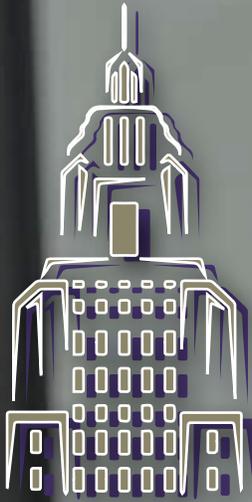


VOL. 7, ISSUE 2 | March/April 2024



THE BATON ROUGE LAWYER

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BATON ROUGE BAR ASSOCIATION



Saluting Women Lawyers for Women's History Month



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On the Cover

On the cover of the March/April 2024 issue is a photo of Christine Lipsey, who recently moderated a discussion with LSU Law Dean Alena Allen. Lipsey served as the first woman president of the BRBA in 1995.

Cover photo was taken by Steve Sanoski, LSU Law.

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Photographed during a round table discussion are (L to R) BRBA past presidents Judge Fred Crifasi, Leo C. Hamilton and Christine Lipsey. Read Steve Sanoski's article on page 10.

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The Baton Rouge Lawyer supports participation of the membership in its production. We encourage the submission of articles and letters to the editor. Single-spaced, typed articles in Word should be fewer than 1,800 words including endnotes. Please email article submissions to: pam@brba.org.

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Hotel Reservation Information: A block of rooms at the conference are reserved at Perdido Beach Resort. To make your reservation, go to: <https://www.perdidobeachresort.com>, booking I.D.# 19649. Call in reservations: (800) 634-8001. Room block is available April 2 - 7. Complete and mail this registration form to: BRBA, P. O. Box 2241, Baton Rouge, LA 70821.

Conference Registration: The conference offers 12.5 CLE credit hours, including ethics and professionalism. Registration fees include registrant's CLE seminar materials, coffee breaks and evening social events. Fax completed form to: 225-344-4805.

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____ GUEST/SPOUSE: Please register my guest/spouse for the Bench Bar Conference at no additional fee. Guest/spouse must be registered to receive event tickets to the Thursday night cocktail reception and Friday dance. ***This does not apply for social-only registrants.***

Name of guest/spouse: _____

Registration Options: The listed rates listed below apply to attendees staying at Perdido Beach Resort.

____ **First-Timer Registration for BRBA members** (Limited to the first 20 BRBA members who have never attended the conference and who registers by March 4, 2024). \$450 _____

____ **Regular Registration** (Begins February 22, 2024). \$725 _____

____ **Late Registration** (Begins March 13, 2024). \$800 _____

____ **Judicial Registration** (for all judges). \$595 _____

____ **Special Rates for Section Members** (BRBA Young Lawyers & Government Lawyers) \$525 _____

____ **Social-Only Registration**
____ *Staying Onsite* \$350 _____
(Limited to the first 10 BRBA members who register by March 4, 2024. Social-only registrants bringing a guest/spouse must complete a separate registration below (See indented "Additional Guest Registration" section below.)

____ **Non-member Registration** (Applies to lawyers who are not members of the BRBA) \$900 _____

____ **Offsite Accommodations** (Please add an additional fee of \$200 to your registration if you are staying in accommodations other than Perdido Beach Resort. This fee is refundable if we meet our room block. We negotiated a block of rooms at Perdido Beach Resort at special conference rates and we are financially committed to filling the room block.) \$200 _____

Additional Guest Registration: Each guest receives one ticket to the Thursday and Friday night social events.

Children's Name(s): (Include first and last names): _____

____ **Children Under Age 4** # persons @ \$0 \$0 _____

____ **Children Age 5-12** # persons @ \$70 \$ _____

____ **Children Age 13-18** # persons @ \$95 \$ _____

(Children's registration fees include nametags and one ticket to the Thursday and Friday night social events.)

____ **Guest over Age 18 (Include first and last names):** _____

..... # persons @ \$150 \$ _____

TOTAL # of persons _____ @ \$ _____

Official Conference T-Shirts for Guest Registrants: T-Shirt must be pre-ordered and will not be available for purchase at the conference. Order deadline is March 4, 2024. (Note: you will receive one T-Shirt with your conference registration.)

Please check the appropriate size(s): **ADULT:** ____ S | ____ M | ____ L | ____ XL | ____ 2XL | ____ 3XL; **CHILD:** ____ S | ____ M | ____ L
..... # quantity of shirts needed @ \$20 each = Total: \$ _____

Office Use Only: Check No. _____ Grand Total: \$ _____

TOTAL: Grand total enclosed: _____ (Include all ticket fees with grand total.)

Return checks to: Baton Rouge Bar Association, P.O. Box 2241, Baton Rouge, LA 70821.

Perdido Beach Resort April 3-6, 2024

Letter from the President *by Luke Williamson*

Callin' Baton Rouge

Some of my fondest, strongest and, yet, vaguest memories arising from practicing law over the last 29 years have come from one event—the Bench Bar Conference. One of the traditions that sets the Baton Rouge Bar Association apart from other bars is this annual migration of judges, lawyers and their respective families to a multi-day conference at a beach resort for CLE, camaraderie and revelry away from the hyper-competitive practice of law.

I missed only one Bench Bar in the last quarter century. Frankly, I wouldn't have it any other way. Bench Bar has played a monumental role in the advancement of my career, development of friendships and my understanding of the congenial nature of the Baton Rouge lawyer community. If I am not being clear, you need to attend. Where else can you obtain outstanding, curated continuing legal education, have a beer with a judge by the pool, mingle at cocktail parties all evening and then catch a shuttle to the Flora-Bama?

This year the Bench Bar Conference is scheduled for April 3 - 6 at the Perdido Beach Resort. In the decade since we last held the event at this venerable establishment, the resort has undergone a near complete renovation. The resort has a great outdoor pool featuring live music and full beach amenities and is near shopping, restaurants and the world famous Flora-Bama. The theme this year is "Friends in Law Places," which just about sums it up.

We will have loads of activities that will encourage development of new friendships, rekindle old ones and break down barriers.

Thursday afternoon activities will include an afternoon CLE followed by an outdoor dinner/cocktail party with live music; Kati-oke/Karaoke featuring DJ Meaux Money; and will wrap up with shuttles to the Flora-Bama, if so inclined.

Friday morning begins with CLE and Bench Bar Yoga, followed by afternoon beach and pool time; a Bench Bar trivia contest; a Bench Bar dance featuring Phat Hat (great funk band); and once again, shuttles to the Flora-Bama.

Saturday starts strong with morning CLE, followed by afternoon golf; beach and pool time; and more shuttles to the Flora-Bama.



Luke Williamson

I attempted to collect a series of fun, hilarious anecdotes about past Bench Bars to encourage attendance, but what happens at Bench Bar outside of the valuable CLE offerings ought to remain at Bench Bar. Instead, I must acknowledge the role of the judges. We are beyond fortunate that Baton Rouge area judges make attendance at Bench Bar a priority. Our judicial participation

is unsurpassed. Without the judges and their unyielding support, what I consider to be the best of the BRBA events would be greatly diminished. Thank you to Judge Tarvald Smith for serving as the 2024 Bench Bar judicial liaison.

Also, I would like to thank Anthony Gambino and Brad Cranmer for chairing this year's event (yeoman's work), all the Bench Bar Committee members for their input and participation, and Valerie Bargas and Kelley Dick Jr. for heading up sponsorship. Finally, Chris Billings has led the CLE Committee in putting together a broad ranged and exciting CLE program. We will cover hot topics like AI, social media and voir dire, have multiple judicial panels and a headliner—a reenactment of the legal proceedings surrounding James Meredith's integration of the University of Mississippi.

Bench Bar has been foundational for my legal career. If you want to get a jump start on your career or reignite it, turn acquaintances into friends, take a deductible hiatus from work or just pass a good time, I encourage you to register. I hope to see you there.

BRBA BENCH BAR CONFERENCE 2024

APRIL 3-6

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March/April 2024

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Save the Date:

YLS Cocktails with the
Court | 5:30 p.m. May 9

@ City Club of Baton Rouge

Message to Young Lawyers

Opportunities

by Brad Cranmer, 2024 YLS Chair

As we set our sights on the horizon, I want to share some insights and highlight opportunities that lie ahead for our dynamic group.

Who Is a Young Lawyer?

At the heart of our bar association are the young lawyers, a term defined as an attorney who has not yet reached his or her 39th birthday or who has been practicing for less than five years, whichever is later. Importantly, there is no additional fee to be a member of the Young Lawyers Section—a testament to our commitment to inclusivity and accessibility.



Brad Cranmer

Purpose of the Young Lawyers Section

Our mission is clear, and our goals are ambitious. The YLS is here:

- To coordinate and implement new membership in the Baton Rouge Bar Association, guiding young lawyers seamlessly into the BRBA's committee system.
- To promote professional and social understanding and cooperation among young and recently admitted lawyers, fostering a supportive community.
- To motivate our present membership to become active in the Section's membership and the broader committee process.
- To identify and uplift underrepresented or relatively inactive sectors of the membership, ensuring a diverse and engaged legal community.
- To coordinate and implement an annual new member reception and orientation, creating a welcoming space for new faces alongside the esteemed judiciary and BRBA members.
- To take various actions and perform functions as deemed appropriate by the Council to enhance the impact of the section.

Meet Your New Council

As your new YLS chair, I am delighted to introduce the new council members who will be working tirelessly to make this year a success. Join me in welcoming Quinn Brown as YLS

chair-elect and Kolby Marchand as secretary. This year's YLS council members are Cornelius Troy Hall, Emily Lindig, Candace B. Ford, Patrick Riley and Josef P. Ventulan. These individuals bring diverse perspectives and a shared commitment to making a positive impact on our legal community.

