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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 11, 2010

## **Attorneys, Student Receive Awards at LSBA's Annual Meeting**

**NEW ORLEANS**—Four Louisiana attorneys and a high school student received awards at two events held in conjunction with the Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) Annual Meeting in Florida.

The four attorneys were recognized at the General Assembly on June 11, as follows:

• **LSBA's First Edwin L. Blewer, Jr. Memorial Award**

Houma attorney William R. "Bill" Leary received the LSBA's first Edwin L. Blewer, Jr. Memorial Award, presented June 11 at the LSBA's Annual Meeting in Florida.

Leary is currently the executive director of the LSBA's Louisiana Lawyers Assistance Program, Inc. (LAP), a position he has held for 25 years. He will retire on Dec. 31, 2010, but will continue to assist with the transition through March 31, 2011. He received his Juris Doctor degree in 1966 from Loyola University Law School. He is a Louisiana board-certified licensed addiction counselor.

LAP was founded in 1985 and is a confidential service providing assistance with alcoholism, drug addiction, stress, compulsive disorders, depression, anxiety and other issues that affect a lawyer's ability to function.

A past advisory board member of the American Bar Association's Commission on Lawyers Assistance Programs (CoLAP), Leary served as chair of the CoLAP Evaluation Committee for 10 years, a committee that reviews LAP programs and makes recommendations for expansion and increased effectiveness of lawyer assistance programs in the United States and Canada. Currently, he is a member of the American Bar Association's Judicial Assistance Task Force, the CoLAP Directors Life Balance Task Force and the Evaluation Committee.

He was recognized by the American Bar Association president for his outstanding assistance to all Louisiana lawyers with post-traumatic stress disorder, suicidal ideation, depression and other illnesses following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. He also received the 2006 LSBA President's Award for these efforts.

The award's namesake, Shreveport attorney Edwin Laurine Blewer, Jr., died Jan. 27, 2009, at the age of 75. Graduating first in his class at Louisiana State University Law School, he was a member of the law firm of Cook, Yancey, King & Galloway for 50 years. Mr. Blewer and four other attorneys were the founding members of the LSBA's Impaired Lawyers Committee, which evolved into the Lawyers Assistance Program; Mr. Blewer served as its chair for six years and continued to serve on the committee until his death. He also served on the American Bar Association's CoLAP and chaired the group from 1998-2001.

• **LSBA's 2010 Stephen T. Victory Memorial Award**

Lafayette attorney Steven G. "Buzz" Durio received the 2010 LSBA's Stephen T. Victory Memorial Award. The award recognizes the author of the *Louisiana Bar Journal* article deemed the most outstanding in the past volume year.

Durio received the award for his article "Discounts in Business Valuations After *Cannon v. Bertrand*," published in the June/July 2009 issue.

A member of the firm of Durio, McGoffin, Stagg & Ackermann in Lafayette, Durio has served on the LSBA's Board of Governors and is a former chair of the LSBA's Public Access and Consumer Protection Committee. He has served in the LSBA's House of Delegates since 1980 and on the LSBA's Legislation Committee since the committee's inception.

He served as trial and appellate counsel for the plaintiff in *Cannon v. Bertrand*, 08-1073 (La. 1/21/09), 2 So.3d 393, which reversed the underlying decisions of the 3rd Circuit and district courts at 07-1278 (La. App. 3 Cir. 4/16/09), 981 So.2d 169.

Durio has been a Fellow of the Louisiana Bar Foundation since 1987. Prior to this article, he has written two other *Journal* articles, both on issues of public adjusting and unauthorized practice of law, in 2005 and 2007.

The award's namesake, Stephen T. Victory, was a partner in the firm of Liskow & Lewis in New Orleans. He served as LSBA secretary-treasurer and editor of the *Louisiana Bar Journal* from 1983-85. He died on Dec. 6, 1985.

more

# Awards

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### • **LSBA's 2010 Leah Hipple McKay Award for Outstanding Volunteerism**

Baton Rouge attorney Patricia B. McMurray received the 2010 LSBA's Leah Hipple McKay Memorial Award for Outstanding Volunteerism. The award is in memory of Leah Hipple McKay, LSBA member and wife of former LSBA President Michael W. McKay of Baton Rouge. The award recognizes a Louisiana lawyer who has made significant long-term contributions in volunteerism in his/her state or local community.

McMurray is a partner in the Baton Rouge office of Adams and Reese, L.L.P. Her practice focuses on commercial transactions, forestry, real estate and education law.

