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Joseph L. (Larry) Shea, Jr. Installed as 74th President of the Louisiana State Bar Association

NEW ORLEANS—Joseph L. (Larry) Shea, Jr., a member in the Shreveport office of Bradley Murchison Kelly & Shea, L.L.C., was installed June 5 as the 74th president of the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) during the LSBA's Annual Meeting in Destin, Fla. Administering Shea's oath of office was Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson.

Shea said one of his main goals during his term is to offer increased and meaningful outreach to all parts of the state — reminding members of the Bar's vast array of programs and valuable services, while effectively weaving the needs and interests of northern, southern, eastern and western members into a unified association, with all sectors working together for the benefit of the whole.

"If I had to pick one theme for my term, I want us to 'Come Together' all across the state and address the needs of the profession and our service to the public. There are tremendous, important issues out there. There is the need for us to provide the basic legal services to those who can't afford them, both on the criminal and civil side," Shea said. "We are working with the Louisiana Bar Foundation and legal services programs statewide to help the judicial system, which needs adequate funding to best administer the process. There are tremendous needs but also tremendous opportunities. Problems are not problems, but opportunities to do something better."

Toward the goal of increased outreach, Shea would like to create regional panels composed of legal professionals from every part of the state. One job for the panels is the identification of "citizen lawyers," people who practice law but also support their communities in other ways. "We need to recognize those good works of these attorneys in the public media," Shea said.

Shea is a great believer in the process of mentoring newly-admitted attorneys, particularly because of the increased economic challenges facing these new practitioners.

"Back then, if you paid attention in law school, worked hard and did well, you most likely could go anywhere in the state and find a job. Almost every law school graduate had an opportunity to work with someone in the state. It's not that way now," he said. "Economic conditions are such that some law school graduates can't find a job — and these are students who did well in law school. It forces these graduates to hang out a shingle and try to do it on their own. You can go to law school, but it's also important to get some direction in the practical aspects of practicing law. You need someone with experience to offer guidance. That brings me to the LSBA's Mentoring Program."

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Shea is proud that Shreveport attorneys and legal organizations are taking an active role in the pilot LSBA Mentoring Program. The LSBA will activate its mentoring program in early 2015, first in Shreveport, Baton Rouge and New Orleans, then in other parts of the state.

Shea also wants to continue his outreach efforts through the Leadership LSBA program. Through their year-long commitment in the program, young lawyers are introduced to the workings of the association and its governing bodies and committees. It allows them to get into the “leadership pipeline” to further advance their involvement in the association.

“I have the opportunity to meet young lawyers all over the state who would be great assets to the state Bar. If they participate in state Bar activities, they will find it incredibly rewarding. It’s an opportunity to do some good for the public and their practices. In the end, today’s young lawyers are the next group of people who will be taking over the reins one day,” Shea said.

Shea received a bachelor of arts degree in 1974 from Tulane University and his Juris Doctor degree in 1978 from Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center. While at LSU Law Center, he served as executive editor of the *Louisiana Law Review* and was named to the Order of the Coif. He was admitted to practice law in Louisiana in 1978 and in Texas in 1996.

His practice involves oil and gas litigation and contract work, representing both independent producers and some traded companies. He also handles other types of litigation and transactional work, including environmental litigation.

Shea served as 2013-14 LSBA president-elect and has chaired the LSBA’s Ethics Advisory Service Subcommittee and the Multijurisdictional Practice Committee. He also served on the Ethics 2000 Committee. He received the LSBA President’s Award in 2002.

He chaired the Louisiana Bar Foundation’s Northwest Community Partnership Panel and is a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates and the Harry V. Booth and Judge Henry A. Politz American Inn of Court. He served as an adjunct professor of business law from 1998-2010 at Centenary College.

He was inducted into the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center Hall of Fame. He also has been listed in 2009-14 *The Best Lawyers in America* directories, including as 2013 Shreveport Litigation-Environmental Lawyer of the Year and 2014 Shreveport Mass Tort Litigation/Class Actions-Defendants Lawyer of the Year; in 2008-13 *Louisiana Super Lawyers* directories; and in the 2013-14 *Chambers USA* directory as a leader in the field for Energy & Natural Resources: Oil & Gas.

Shea and his wife, Jane, have been married for 40 years and are the parents of two children.

The Louisiana State Bar Association assists its more than 22,000 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.