Upcoming Events

We will be creating experiences tailored to the dynamic and diverse talents within our section. From engaging workshops that unravel the intricacies of emerging legal landscapes to social gatherings that foster connections beyond the courtroom, we have a lineup that is as diverse as our collective legal expertise.

- **Annual Bench Bar Conference:** April 3 - 6 at Perdido Beach Resort, featuring a YLS-sponsored Happy Hour with the judiciary in attendance.
- **Cocktails with the Court:** May 9 at City Club of Baton Rouge.
- **Sidebar Luncheons:** Multiple opportunities to connect with various courts around Baton Rouge.
- **YLS Bar Luncheon:** Date to be determined.
- **Quarterly Thirsty Thursdays:** A casual setting for networking and camaraderie with a sponsored bar tab.
- **Belly Up with the Bar:** An annual fundraiser and cooking competition including food, drinks and fun for all.

But that's not all—we're turning the spotlight on you. This year, we're rolling out opportunities for you to share your insights, lead discussions and be the voice of our vibrant legal community. Your unique perspectives are the driving force behind our section's success, and we're ready to champion your contributions.

Seize These Opportunities

Now, more than ever, is the time to get involved. Attend these events, engage with your fellow young lawyers and take advantage of the opportunities that the YLS provides for professional and personal growth. We also welcome your innovative ideas to enhance our section further.

As we embark on this journey together, I encourage each of you to bring your energy, passion and creativity to the YLS.

I'm genuinely excited about the year ahead and the chance to connect with each of you. Let's make the most of these opportunities, creating lasting memories and forging meaningful connections within our legal family.

On the Leading Edge

LSU Law Dean Alena M. Allen, LSU Law Students and Past BRBA Presidents Discuss the Confluence of Leadership and Legal Studies *article and photos by Steve Sanoski*

In a strictly grammatical sense, “law school” and “leadership” are not synonyms. But they certainly are synonymous. From the founding of our country to the present, law schools have served as one of our nation’s primary training grounds for leaders in all walks of life.

Half of the signatures on our Declaration of Independence and Constitutional Convention were those of lawyers. More than half of our presidents have held law degrees. Regardless of where you live, you’ll find lawyers in leadership positions across the government, business, education, military and nonprofit sectors. You’ll also find many local attorneys volunteering to take on key roles in community groups, boards of directors and professional organizations—the Baton Rouge Bar Association serving as just one fine example.

LSU Law has been under new leadership since July 1, 2023, when New Orleans native Alena M. Allen returned home to Louisiana to begin serving as dean of the state’s flagship law school. Allen was previously deputy director for the Association of American Law Schools and a professor at the University of Arkansas School of Law. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Loyola University New Orleans and her law degree from Yale Law School, where she served as articles editor of the *Yale Journal of Regulation*.

Many BRBA members met Allen in late November when she presented at the association’s Bar Luncheon. A week later, she and two LSU Law students joined three former BRBA presidents—who also happen to be LSU Law alumni—to

learn more about one another and have a discussion on the confluence of law school and leadership.

Nineteenth Judicial District Court Judge Fred Crifasi, 1992 LSU Law alumnus who led the BRBA as president in 2010, emphasized one important point about leadership and everyone in the legal profession, regardless of their title.

“Everybody who has a license to practice the law is a leader,” said Crifasi, who has served on the bench since 2018. “That’s why you get the license to practice, to lead—and the importance of that license is sometimes forgotten. It’s a license of agency. You are literally acting on behalf of someone else. You are leading.”



Judge Fred Crifasi is a former president of the BRBA.

Along with Crifasi, former BRBA presidents Leo C. Hamilton and Christine Lipsey joined in the conversation, with Lipsey moderating. Hamilton is a 1977 LSU Law alumnus and partner at Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson who led the BRBA as president in 2002. Lipsey is a 1982 LSU Law alumna who serves as general counsel for McGlinchey and was BRBA president in 1995. They were joined by Allen as well as third-year LSU Law students Brock McKiness and William “Grey” Fitzgerald at the downtown Baton Rouge office of the McGlinchey law firm.

After introductions and some poignant observations about how much more supportive the law

school experience is for current students than it was for the LSU Law alumni—who acknowledged their experience was far more affordable, if not nearly as pleasant—the group began its discussion by listing the characteristics commonly found among great leaders.

“I think courage,” Allen began. “We have to have strong principles and be consistent in applying them. When you do that, you earn the respect of others—and it takes real courage to do that.”

“Courage is also first on my list,” Crifasi agreed, “and then empathy, listening and communication. And then I also think candor and honesty are an absolute must.”

Fitzgerald added kindness to the list, and Lipsey said enthusiasm is also important. McKiness offered yet another perspective, based on his nearly nine years of leadership experience in the U.S. Army, which included two deployments to Afghanistan.

“Adaptability is probably the most key, because every leadership position is different,” said the combat veteran, who played a critical role in the development and launch of the William A. Brookshire Veterans Law Clinic at LSU Law in 2022 and previously served as president of the law school’s Veterans Advocacy Club. “I would also say loyalty, mindfulness and determination are character strengths that I find most common in the greatest leaders.”

Although law schools produce countless leaders, the vast majority don’t offer courses that specifically focus on



Photographed (above) are Leo C. Hamilton and Christine Lipsey, both former BRBA presidents.

the development of leadership skills. With that in mind, how are students like Fitzgerald—who didn’t arrive at LSU Law with a great deal of previous leadership experience—developing those skills while they pursue their law degree?

“I’m not a born leader,” acknowledged Fitzgerald, who is president of the Public Interest Law Society (PILS) at LSU Law and serves as a student ambassador, “but there are many ways you can build your leadership skills at LSU Law.”

Along with the numerous student organizations he’s involved in, Fitzgerald

cited his experiences in the LSU Law Wrongful Conviction Clinic as well as a summer spent working with the public defender’s office in his native Sarasota, Florida, as the recipient of a PILS Fellowship.

“With all the tenets of leadership that we’ve defined, the best way I’ve come to develop some of those skills is by being an active member of the community and doing things like tutoring local students,” said Fitzgerald, who recently visited the Math, Science & Arts Academy in St. Gabriel to speak with students.

With the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center being home to more than 30 student organizations, dozens of mock trial teams, a half dozen legal clinics and a wide variety of field-placement opportunities, McKiness said “the opportunities are endless” for students to gain leadership experience at LSU Law.

“There are more opportunities than students,” McKiness said.

“Wow,” Hamilton responded. “To hear about all these opportunities and support groups as you have described them is just amazing when I think about how law school was for me. There was just no such thing. To develop leadership skills, you must have opportunities to participate, work with others and be in situations where ideas are moving back and forth. I have to say that was sorely



LSU Law Dean Alena Allen (center) is seated between law students Brock McKiness and Gray Fitzgerald.

lacking when I was in law school, and I'm glad to hear that things have changed."

Considering the vast and varied opportunities available to students, Allen said, the only thing holding them back from building valuable leadership skills is fear.

"The most important thing for students is to not be afraid to fail," she said. "Law schools and undergraduate institutions offer lots of opportunities to lead and to try new things, but I think too often students are not availing themselves because they don't want to look stupid in front of their peers or faculty members. So what if they fail? You must let go of that fear and take advantage of the opportunities."

Through its Young Lawyers Section, continuing legal education programming and other initiatives, BRBA plays a key role in helping young attorneys in the Baton Rouge area develop their leadership skills. Many BRBA members also serve as mentors to law students, providing them with some of their first hands-on experiences in the legal world. With that in mind, the group pondered whether there are ways for bar associations and law schools to work more closely to better prepare the next generation of leaders.

"Absolutely, and I would only wonder if that's invited," Hamilton said. "Practice is so much different than law school, and that part was very difficult for me to adjust to coming out of law school. I would love to see bar associations more involved with law schools than they are currently."

Allen noted that the Arkansas Bar Association has a Law School Committee whose members visit the state's two law schools for a few days each academic year to sit in on classes and discuss what's happening in legal education with administrators, faculty and staff.

"There's sort of a disconnect between what's happening in law schools today and what people perceive is happening in law schools today," Allen said. "So, I thought it was valuable to have that conversation with members of the bar in a very real and present way."

With Baton Rouge being home to two law schools, Allen suggested the BRBA might consider forming a similar committee to foster greater engagement with LSU Law and the Southern University Law Center.

"What Dean Allen suggests is a great measure of integration that our bar association can embrace. Our Young Lawyers Section has made great strides in this arena over the years, and now even more avenues are available," Crifasi said, noting the BRBA Young Lawyers Section launched the Belly Up with the Bar cooking competition 25 years ago. It has since become one



Leo C. Hamilton is a 1977 LSU Law alumnus and was the first African American lawyer to become president of the Baton Rouge Bar Association.



Dean Allen listens as LSU Law student and PILS President Gray Fitzgerald, contributes to the discussion.

of the most popular annual events for the association, and it always includes teams from each law school.

McKiness and Fitzgerald said they have had numerous interactions with BRBA as law students, but agreed that they would welcome additional opportunities to learn from BRBA programming and members.

"As a law student, the bar associations can feel like this secret society of rule makers that you need to beg for permission to be part of the team," McKiness said. "It's kind of mysterious. But every time we interact with bar members, we find that they're just people like us. People with more experience, but just people, and having more opportunities to learn from them would be huge."

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On Social Media*



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March Bar Luncheon

Celebrating Women’s History Month

March is designated as Women’s History Month each year by presidential proclamation, setting aside this time to honor women’s contributions in American history.

Please join us as we honor women in law at a Women’s History Luncheon Wednesday, **March 27, 2024**, at 11:45 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. at Jubans. This is a joint lunch meeting of the Baton Rouge Bar Association, Baton Rouge Association of Women Attorneys (BRAWA), and the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society and the Federal Bar Association, Baton Rouge Chapter.

Family Court Judge Erika L. Green will moderate a panel of legal trailblazers who will discuss their unique perspectives on the future, the past and the progress made in women’s rights issues.