She has made a lasting impact on her community through her work with the Pro Bono Project in Baton Rouge. She first became active with the Project and committee in 1987, serving as its chair in 1993 and 1997. During her first term, the Project produced its first volunteer manual, providing information on the steps involved in handling a pro bono case. In 1994, she organized the first volunteer recognition event for pro bono panel members. She also served on the Filing Fees Committee and helped draft legislation that secured the availability of filing fees on a statewide basis for pro bono and legal services entities. She currently serves as the pro bono partner at her firm, allocating projects among the firm's attorneys and creating a positive pro bono culture. McMurray also works with several schools on education matters. For many years, she served on the board of the Children's Charter School, an elementary school serving an at-risk population where 97 percent of the students are at or below the federal poverty level. Through her efforts over three years, she helped establish a school library with books donated by members of Adams and Reese, other Baton Rouge law firms, the Louisiana 5th Circuit of Appeal and her personal clients. She also is a member of the board of directors of Boys Hope/Girls Hope of Baton Rouge and is a former Big Buddy.

### • **Louisiana Bar Foundation's 2010 Curtis R. Boisfontaine Trial Advocacy Award**

New Orleans attorney John M. McCollam received the 2010 Curtis R. Boisfontaine Trial Advocacy Award presented by the Louisiana Bar Foundation. McCollam received a plaque and \$1,000 will be donated in his name to a Louisiana nonprofit, law-related program or association of his choice.

McCollam is founding partner of Gordon, Arata, McCollam, Duplantis & Eagan, L.L.P., in New Orleans. His practice ranges from complex commercial and energy transactions and litigation to energy regulatory matters, products liability, toxic tort and environmental cases, telecommunications and intellectual property law. He has extensive experience litigating all types of oil and gas disputes and has often served as an arbitrator in domestic and international oil and gas disputes, including disputes involving North Slope production from Alaska's Prudhoe Bay Field. He has given expert testimony on U.S. oil and gas law in several Australian arbitrations involving production from the Bass Straits, and is frequently called upon to mediate complex oil and gas disputes. He served as a Special Master appointed by the federal court in New Orleans in a complex gas balancing dispute. At Tulane Law School, he was elected to the Order of the Coif. He served on the board of editors of the *Tulane Law Review* (editor-in-chief, 1958-59).

McCollam is a Fellow of the American and Louisiana Bar Foundations and the American College of Trial Lawyers. He is a member of the New Orleans (first vice president, 1980-81), Louisiana (chair, Mineral Law Section, 1975-76), Energy and American bar associations, the Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel (board of directors, 1983-84) and the Louisiana Mineral Law Institute (advisory council, 1981-82).

He is a member of the Dean's Council and professor emeritus of Tulane Law School. He has published numerous papers and articles, including a comprehensive review of basic Louisiana mineral law entitled "A Primer for the Practice of Mineral Law Under the New Louisiana Mineral Code," 50 Tul. L. Rev. 729 (1976).

The Boisfontaine Award, established in 1994, is given to a Louisiana attorney who exhibits long-standing devotion to and excellence in trial practice and upholds the standards of ethics and consideration for the court, litigants and all counsel. The late Mr. Boisfontaine served as president of the LSBA and was a charter member of the Louisiana Bar Foundation.

### • **Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education's 2010 Civics in Action Award**

Mandeville High School student Samuel Curtis Ingalls received the Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education's (LCLCE) 2010 Civics in Action Award during a reception June 10.

Called a "natural born leader" by his teachers, Ingalls, a transfer student from Chicago, began school at Mandeville High in St. Tammany Parish this past year. He has a grade point average of 4.7 and was elected president of his sophomore class. He is a member of Hi-Y, the football team, the jazz band, the wrestling team, the Student Council and the Life on Purpose Club.

## Awards

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As a member of Hi-Y, Ingalls was elected to the position of Speaker of the House of the Louisiana Youth Legislators Board and won the Monice Oliphant Award for Best Legislator and Delegate at the 2010 Louisiana Legislature Conference. He was selected to be the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership (HOBY) ambassador from Mandeville High School and was chosen to be a representative from Louisiana at the YMCA Conference for National Affairs. This summer, he is serving as a page in the United States Senate Page Program, nominated by Sen. David Vitter.

The Civics in Action award is presented annually to a Louisiana middle or high school student committed to making a difference through the use of government or his/her school environment.

*The Louisiana State Bar Association assists its more than 21,000 members in the practice of law. The statewide association, as part of its multi-faceted mission, promotes and maintains access to justice initiatives for the state's residents, assists the Louisiana Supreme Court in its regulation of the practice of law, upholds the honor of the courts and the profession, and supports programs that increase public understanding of and respect for the law.*

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