

Brian D. Lenard  
Hammond

Brian D. Lenard has been the Executive Director of Southeast Louisiana Legal Services for the past 36 years. He retired his position in May 2014. He has led the agency, now the largest legal services agency in Louisiana covering 22 parishes, through the most difficult of times, including post Katrina/Rita and after the BP oil spill.

As a young attorney in 1982, Lenard joined the board of the Southeast Spouse Abuse Program where he has generously given of his time and talents for almost three decades. In 2009, he was appointed to the Board of Directors of the National Center for Survivor Agencies and Justice (CSAJ) which provides technical assistance to the national network of over 200 legal agencies receiving funding from the Office of Violence Against Women and the U.S. Department of Justice.

In 1982, Lenard joined the Tangipahoa Social Services Council, which coordinates services, resources and information sharing across a wide spectrum of community needs. His significant accomplishments there include serving in various leadership capacities for approximately 25 years, including previously serving as the chairman and secretary of the board. He also has served as chair of the agency's United Way Committee and Resource Directory Committee.

For the fifth year, the **Pro Bono Century Award** was also handed out. This award recognizes attorneys that have shown consummate pro bono leadership by completing one-hundred hours of service from January 2013 through December 2013.

2014 Recipients:

Phillip J. Antis, Jr.  
John O. Brady  
Scott Brown  
Booker T. Carmichael  
William G. Cherbonnier  
Jeffrey K. Coreil  
Anderson O. Dotson, III  
Elizabeth Dugal  
Bradford H. Felder  
Valerie G. Garrett  
Catharine O. Gracia  
Mitchell P. Hasenkampf



Kenneth W. Jones, Jr.  
Judith R. Kennedy  
Greg A. Koury  
Cliff A. Lacour  
Seth T. Mansfield  
Gary K. McKenzie  
Patrick O'Hara  
Annette N. Peltier  
Chris K. Ralson  
James C. Rather, Jr.  
Dona K. Renegar  
Wendy Hickok Robinson  
Marcus J. Roots  
Dwazendra J. Smith  
Grady M. Spears  
Gregory T. Stevens  
Mark C. Surprenant  
Sandra L. Sutak  
K. Wade Trahan  
Amy M. Winters

To view photographs from the event, please click on the following link:  
<http://www.lsba.org/NewsAndPublications/PressPhotos.aspx?PRPA=38>. The Louisiana State Bar Association assists its more than 21,000 members in the practice of law.

The statewide association, as part of its multi-faceted mission, promotes and maintains access to justice initiatives for the state's residents, assists the Louisiana Supreme Court in its regulation of the practice of law, upholds the honor of the courts and the profession, and supports programs that increase public understanding of and respect for the law