This CLE presentation provides 1.0 hour of Professionalism credit.

Panel will include:

- **Candace B. Ford**, *U.S. Attorney’s Office, Middle District of Louisiana*
- **Liz Murrill**, *Attorney General of Louisiana*
- **Jan Reeves**, *attorney at law*
- **Mary Roper**, *Roper Ligh*
- **Sharon Starkey Whitlow**, *Whitlow Law Firm*
- **Magistrate Judge Erin Wilder-Doomes**, *U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana*
- **Mary Anne Wolf**, *Keogh Cox*

To attend, complete the form below and submit this entire page to the BRBA via fax at: 225-344-4805. Members of the sponsoring organizations may attend the March Bar Luncheon at Jubans for \$45 per person. RSVP by noon, March 20, 2024.

Date: March 27, 2024

Time: 11:45 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Location: Jubans

Cost: \$45

**CLE credit: 1.0 hour
of Professionalism**



*Judge Erika L. Green,
moderator*



Candace B. Ford



General Liz Murrill



Jan Reeves



Mary E. Roper



*Sharon Starkey
Whitlow*



*Magistrate Judge
Erin Wilder-Doomes*



Mary Anne Wolf

LUNCHEON — YES, register me for the MARCH BAR LUNCHEON at Jubans, 3739 Perkins Road, which will take place Wednesday, March 27, 2024, at 11:45 a.m. for \$45 per BRBA, BRAWA, FBA (Baton Rouge Chapter) or Martinet member. SPACE IS LIMITED. Please reserve your seat by sending this form to Susan Saye via fax (225-344-4805) or email (susan@brba.org) by March 20, 2024. “No shows” will be invoiced. Online registration available at www.BRBA.org.

NAME: _____ FIRM: _____

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**TO REGISTER FOR THIS LUNCHEON AND PAY BY CREDIT CARD, BRBA MEMBERS CAN GO TO
WWW.BRBA.ORG, SELECT THE EVENTS TAB, CLICK ON LIST AND CHOOSE THE APPROPRIATE EVENT.**



VITAL STATISTICS

Position: Judge, The Family Court in and for East Baton Rouge Parish

Age: 38

Born: Baton Rouge, Louisiana

High School: Belaire High School

College: Prairie View A&M University

Law School: Southern University Law Center

Parents: Mr. Elton & Min. Linda Green

Dog: Thurgood

Honorable
Erika L. Green

Interview with Family Court Judge Erika L. Green

by Jennifer Maybery

TBRL: What influenced you to become a lawyer?

EG: I was on the Baton Rouge Bar Mock Trial team two years in high school and a law studies class.

TBRL: If you had not pursued law, what other career choices did you consider?

EG: I might have been a public speaker.

TBRL: This is not your first elected public service position. What was the transition like, going from Metro Council to judge?

EG: I served Metro Council District 5 for six years prior to being elected judge. This district was special because I grew up in the district.

TBRL: What is your advice to lawyers who appear before you?

EG: To be prepared and have professionalism.

TBRL: What most surprised you about the job?

EG: I found the administrative side of the judiciary was surprising.

TBRL: What is the most challenging part of your job?

EG: Domestic violence hearings are challenging.

TBRL: What was the most rewarding?

Though I am hesitant with child interviews, I find that children offer a valuable perspective and give practicality to the cases before me. Their opinions may be skewed, but the interaction with them reinforces the reality of the people behind the caption.

EG: Though I am hesitant with child interviews, I find that children offer a valuable perspective and give practicality to the cases before me. Their opinions may be skewed, but the interaction with them reinforces the reality of the people behind the caption.

TBRL: Who had the most influence on you as a law student? What was that influence and why?

EG: In true transparency, the total experience of Southern University Law Center was influential from the professors, classmates, alumni and clinical experience.

TBRL: What is your favorite music?

EG: Neo-Soul, R&B ('90s) and gospel.

TBRL: What are our hobbies?

EG: Reading, listening to podcasts, traveling and museums..

TBRL: What was your favorite vacation?

EG: Greece

TBRL: If there was a movie about you, who would play your part?

EG: Danielle Brooks.

TBRL: What will you do when you retire?

EG: Travel.

A Salute to Baton Rouge Area Women Lawyers

by John H. Fenner

March is Women's History Month, which celebrates "the often-overlooked contributions of women in history, society, and culture." Every year since 1987, presidential proclamations have declared March as Women's History Month to recognize "the contributions women have made to the United States and [to] recognize the specific achievements women have made over the course of American history in a variety of fields."² *The Baton Rouge Lawyer* joins in commemorating National Women's History Month by featuring profiles of practitioners who have impacted the legal profession locally.

Frances L. Landry

Any tribute to Baton Rouge women attorneys must begin with Frances Landry, who graduated from the LSU Law School in 1934 as the valedictorian of her class, of which she was the only woman. She received numerous honors, including Order of the Coif, Phi Kappa Phi and Mu Sigma Rho. Landry practiced law with her husband, Jules Landry, for 56 years until his death in 1990. She was a special lecturer in the law school in the 1940s and also served as attorney for the tax collector for East Baton Rouge Parish from 1940 to 1946. Mrs. Landry was chosen as the outstanding alumna of the LSU Law School for 1988. She died in 2004.

Landry's grandson, David Borghardt, said, "She was the first woman to serve as a judge in Baton Rouge, doing so as an ad hoc [judge] in city court." Borghardt said his grandmother's longtime friend and mentor, Harriet S. Daggett, was one of the first women to be appointed to the law faculty of a major university. "Daggett inspired my grandmother early on in her career by telling her she had a great legal mind, which my grandmother spoke about to her last days," Borghardt said.



Frances L. Landry



Chief U.S. District Judge Shelly Dick

Borghardt provided a 1990 article from a scrapbook that included quotes from his grandmother. In the article Landry said law practice was lonely for her because of the dearth of women practitioners, even though she "had the spotlight." She found she preferred practice to teaching. Men showed her respect, which she attributed to her reputation as a legal scholar, and judges were "particularly considerate." Landry encouraged women to go to law school, noting that law school was "a wonderful education" and the law was "an honorable profession."³

Landry's father planted the idea that she could become a lawyer, and her mother supported her pursuits completely. In turn, Landry and her husband supported the community through pro bono work.

Chief U.S. District Judge Shelly Dick

Shelly Dick is Chief U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Louisiana. Nominated on April 26, 2012, to the federal bench by President Barack Obama, she has served as a federal judge since May 2013, rising to chief judge in July 2018.

After four years with Dow Chemical, Judge Dick was encouraged to attend law school by her sister-in-law and eventual Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice, Catherine "Kitty" D. Kimball (retired).

"From there it was marriage and a first child, Kelley, born in the fall of my 3L year," Judge Dick said. "I was lucky enough to have a few clerkships, which led to a job as an associate with what was then Gary, Field, Landry and Dornier."

When asked which women most inspired her, Judge Dick mentioned several members of her family, starting with her maternal grandmother, Grace George, who was "born in 1914, went to college at night during the depression while raising three young children and earned her nursing degree." She worked full time as a registered nurse until 80.

Judge Dick found much inspiration from the next two generations, including her mother, sister and sister-in-law. About her mother, Myrna Deckert, Judge Dick said:

She was a visionary, trailblazing, CEO of a non-profit in El Paso, Texas. She died early during the pandemic, but ... we were able to hold her memorial service in 2022 ... at the minor league baseball stadium that she was instrumental in building in El Paso. She loved her city and its people and dedicated her life to making that West Texas border city a wonderful place and a model for other southwestern cities.

She considers her sister, Kim Herrera, to be her best friend and someone she most admires for her tenaciousness and commitment. Judge Dick said:



Mary Olive Pierson

At 18, she married her high school sweetheart, who joined the U.S. Army, moving them and their family around the world. Their first station was in Germany, where she worked full time, began college at night and started her family. After returning stateside, she and her young family moved every one to two years to different military bases. All the while, she went to night school, often losing hard-earned credit hours in the frequent transfer process, ... earn[ing] a bachelor's degree in accounting after 13 persistent years.

Judge Dick said she will be forever grateful to and in awe of her sister-in-law Kitty Kimball, who encouraged her to enroll in law school and who advised her for the last four decades. About Kimball, Judge Dick said:

She was a trailblazer, one of the first women to graduate LSU Law School, the first woman elected to the Louisiana Supreme Court and its first female chief justice. Kitty Ann's courage and her commitment to service inspired me to put my "hat in the ring" when there was a vacancy in the Middle District. She was my biggest cheerleader and supporter during the nomination process.

While Judge Dick appreciates National Women's History Month, she said:

To be honest, I would prefer that women, in whatever profession or in whatever role they play, get their due every month without having to designate a special time for that to happen. To me, that would symbolize better than pretty much anything else, the role women have played in our country and its greatest achievements ... and recognition that any door is open, and will stay open, to them ... equally.

Judge Dick said she appreciates the pains, trials and tribulations of women who have overcome adversity and is especially moved by "[t]he women who work two jobs to make ends meet. The grandmothers who are the primary caregivers for their grandchildren. The women who are nurses and teachers and bank tellers and who drive school buses." While she admires women who are considered to be great female historical figures, such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Justice Ruth Ginsberg and Michelle Obama, "the tenacity and determination of everyday women who go about life and work with a calm resolve" is what inspires her most. Additionally, Judge Dick said she is "most proud of the many law clerks I have had the

good fortune to mentor and come to know since taking the bench."

Mary Olive Pierson

Mary Olive Pierson, who has practiced law for over 50 years, is much like those old EF Hutton commercials: When MOP speaks, people listen.

I come from a family of attorneys, including my father, and his interesting cases were constantly being discussed at meals. I worked during college in the EBR Clerk of Court's office preparing appeals, so I got to read interesting transcripts of real cases (civil and criminal); I was intrigued by the legal logic and presentation of two sides of an argument. I graduated from LSU in 1966 with a degree in accounting, and the job prospects in that field were dull and not challenging. Law school seemed like a logical path down the "Yellow Brick Road" for me.

My career started with being turned down for all but one job: "Sorry, in 1970, no women are being hired." This is when my bad luck ended. ... Two of my classmates, Walter Monsour and Pat Screen, had landed jobs with Ossie Brown, who had dozens, if not hundreds, of clients. Ossie was running for district attorney, so Walter and Pat needed help with Ossie's huge caseload. Voila, my clerkship with Judge Pike Hall of the Louisiana Second Circuit was at an end, and Ossie Brown offered me a job. I immediately accepted the offer. It was a baptism by fire. My first court appearance was in the Louisiana Supreme Court to argue a case involving the "Blue Van," the predecessor of the current roadside alcohol test for DWI.

Pierson said she had to work twice as hard as the men just to be accepted as smart and credible in the early years. "Thank God for Judge Hall, Ossie, Walter and Pat, who considered me their equal in the profession and offered me the opportunity to be a practicing attorney," she said.

Pierson expressed appreciation for her career success and the resulting impact she might have had on the young women who followed in her footsteps. She said:

I am very proud that I have had really good clients and have been involved in highly publicized cases, which I think and hope have been seen by young women who are interested in a legal career and are willing to take the risk of such a career. ... My motto: Do not spend eight or more hours a day in a job you do not like. No amount of money is worth one-third of an unhappy day on earth.

Pierson's mother always supported her. "I am sure she thought I was nuts to go to law school because it was obviously an uphill battle for women in the '70s. She was right, but I got over the hill," Pierson said. She acknowledged there weren't many women mentors or role models at that time, so the male lawyers in her circle of friends encouraged her to go to law school because they thought if they could do it, Pierson likely could do it even better.

She said her classmates from law school inspire her, even today:

My classmates from law school, namely Carol Ann Blitzer, Kitty Kimball, Bernette Johnson (former Chief Justice Louisiana Supreme Court), Elaine Abel, Dottie Hardy, Mary Joseph and Katherine Spaht. I was also inspired by my friends Margaret Estes Johnson and Janis Lasseigne, both of whom are now deceased, who commuted every day to law school from Thibodaux. All were pioneers and the advance guard for breaking into the legal world.

Pierson offers this advice to other women considering a future in law: “If you like challenging work, terrific rewards, logical thinking and long hours (for the first 10 years at least), go for it. As a bonus, if you are only looking for a husband, law school is a target-rich environment.”

Judge Bonnie Patrisce Jackson (retired)

From a young age, “Perry Mason” sparked her interest in a legal career. But what motivated now-retired Judge Bonnie Patrisce Jackson most toward her career pursuits as a teen was when a teacher at Fair Park High School in Shreveport, Louisiana, challenged Jackson’s ability to study law.

“The teacher kept me after class to advise me that ‘colored girls’ can’t be lawyers, and that I should take up home economics,” Jackson said. “Bless her heart.”

Jackson, who was one of five African American students to integrate into the previously all-white school, said underestimating her is a sure way to bring out her competitive spirit. Later, while enrolled in a business law class at Louisiana Tech, she faced similar pushback concerning her future career choice from her instructor, a Ruston attorney and state legislator.

“He asked who in the class was planning to go to law school, and I raised my hand along with several others,” Jackson said. “Then in a very condescending tone he asked how many of us would be going to THE law school. I raised my hand again. Mind you, I hadn’t applied to or been accepted at THE law school. So not to be proven a liar I took the LSAT and applied at THE law school.”

By 1978, after taking the bar exam and while preparing for her wedding with Carl in Shreveport, Jackson received a call from her sister relaying important information: she had missed several calls from Frank Saia and Alton Moran, who were over the newly formed Public Defender’s Office in East Baton Rouge Parish.

“They wanted me to come to Baton Rouge for an interview,” Jackson said. “I did not know anything about the Public Defender’s Office and had not applied for a position there. I later learned that someone at the Law Center Placement Office had given them my name. Two days after getting married, I was in Baton Rouge for an interview and I was hired on the spot.”

“If anyone underestimated me because I was a woman, I solved that by clearly being the best lawyer in the courtroom; excellence speaks for itself,” Jackson said.

After she passed the bar, she was assigned to handle cases in the Baton Rouge City Court. “Nine months later I was assigned to District Court and eventually assumed the role of assistant director of the office.”

After serving the office for 14 years, she ran for judge in 1992. Jackson said she is most proud of the reputation she built both as a public defender and as a judge. “In my legal career, I hated the feeling of losing more than I enjoyed the feeling of winning. That feeling after losing a case drove me to try to be better the next time.”

Jackson said the woman who inspired her most is her mother, the same person who nurtured her belief that she could accomplish anything. “She was an extraordinarily strong and intelligent woman,” Jackson said. “Her work ethic and strong-willed determination and amazing sense of humor shaped me into the person I am today.”

“I have been blessed to have been surrounded by amazing women throughout my life,” she said about her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

However, Jackson said she is inspired by “any woman who gets up every day and does what needs to be done because that’s what women do. Whether it’s working all day then coming home and giving her family her best or caring for aging parents or taking on multiple roles at once, that’s the woman who deserves everyone’s admiration.”



Judge Bonnie Patrisce Jackson

“I feel that my entire career as both an attorney and a judge reflected my desire to make sure that everyone was treated fairly,” Jackson said. “I always felt that poor people needed a good attorney even more than those with adequate economic resources.”

“As a judge, it was important to me to make sure that poor and unrepresented defendants had the same access to opportunities afforded to other defendants. I tried to make sure that everyone who appeared before me left the courtroom feeling that they had been respected and treated like they mattered.”

Melanie Newkome Jones

Life got in the way of her plan to become a Los Angeles broadcast journalist when Melanie met her then-future-husband in 1986.

The next year, she enrolled at LSU Law, married and had her first baby. Her legal career began with a small general civil practice firm, where she practiced primarily personal injury and family law. At this same law firm Melanie Newkome Jones began using her married name “because the men at the firm thought I should be using my husband’s name,” she said.



Melanie Newkome Jones

Jones opened her own legal practice in 1997, when she was expecting her fourth daughter. “My practice evolved into a primarily family law concentration with some personal injury, wills and successions.”

Jones, who decided to learn a new area of law in October 2023, now works as an assistant city prosecutor at Baton Rouge City Court. “I realized it’s never too late to branch out in law,” she said.

As she reflects on the past, Jones said, “I have had a rich life, both professionally and personally. Having my own practice had its challenges, but allowed me the freedom to be involved in my children’s activities.”

Jones said her 33 years of law practice and volunteerism provided her with opportunities to help families during trying times. Over the years, she served in leadership roles with legal organizations, including president of BRAWA, chair of the BRBA Family Law Section and president of the BRBA.

Jones was greatly inspired by women in her family, including her great aunt, an attorney who graduated from law school in 1930. “My grandmother started law school but decided to go into social work,” Jones said. “She worked full time and had nine children. Finally, my mother taught first grade when I was born and earned her master’s degree and doctorate in education.”

She explained that she is proud to have raised four daughters who are “strong, independent women who value their equality and are vocal proponents of women’s rights.”

“I am happy we celebrate Women’s History Month as it gives us an opportunity to focus on how far women have come,” Jones said. “It is important for our daughters and granddaughters to appreciate the advances women have made and to be vigilant that we do not allow our rights to be diluted or diminished in any way.”

EBR Commissioner Kinasiyumki “Kina” Kimble

East Baton Rouge Parish Commissioner Kinasiyumki “Kina” Kimble was appointed to her position in March 2018. A former East Baton Rouge Parish assistant public defender, she has served in that capacity since 2013. Kimble also taught as an adjunct professor in Southern University Law Center’s Juvenile Law and Criminal Law clinics.

Kimble has been a member of the bar for 18 years. Like many women, early in her career, she was told “no” many times. “But, I never lost my passion and I kept moving forward without losing perspective,” she said. Kimble began her career in private practice; she later transitioned into public service, holding a variety of positions along the way, including judicial law clerk, legal aid staff attorney, assistant public defender and adjunct law professor.

Kimble said National Women’s History Month is a time to celebrate the never-ending versatility of women.

Women are dynamic. Not only do we continue to evolve individually, but we also have the ability to transform



Commissioner Kinasiyumki “Kina” Kimble

everything around us. Our influence transcends time and space. We were integral in every monumental moment of American history; presently, we are actively involved in every aspect of American culture; and we will continue to be courageous leaders of America in the future.

Kimble’s great grandmother, who was a founding member of her childhood

church, instilled the value of service. “Service to others is in my blood,” Kimble said. “Today, my mother and several female cousins continue this tradition of leading through ministry.” Her love for studying language and arts led to her pursuit of law, allowing her to continue her family’s legacy of serving others.

Regarding the importance of mentorship, Kimble said:

Mentorship is one of the most fulfilling aspects of my legal career. I am most proud knowing that the lawyers that I have mentored and taught over the years are excelling in their careers. As members of the legal profession, we have a special responsibility to ensure that the highest quality of justice exists. Therefore, I enjoy sharing my professional experiences and hard-learned lessons with aspiring and new attorneys the same way my mentors share with me.

Considering the 2024 theme for National Women’s History Month, Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Kimble said:

My experience as a legal aid attorney and as an assistant public defender exposed me to the reality that all people do not have equal access to justice under the law. Since my time in legal aid, I have come to understand the value of equity, diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. I advocate for equity, diversity and inclusion by taking an active role in training, mentoring and extending internships and career opportunities to women from diverse backgrounds as they embark on their legal careers.

Mary Erlingson

Mary Erlingson is a founding member of Erlingson Banks, a Baton Rouge mid-sized law firm with a majority of women attorneys. Erlingson said her early vision of a legal career was “confined to working behind a desk, immersed in documents, with little desire to step into a courtroom.” She said:



Mary Erlingson

However, my perspective took a significant turn after I graduated and spent a year as a state court law clerk in Monroe, Louisiana. It was a general jurisdiction court in which the judges I worked for handled criminal, civil, family and juvenile matters.

Erlingson is especially proud of her career arc.

What stands out as a source of pride in my legal career is the establishment of Erlingson Banks, the law firm I co-founded with Judson Banks. This venture has allowed me to extend beyond the realms of providing legal advice to my clients, but has also provided me with the unique opportunity to manage and lead a thriving business. I am greatly satisfied witnessing individuals who started as support staff at Erlingson Banks then progress into successful professionals, including several who pursued legal careers and credit their inspiration to enter the legal field to our firm. Also, collaborating with younger attorneys at various stages of their careers, whether they are just starting out, or have been practicing for several years, is a privilege I value deeply.

Well into her legal career, Erlingson recognized the importance of being actively engaged with bar organizations and associations. She strongly urged young lawyers to be actively involved in their local and national bar organizations that align closely with their practice areas. She said:

I am an active committee leader with both the Defense Research Institute (DRI) and the Federation of Defense and Corporate Counsel, national organizations that serve the legal profession. Bar associations both local and national provide lifelong friendships and access to a wealth of resources and tools, while also providing publishing and speaking opportunities that will enhance any professional career.

The word that best describes Erlingson is resilient. She said she considers her mother, a registered nurse in Opelousas, Louisiana, as her most influential female figure.

She held leadership positions as the director of nursing at both hospitals in the community during various points in her career. My mother was a smart, strong, dedicated professional. She set clear expectations, was direct in communicating them, and didn't shy away from holding others accountable when those expectations were not met. Despite her no-nonsense approach, my mother was also a source of love, compassion, and unwavering support for dreams and aspirations. She instilled in her children the values of independence, goal orientation and hard work, reflecting her own character. Yet, equally important was her emphasis on empathy, understanding and love, creating a balanced and impactful legacy that has been my inspiration for my life and in becoming a lawyer.

Erlingson said the other women lawyers she works with daily are her true inspiration.

To see their enthusiasm, dedication and sheer enjoyment practicing law keeps me motivated. They inject a contagious energy into the professional atmosphere, keeping me thoroughly engaged and inspired. Seeing these women tackle challenges with a blend of resilience and creativity fuels my own dedication to the practice. It's a daily reminder that the future of our profession is in capable and innovative hands.

On the importance of National Women's History Month, Erlingson said, "It is significant as a dedicated time to honor and celebrate the remarkable contributions, achievements and resilience of women throughout history." She added that everyone—men and women—"should pause, reflect and acknowledge not only the trailblazers who have shattered barriers, but also the everyday women whose contributions often go unrecognized."

Additionally, she said having such a platform can "bring the issue of gender equality to the forefront, inspiring a collective commitment to inclusivity and equality in our community and beyond."

Mary Terrell Joseph

Mary Terrell Joseph is a pioneer among prominent women attorneys in Baton Rouge.

Below Joseph detailed what led her to a career in law.

My senior year was 1966 at Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia, and I was majoring in political science. It seemed logical to apply for law school. After being accepted, I spent most of the next year camping in Europe and upon my return, I was ready to save the world. As it was too late to apply for the Peace Corps and my application to Vista (domestic peace corps) assigned me to Watts, California, I decided to save the world by going to the LSU School of Social Welfare. My request for an application was met with disdain because I had missed a deadline. So, I checked with the LSU Law School as I had been admitted the year before. The associate dean said, "Fine," and I started two weeks later.

I became friends and roommates with the few women who were there: Carol Ann Nathanson Blitzer, Dottie Amman Hardy, Ollie Pierson, Elaine Durbin, Margaret Estes Johnson, Kitty Kimball, and later Katherine Shaw Spaht and Jean Talley Drew. I married Cheney Joseph on Dec. 22, 1967, and we returned from Shreveport the next day to study for class and for exams, which were then AFTER Christmas.

Joseph's first child was born during her senior year of law school. Shortly after graduation, she and her husband, Cheney, who also worked for the district attorney, opened and operated "Joseph and Joseph" from their home. Their second child was born in 1972, and, besides being a mother, for the next eight years, she said she wore many hats, including those of office manager, secretary, runner, lawyer, paralegal and cleaning crew. Her cases involved curatorships, appointed criminal defense,



Mary Terrell Joseph

family law, successions and collections for the Baton Rouge Clinic.

In 1978, Sanders Downing Kean and Cazedessus approached Joseph to be their first woman attorney to organize and consolidate their collection practice. Joseph said: “Apparently, there was some controversy with the 12 men of the firm about hiring a woman, but once I was there, it was a wonderful experience.”

In 1983, she and four of her colleagues left the firm and formed Rubin Curry Colvin and Joseph. “My legal concentration was ‘creditors’ rights,’ which is a euphemism for collections,” she said. “In 1993, our firm merged with McGlinchey, and I have been there ever since.”

Joseph said her passion has been volunteering in the community. “I believe my activities have shown that lawyers can be ‘good community citizens’ as well as advocates for the law.” When asked what one word best describes the impact of women in the law, Joseph chose the word, “empathy”; however, her nickname is “The Queen of Mean” because she does collections. She clarified: “But I am only firm, not mean.”

Sheri Morris

Sheri Morris carved her own niche within the Baton Rouge legal community. Her interest in the law began when she was an undergraduate at LSU and was tasked with assisting paralegal course instructors.



Sheri Morris

While delivering course materials to classrooms, I overheard parts of lectures that I thought were interesting and asked if I could stay and listen. I later registered for paralegal courses, including one taught by Mike Walsh. ... I loved working in the LSU Law Library, did well in research and writing courses, and began thinking about a career in the legal field. I became an attorney because I saw that there were so many opportunities for attorneys to make a difference in people’s lives.

Morris began working as a law clerk on the Criminal Staff for the Third Circuit Court of Appeal. “Researching and writing opinions helped me sharpen my research and writing skills, and I was able to work on many interesting constitutional law issues.” She left the Third Circuit and went to work for a small firm in New Orleans. “There I learned to handle administrative hearings and about law firm management. I was the only woman attorney employed by the firm.”

In 1993, Morris was contacted about a temporary appointment as assistant attorney general and special counsel to the Elections Division:

At the Secretary of State’s Office, I worked under the supervision of Undersecretary Cynthia Rougeou and

General Counsel Yvette Alexander. Prior to the end of my 18-month appointment, I was offered the position of deputy general counsel to the Secretary of State. After Yvette was elected as a Baton Rouge City Court judge, I took over her responsibilities and was later promoted to general counsel.

After seven years at the Secretary of State’s Office, Morris decided to return to private practice, where she had the opportunity to work on one of the longest litigated desegregation cases in the country. “My representation of the Zachary Community School Board defined my career,” she said. After a federal judge approved the separation of the Zachary Community School Board from the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board, Morris represented the incorporators for the City of Central and subsequently served as counsel for the Central Transition District and Central Community School Board and as Central’s City Attorney.

Regarding the women who have inspired her, Morris said her mother was her “biggest inspiration and supporter.”

She was a legal secretary ... [who] later started a business that provided typing, phone answering services and temporary secretarial services to small businesses, including attorneys, court reporters and political campaigns. My mother’s business grew rapidly because she was a perfectionist, often calling her attorney clients to inform them of errors they needed to revise in their documents before she typed them.

Camille Anne Campbell, my high school principal, has been an inspiration to me since I was a freshman at Mount Carmel Academy in New Orleans. She encouraged me to attend LSU, and when I shared with her that I was considering going to law school, she said, “We need more women in the legal profession.”

Christi Peck, whom I met the first time I appeared in the Middle District to defend the Louisiana Secretary of State in a suit regarding several school board reapportionment plans, continues to inspire me. Christi represented one of the defendant school boards, and the others were represented by district attorneys. Christi’s presentation on the Voting Rights Act to the court was impressive, and I remember thinking I wanted to be just like her.

The Baton Rouge Lawyer salutes these and all women who practice law, and who contribute to the lives and the well being of our legal community. As noted at the outset of this tribute, the profiles depicted here are but a fraction of the many women who have impacted, shaped and nurtured the law for the betterment of the legal community and our citizenry.

¹ National Today, National Women’s History Month - March 2024, <https://nationaltoday.com/national-womens-history-month/#:~:text=U.S.&text=During%20the%20month%20of%20March,accomplishments%20of%20strong%2C%20determined%20women> (last visited Jan. 12, 2024).

² Library of Congress, Women’s History Month, <https://www.womenshistorymonth.gov/about.html> (last visited Jan. 12, 2024).

³ *Frances Landry*, 2 LA. WOMAN 1 (Apr. 1990).

Bar News

Register to attend the 2024 Bench Bar Conference Committee in Orange Beach

The 2024 Bench Bar Conference will be held at Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, Alabama. Committee co-chairs are Anthony Gambino and Brad Cranmer. To sponsor this event, please contact Ann K. Gregorie at ann@brba.org or 225-214-5563. To register to attend the conference, complete the registration form in this issue or go online at www.brba.org.

Volunteer with a Youth Education Committee

BRBF Youth Education Coordinator Reagan Haik is seeking new committee members to assist with various youth education projects, including Mock Trial (March 8 - 9), Teen Court and Law Day. To join any of these committees or to assist with any of these on-going projects, please contact Reagan at reagan@brba.org or 225-214-5556.

BRBF to Celebrate Law Day on May 1

The BRBF Law Day Committee will celebrate Law Day Wednesday, May 1, 2024, by bringing back its activities for middle and high school students. Leading to the big event will be poster, essay and video contests. This year's Law Day has a theme of "Voices of Democracy." For more information, contact Reagan Haik at reagan@brba.org or 225-214-5556.



Chief U.S. District Court Judge Shelly Dick presides over the swearing in of 2024 BRBA President Luke Williamson (right). In background, Magistrate Judge Scott Johnson and Judge John deGravelles watch the ceremony.

Save the Date: Cocktails with the Court is May 9

On Thursday, May 9, 2024, the BRBA Young Lawyers Section will host Cocktails with the Court at the City Club of Baton Rouge. Law clerks and their judges as well as members of the Young Lawyers Section are invited to attend this sponsored event. For more information about sponsorships, contact Ann K. Gregorie at ann@brba.org or 225-214-5563 or Young Lawyers Section Secretary Kolby Marchand.

Help Plan this Year's Belly Up with the Bar Event

Consider joining the Belly Up with the Bar Committee. Members help plan the event, line up sponsors, encourage teams to register and spread excitement about the event to potential attendees. Chairing the 2024 Belly Up with the Bar event is Cornelius Troy Hall. Contact Pamela Labbe at pam@brba.org to join.



BRBA Board members posed for a photo after the installation ceremony Jan. 11, 2024. Photographed (L to R) are Marcus Plaisance, Lori Palmintier, Valerie A. Black, Hayden A. Moore, Luke Williamson (2024 BRBA president), Melanie Newkome Jones (immediate past president), Vincent "Trey" Tumminello, Kelley Dick Jr. and Monica Vela-Vick (president-elect). Not photographed is Kellye R. Grinton.



The BRBA's newly sworn in secretary, Hayden A. Moore (left), received a 2023 President's Award for her work with last year's Bench Bar Conference Committee. BRBA Director-at-Large member Lori Palmintier and Young Lawyers Section Council member Emily Lindig are also photographed.



At the 2024 BRBA Bar Leader Investiture Ceremony, BRBA Immediate Past President Melanie Newkome Jones honored her predecessor, David Abboud Thomas, who served as BRBA president in 2022.

New BRBA Leadership Takes the Helm

The BRBA held an installation ceremony to swear in its new crop of leadership Thursday, Jan. 11, 2024, at the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana. During the combined ceremony, 2023 President's Awards were announced and Federal Bar Association officers were installed. Additionally, new lawyers participated in the Introduction to Federal Courts Ceremony, which was held prior to the BRBA and FBA's installation ceremonies.



In photo are the newly sworn in 2024 officers and board members of the Federal Bar Association, Baton Rouge Chapter: (in front, L to R) Immediate Past President Jamie Flowers Jr., FBA President Sharon Whitlow; (in back, L to R) Secretary Justin Jack, Vice-President Edward Warner, President-elect Tara Johnston, Treasurer Patrick Hunt and Member Recruitment Chair Chris Dippel.



(L to R) BRBA Board Director-at-Large member Marcus Plaisance and President-elect Monica Vela-Vick stand with Cornelius Troy Hall, who was awarded a 2023 President's Award by Melanie Newkome Jones during the Jan. 11, 2024, BRBA Bar Leader Installation Ceremony for his work with the Young Lawyers Section Council.



Melanie Newkome Jones honored Scott Gaspard with a 2023 President's Award for his contributions toward the BRBF Pro Bono Project and his work toward assisting the disadvantaged in his community through his donation of 900 hours of pro bono work.



Judge Lou Daniel (retired) presented the newly installed Judge Colette M. Greggs with a judicial robe on behalf of the BRBA during her Jan. 18, 2024, installation ceremony.



Photographed at the Jan. 11, 2024, Bar Leader Installation Ceremony are (L to R) U.S. District Judge John W. deGraveles, BRBA Past President Melanie Newkome Jones and Judge Jay C. Zainey, who was honored with a 2023 President's Award. Zainey is a U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

The Hon. Colette M. Greggs Installed as 19th JDC Judge During a Jan. 18 Ceremony

During a Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024, ceremony in the 11th Floor courtroom, the Hon. Colette M. Greggs was installed as a 19th Judicial District Court. Chief Judge Donald R. Johnson presided. A reception followed the ceremony.

Opening of Court, Memorial & New Member Ceremony Held Jan. 31

The BRBA, the Baton Rouge Association of Women Attorneys and the Louis A. Martinet Society joined forces to honor 24 lawyers and judges who were lost during 2023 during an afternoon ceremony at the 19th Judicial District Court. Chief Judge Donald R. Johnson presided over the ceremony.



19th Judicial District Court Chief Judge Donald R. Johnson presided over the swearing in of the Hon. Colette M. Greggs Jan. 18, 2024. Holding The Bible and surrounding Judge Greggs are her sons, Jamal Greggs Russel and Kyle Greggs Russel, and her brother (second from the left) Mark E. Greggs.



(Above) Photographed L to R are three generations of legal professionals - Whitney Higginbotham Greene, Manning Greene and retired Judge Toni Higginbotham. Whitney introduced her son during the new bar member introductions during the second half of the Opening of Court, Memorial & New Member Ceremony.)

(Right) Carol Anne and Sydney M. Blitzer, who have practiced law for 55 years, were honored during the Opening of Court, Memorial & New Member Ceremony held Jan. 31, 2024, at the 19th Judicial District Court's ceremonial courtroom on the 11th Floor.



Prior to and after the memorial ceremony, Louisiana State Bar Association staff members were on hand to photograph practicing attorneys and to provide new bar cards.

Additionally, long-time practicing attorneys were honored, including those who had practiced for 50, 55 and 60 years. The ceremony adjourned soon after the attending 31 new members of the BRBA were introduced to the court.

Volunteers Needed:
Mock Trial Competition
March 8 & 9

We need volunteers to assist with the Region III High School Mock Trial Competition, which takes place **Friday, March 8, and Saturday, March 9**, at the 19th Judicial District Courthouse (300 North Blvd.).

To volunteer as a competition judge, please contact Reagan Haik at reagan@brba.org.



Friley and Dugas, L. L. C.
is pleased to announce that
Keith Friley has qualified as a family
law mediator and is
accepting mediations effective
December 1, 2023.

Friley and Dugas, L. L. C.
4127 W. E. Heck Ct.
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70816
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*Committee Members &
Volunteers needed for*
Law Day
Wednesday,
May 1

Contact Reagan Haik to join the 2024 Law Day Committee, which is tasked to plan this year's Law Day activities, or to volunteer to assist with the day. The BRBF Law Day event serves Baton Rouge area middle and high school students and their civics teachers. You can reach Reagan at reagan@brba.org or 225-214-5556.



An Overview of the 19th Judicial District Court's Civil Complex Litigation Section Pilot Program

by *Diana B. Gibbens*

In August 2023, the judges of the 19th Judicial District Court implemented a pilot program to address complex civil matters that are filed with the court. Judge Wilson E. Fields serves as the presiding judge for the Complex Litigation Section Pilot (CLS Pilot). The goal of the CLS Pilot is to actively manage complex disputes to timely resolve such matters on a cost-effective basis. Through the use of judicial case management, in collaboration with the parties and their counsel, CLS will address the most challenging civil cases facing our court today. In turn, shifting these matters from the regular civil dockets will assist with improving the efficiency of overall civil case management.

A “complex litigation” matter is generally defined as one that involves multifaceted legal and case-management issues requiring all-encompassing judicial management to expedite litigation and to avoid unnecessary burdens on the court. A non-exclusive list of factors that will guide both

parties and the court in determining whether a case is complex includes the following:

1. The need for a high degree of case management, including the handling of discovery disputes and motion practice;
2. The expectation of numerous pretrial and/or discovery motions raising difficult or novel legal issues, or legal issues that are inextricably intertwined and/or time consuming;
3. The expectation of extensive and intensive document review or in camera inspection by the court;
4. The presence of a large number of separately represented parties on main actions, cross claims, counterclaims, and/or third-party claims;
5. The need to manage a large amount of documents, both paper and electronic, during the pendency of the matter and at a trial;
6. The need to manage a large number of expert witnesses;
7. The anticipation of a lengthy trial;
8. Litigation classified as large mass torts or class actions; and



Judge Wilson Fields

9. The expectation that the services of a Special Master would be beneficial due to the complexity of the litigation.

Phase 1 of the CLS Pilot began Sept. 1, 2023. All civil sections had the opportunity to evaluate their current dockets to consider pending matters for referral to CLS. During Phase 1, several hundred Hurricane Ida-related matters filed in late 2023 were referred to CLS. Phase 2 of the CLS Pilot began Jan. 1, 2024. A matter may be referred to CLS under Phase 2 through three different methods: upon filing, through transfer or referral by the presiding judge. The proposed procedure is set forth in an en banc order signed on Aug. 14, 2023.

As we move into 2024 and enter Phase 2 of the CLS Pilot, *The Baton Rouge Lawyer* contacted CLS Pilot presiding Judge Wilson E. Fields to learn how the program is progressing.

TBRL: *Judge Fields, you became presiding judge over the newly implemented CLS Pilot at the 19th JDC in September 2023. Where did the idea for this pilot originate?*

WEF: After listening to both plaintiff and defense counsel express frustration about the delays in handling complicated civil matters in the 19th JDC, I began to look for solutions and discovered that other jurisdictions around the country had created specialized courts to handle complex civil matters. Although there is not another complex-litigation-specialized court in Louisiana, or not one that I am aware of, the programs in other jurisdictions served as models for the development of the CLS Pilot at the 19th JDC.

TBRL: *I understand that the process of developing the pilot involved an advisory group that met over the course of several months. How did the CLS advisory group develop?*

WEF: It was important to have the perspective of both plaintiff and defense counsel on the CLS advisory group. I met with a small group to develop the list and ensure a diverse representation. In total, around ten attorneys from various backgrounds participated in the CLS advisory group. Their input proved invaluable in the establishment of the Pilot.

TBRL: *As the CLS Pilot develops, will you continue to preside over your regular civil docket in section 25?*

WEF: Yes, much like the criminal specialty courts at the 19th JDC (Recovery Court, Reentry Court, Veterans' Treatment Court), the presiding judge over the specialty court maintains his or her primary docket. The work on the special court, in this case the CLS Pilot, is an additional service to the court. I will continue to preside over my civil docket in section 25.

TBRL: *You previously mentioned that other jurisdictions have successfully implemented Complex Litigation Courts. Did the CLS advisory group explore those programs when developing the 19th JDC's pilot?*

WEF: Absolutely! The group contacted several jurisdictions with established programs. California has six locations throughout the state that have been in existence for

twenty years. The CLS advisory group communicated with representatives of the California complex-litigation programs numerous times throughout the planning process.

TBRL: *In late 2023, several hundred Hurricane Ida cases were simultaneously filed in the 19th JDC. The judges of most civil sections agreed to refer these matters to the CLS Pilot through an en banc order. How has the CLS Pilot assisted with these Hurricane Ida cases? How many Ida cases have been referred to the CLS Pilot at this point?*

WEF: Although we are in the early stages, the Clerk of Court estimates between 400 to 600 Hurricane Ida cases have been filed. Once referred, a status conference has been held with all plaintiff and defense counsel. A case-management order will be issued to streamline the litigation process.

TBRL: *Have these Hurricane Ida cases provided a good test for the CLS Pilot?*

WEF: Yes, it definitely helps us to test the process and the Case Management Order.

TBRL: *Looking forward to Phase 2 in 2024, will the experiences of Phase 1 lead to modifications in case referrals in Phase 2?*

WEF: It is too soon to say what modifications, if any, to the three referral methods may be needed. But, the purpose of a pilot is to test the process and to see what works in practice. Later in 2024, once the data collected from the cases that have progressed through the CLS Pilot have been evaluated, the court may make adjustments to enhance the future success of the program.

TBRL: *Will there be additional costs associated with a matter being filed into or transferred to CLS? When will these be determined?*

WEF: A court-costs application has been submitted to the Judicial Council at the Supreme Court with a hearing scheduled for late February. If approved, legislation will be necessary to create the additional CLS court cost. The earliest effective date would be August 2024.

TBRL: *Is there anything else that you would like to share with members of the BRBA about CLS?*

WEF: Even though the Clerk of Court does not routinely require a Civil Cover Sheet for most civil filings, if a matter is to be designated as CLS at filing, it will be necessary to include a Civil Cover Sheet with an indication that the matter may qualify as CLS. A link to the Civil Cover Sheet can be found on the CLS page at 19thjdc.org—<https://19thjdc.org/civil>.

A Call to Action: Pro BRBA

by Josef P. Ventulan & Valerie Schexnayder

Vincent van Gogh once shared the following sentiment: “For the great doesn’t happen through impulse alone, and is a succession of little things that are brought together.”¹ Simply put, intentional collective efforts lead to great impact. When placed within the context of the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation’s pro bono efforts, the impact is certainly impressive—data indicates that between 2021 and 2023, BRBA volunteer attorneys rendered at least 2,857 hours of free legal services; this translates to \$615,093 in legal fees.² However, while praising these accomplishments, we must acknowledge that the Pro Bono Committee reported a decrease in quantified pro bono efforts.

To illustrate, the monetary in-kind donation for 2021 amounted to \$237,439; in 2022, that number was \$241,795. In 2023, in-kind donations fell short and amounted to \$162,433. This is not to say that we are not providing the same level of pro bono efforts as in previous years—many of us could very well be providing services not quantified by the Committee’s report or are providing services reportable to other entities such as the state bar. However, we must still take this information as a call to action. So, what can we do?

Rule 6.1 of the Rules of Professional Conduct states that “[e]very lawyer should aspire to provide legal services to those unable to pay.”³ Rule 6.1 also provides an aspirational goal of 50 pro bono hours per year per attorney. More practically, pro bono encompasses a broad range of services rendered by our members—most attorneys, even our newer colleagues, are contributing to pro bono efforts, whether they report it or not. As members of the bar, we have a responsibility to our community, particularly to those of more modest means.

David S. Gunn, a frequent pro bono volunteer, beautifully said:

Many people forget that we, as lawyers, are caring and God-fearing people. While I absolutely love and cherish what I do, members of our community often only need lawyers during the worst parts of their lives. Volunteering in the Pro Bono Project allows me to help the needy members of our community, while sharing humor and laughter and, hopefully, leaving them with a brighter view of tomorrow.⁴

As members of the bar, we have a responsibility to our community, particularly to those of more modest means.

Of course, the traditional form of pro bono is receiving a case and litigating the matter to completion. In partnership with Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, the BRBA has facilitated the placement of 96 such cases in 2023 alone. These cases involve a wide range of matters, from custody to consumer finance. At times, volunteers may be assigned cases outside their practice areas. However, the BRBA has a list of seasoned, generous subject-matter experts on hand to serve as a resource and answer the questions of pro bono attorneys. But if one has neither the time nor the skillset to litigate a matter to completion, what options are available to those wanting to engage? The BRBA provides various established opportunities with respect to volunteerism. To those unfamiliar with these opportunities, they provide easy, impactful ways to remain engaged.

The Self-Help Resource Center (SHRC) is a great introduction to involvement with the BRBA’s pro bono efforts. Located on the fourth floor of 300 North Boulevard and operating from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday, the SHRC does *not* require the provision of legal advice. Volunteers provide guidance to self-represented litigants seeking to execute templates provided by the Family Court. Volunteers ensure that self-represented litigants understand and comply with the fillable portions of the template.

Take, for instance, the statement: “Petitioner be cast with the costs of these proceedings.” To a volunteer attorney, the statement is straightforward. However, to a non-practitioner, the meaning may be unclear. Even worse, erroneous selection of the option may affect a litigant’s already limited financial resources. Additionally, volunteers may be asked to notarize documents, further alleviating any drain on a litigant’s finances. The Pro Bono Committee reports that our members have assisted

744 litigants through the SHRC this past year. At a rate of \$20 per notarization, this amounts to an additional (and likely uncounted) \$14,880 of services rendered.

The Ask-A-Lawyer program is another great option for pro bono newbies. The program is held multiple times every month. It includes the rendering of *some* legal advice relative to whatever matter a client may present. Additionally, volunteers often assist clients with formulating a plan to move their

matter forward. Assistance could look like an explanation of the factors used to determine the best interests of a child, or just directing a client to additional resources. Participants should note that the volunteer is not being retained; thus, there is no continuing obligation to the client after the event. Though this program may involve answering “easy” questions, to a non-attorney it could also provide relief from an often confusing, nebulous process. In 2023, 161 litigants were assisted through the Ask-A-Lawyer program, which translates to 161 members of our community who are now better equipped to traverse our legal system.

Another generous volunteer, Keith Friley, said:

I believe that every attorney should perform pro bono work because we have the privilege of working in a great profession and because we are our brother’s keeper. I wish every attorney would do one pro bono case to see how rewarding helping others can be.⁵

Yet another option, the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation Hotline, provides busy attorneys with perhaps the most convenient avenue to volunteerism. This ongoing program connects the public with a pool of volunteers ready to answer questions. In the last three years, the hotline has met the needs of over 1,129 callers.

Baton Rouge attorney Candace B. Ford said:

I enjoy the hotline because it gives me an opportunity to give back to the community as an attorney in the commercial litigation industry. I don’t have opportunities to work with legal issues on a more local level, such as divorces, child custody, insurance, disability and successions. The hotline is beneficial because not only am I helping the community, I am also refreshing my knowledge on aspects of the law that I don’t handle on a daily basis.⁶

As Ford astutely pointed out, volunteers are able to expand their knowledge and expose themselves to unfamiliar areas of law.

Know that these efforts do not go unnoticed. The Pro Bono Committee hosted its Volunteer Recognition Reception Oct. 23, 2023, honoring outstanding volunteers. The Louisiana State Bar Association annually hosts the Pro Bono Publico & Children’s Law Awards ceremony. A commitment to pro bono builds goodwill and enhances the reputation of our profession. Too often, the public’s perception of our profession is shaped by the characters—rather, villains—of “Suits” and “Law & Order,” but it is not difficult to change that paradigm. Being a lawyer can be hard; being an exemplary member of society, not so much. Even the

busiest of practitioners is able to spare one or two hours a month and take a call from the Hotline, or volunteer with either the SHRC or Ask-A-Lawyer Program. For those interested, please look for these wonderful opportunities in the BRBA E-newsletter or contact the BRBA.

The legal profession is a profession of service. One hardly correlates that service with art. But if Van Gogh were an attorney, he would probably agree that pro bono efforts are necessary because what is pro bono but vibrant color on the canvas of the legal profession?

WE SOLVE STALEMATES.
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Meet Mary Devereux

■ Judge Devereux presided for 12 years in Family Court, which has jurisdiction over matters such as divorce, child custody, child support, paternity, partition of property, protective order hearings, and adoption proceedings. Mary received her mediation training at Loyola University in both basic and advanced family law mediation. As a certified family law attorney in private practice and then as Judge, Mary brings the experience to help move your stalemate to a solution.

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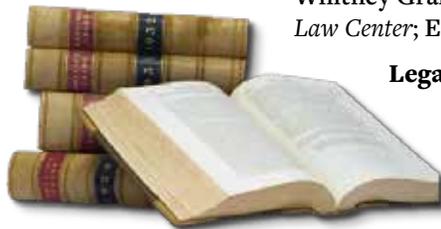
¹ Letter from Vincent van Gogh to Theo van Gogh (Oct. 22, 1882), <https://www.vangoghletters.org/vg/letters/let274/letter.html>.
² 2021, 2022 & 2023 BRBF Pro Bono Project Status Reports, on file with authors. These reports are internal documents prepared by Lynn Haynes for the Baton Rouge Bar Association’s Pro Bono Committee.
³ La. R. Prof’l Conduct 6.1.
⁴ Interview by Josef P. Ventulan with David S. Gunn, Managing Attorney, Gunn & York, LLP, in Baton Rouge, La. (Dec. 7, 2023).
⁵ Interview by Josef P. Ventulan with Keith Friley, partner, Friley & Dugas, LLC, in Baton Rouge, La. (Dec. 7, 2023).
⁶ Interview by Josef P. Ventulan with Candace B. Ford, associate, Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson LLP, Baton Rouge, La. (Dec. 13, 2023).

Foundation Footnotes

Pro Bono Reports — November & December 2023

Teen Court Volunteers

In November, three hearings and one training were held. Volunteers were **Monica Vela-Vick**, *Phelps Dunbar*; **Tiffany Carriere**, *First Circuit Court of Appeal*; **Candace B. Ford**, *attorney at law*; **Rebecca Moreno**, *Southern University Law Center*; **Tammeral Hills**, *Hills Law Firm, LLC*; BRBA student member **Dr. Naveen Adusumilli**; and BRBF intern **Whitney Graham**, *Southern University Law Center*. In December, one educational session was held; no other hearings or trainings took place.



Attorneys Accepting Cases

Krystal Airs Brown, *attorney at law*; **Christine Baker**, *Kingdom Mission Law Firm*; **E'Vinski Davis**, *Craig D. Gremilion and Associates*; **Morley Diment**, *Diment & Associates*; **Arlene Edwards**, *Delatte & Edwards*; **Dean Esposito**, *Esposito Law Firm*; **J. Keith Friley**, *Friley and Dugas, LLC*; **Janeane G. Abbott**, **Abbott Prescott**, *attorneys at law*; **David S. Gunn**, *Gunn & York*; **Derrick McCorey**, *attorney at law*; **Barrington Neil**, *attorney at law*; **Cynthia Reed**, *Southern University Law Center*; **Gavin M. Richard**, *Law Office of Gavin M. Richard, LLC*; **Brett Sandifer**, *The Carpenter Health Network*; **Arthur Vingello**, *The Steffes Firm, LLC*.

Self Help Resource Center Volunteers

Carlesia Carmena Bibbins, *attorney at law* and **Laura Bergeron-Hart**, *Gold, Weems, Bruser, Sues & Rundell*.

Fall Pro Bono Project Interns

Whitney Graham and **Destiny Singleton**, *Southern University Law Center*; **Eric J. Roshak**, *LSU Law Center*.

Legal Hotline Volunteers

In November and December 2023, the following lawyers volunteered to assist with the Legal Hotline: **Scott Gaspard**, *attorney at law*; **Michele Crosby O'Neal**, *attorney at law*.

Ask-A-Lawyer Volunteers

Volunteering for Ask-A-Lawyer events in November and December 2023 were **Candace B. Ford**, *attorney at law*; **Todd Gaudin**, *Gaudin Law Group*; **Lykisha Vaughan**, *Southeast Louisiana Legal Services*; **James A. Word II**, *attorney at law*; **Whitney Peters**, *law student, Southern University Law Center*; **Eric J. Roshak**, *law student, LSU Law Center*.

Teen Court is made possible in part by grants from the Louisiana Bar Foundation. The Pro Bono Project is financially assisted by the Interest on Lawyers' Trust Account (IOLTA) Program of the Louisiana Bar Foundation; Southeast Louisiana Legal Services; Family, District and City Court Fees; and the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation.

GAIL'S GRAMMAR

Two frequently confused homophones are *elicit* and *illicit*. While they sound the same, they have quite different meanings. *Elicit* is a verb that means to draw forth a response. *Illicit* is an adjective that describes something illegal or immoral. To avoid using the wrong word, just remember that *illicit* and *illegal* both start with *ill*.

CORRECT EXAMPLE:

Editorial board members *elicited* information from notable Baton Rouge women attorneys for our Women's History Month issue.

Attorneys who engage in *illicit* behavior may find themselves before the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board.

Send suggestions for future Gail's Grammar columns to Gail Stephenson at GStephenson@sulc.edu, or call Gail at (225) 926-1399.

IMPORTANT DATES

MARCH 2024						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1 *	2
3	4 *	5 *	6 *	7	8 *	9 *
10	11	12	13 *	14 *	15 *	16
17	18 *	19	20 *	21 *	22 *	23 *
24/31 *	25	26	27	28	29 *	30

APRIL 2024						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	1 *	2	3 *	4 *	5 *	6 *
7	8	9	10 *	11	12	13
14	15 *	16	17	18 *	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 *	27
28	29 *	30				

March

- 1 Professional portrait sittings available at the BRBA
- 4 Teen Court Hearings, via Zoom, 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Professional portrait sittings available at the BRBA
- 5 Professional portrait sittings
- 6 Professional portrait sittings
- 8-9 High School Mock Trial Competition, 19th JDC, 300 North Blvd.
- 13-15 Bar Leadership Institute, Chicago
- 18 Teen Court Hearings, via Zoom, 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- 20 BRBA Board meeting at Jubans, 6 p.m.
- 21 Belly Up with the Bar meeting, noon
- 22 Publications Committee meeting via Zoom, 8 a.m.; Youth Education Committee via Zoom, noon
- 23 State Mock Trial Competition, U.S. District Court, MDLA
- 29 BRBA Office Closed for Good Friday
- 31 Easter

April

- 1 Teen Court Hearing via Zoom, 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- 3 Early Arrivals Reception, Bench Bar Conference, Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach, Alabama
- 4 Board of Directors meeting, 10 a.m., Perdido Beach; Bench Bar Conference - first full day (Orange Beach, Alabama)
- 5 Bench Bar Conference continues
- 6 Bench Bar Conference - final day.
- 15 Teen Court Hearings via Zoom, 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- 18 Belly Up with the Bar meeting, noon
- 26 Youth Education Committee Meeting via Zoom, noon
- 29 Teen Court Hearings via Zoom, 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.

DUTY COURT SCHEDULE

19th JDC Civil Duty Court	
2/26 - 3/08	Judge D. Johnson
3/11 - 3/22	Judge Higginbotham
3/25 - 4/05	Judge Balfour
4/08 - 4/19	Judge Moore
4/22 - 5/03	Judge Foxworth-Roberts

19th JDC Criminal Duty Court***	
2/23 - 3/01	Judge Ray
3/01 - 3/08	Judge Myers
3/08 - 3/15	Judge Johnson Rose [^]
3/15 - 3/22	Judge Smith
3/22 - 3/29	Judge Jordan
3/29 - 4/05	Judge Hines
4/05 - 4/12	Judge Pro Tem
4/12 - 4/19	Judge Crifasi
4/19 - 4/26	Judge Ray
4/26 - 5/03	Judge Johnson Rose [^]

Baton Rouge City Court*	
2/26 - 3/03	Judge Moore Vendetto
3/04 - 3/10	Judge Marcantel
3/11 - 3/17	Judge Temple
3/18 - 3/24	Judge Matthews
3/25 - 3/31	Judge Alexander
4/01 - 4/07	Judge Vendetto
4/08 - 4/14	Judge Marcantel
4/15 - 4/21	Judge Temple
4/22 - 4/28	Judge Matthews
4/29 - 5/05	Judge Alexander

Juvenile Court	
March	Judge Grover
April	Judge Haney

Family Court**	
3/01	Judge Russ (Div. D)
3/04	Judge Day (Div. C)
3/05	Judge Russ (Div. D)
3/06	Judge Baker (Div. A)
3/07	Judge E. Green (Div. B)
3/08	Judge Baker (Div. A)
3/11	Judge Day (Div. C)
3/12	Judge Russ (Div. D)
3/13	Judge Baker (Div. A)
3/14, 3/15	Judge E. Green (Div. B)
3/18	Judge Day (Div. C)
3/19	Judge Russ (Div. D)
3/20	Judge Baker (Div. A)
3/21	Judge E. Green (Div. B)
3/22, 3/25	Judge Day (Div. C)
3/26	Judge Russ (Div. D)
3/27	Judge Baker (Div. D)
3/28	Judge E. Green (Div. B)
3/29	HOLIDAY
4/01	Judge Day (Div. C)
4/02	Judge Russ (Div. D)
4/03	Judge Baker (Div. A)
4/04	Judge E. Green (Div. B)
4/05	Judge Baker (Div. A)
4/08	Judge Day (Div. C)

Family Court (Continued)	
4/09	Judge Russ (Div. D)
4/10	Judge Baker (Div. A)
4/11, 4/12	Judge E. Green (Div. B)
4/15	Judge Day (Div. C)
4/16	Judge E. Green (Div. B)
4/17	Judge Baker (Div. A)
4/18	Judge E. Green (Div. B)
4/19, 4/22	Judge Day (Div. C)
4/23	Judge Russ (Div. D)
4/24	Judge Baker (Div. A)
4/25	Judge E. Green (Div. B)
4/26	Judge Russ (Div. D)
4/29	Judge Day (Div. C)
4/30	Judge Russ (Div. D)

Court Holidays	
Friday, March 29	Good Friday

NOTE: Duty Court changes at 5 p.m. each Friday unless otherwise specified.
^{*}City Court's Duty Court judge is on duty from 8 a.m. on the Monday beginning his/her week of duty until 8 a.m. the Monday ending his/her week of duty.

**Family Court's Duty Court schedule is completely different each day, rotating on Fridays.

***19th JDC Criminal Court changes each Friday at noon.

^{*}Section IV is currently the only section conducting Saturday callout.

¹Family Court will be closed on Monday, Feb. 12, 2024, for Lundi Gras.

Baton Rouge Bar Association

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Attorney David Abboud Thomas is responsible for this ad.