



*Serving the Public. Serving the Profession.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 5, 2011

## **Louisiana State Bar Association Members Receive Awards at Annual Meeting**

**NEW ORLEANS**—Nine Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) members received awards during the Association's Annual Meeting June 28-30 in Las Vegas, Nev. The awards were presented during a ceremony on June 28.

### **• President's Awards**

Six LSBA members received President's Awards. All recipients were chosen by 2010-11 LSBA President Michael A. Patterson of Baton Rouge and were recognized for various services to the Association. Recognized were **S. Guy deLaup**, Metairie; **Richard K. Leefe**, Metairie; **Hon. William A. Morvant**, Baton Rouge; **Lauren McHugh Rocha**, New Orleans; **Edward J. Walters, Jr.**, Baton Rouge; and **Scott T. Whittaker**, New Orleans.

**S. Guy deLaup**, a sole practitioner in Metairie and a former LSBA president, was recognized for his service as chair of the LSBA Bar Governance Committee, as parliamentarian for the House of Delegates and for general service to the LSBA.

He was a former assistant district attorney in Jefferson Parish and a former partner of the law firm of Connick, Wimberly & deLaup. He received his undergraduate and law degrees from Louisiana State University and the Paul M. Hebert Law Center. He practices extensively in the area of family law.

deLaup has served on the LSBA's Board of Governors, in the House of Delegates, on the Young Lawyers Section Council and on various committees and sections. He received the LSBA's Pro Bono Publico Award in 2002.

He is a past chair of the Louisiana Supreme Court's Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Committee and a past president of the Jefferson Bar Association. He is a former member of the board of directors of the New Orleans Legal Aid Clinic and the Jefferson Parish Child Advocacy Center. He is a past board member, past chair and active volunteer for The Pro Bono Project in New Orleans.

deLaup is a charter and current member of the John C. Boutall American Inn of Court. He is a Fellow and past board member of the Louisiana Bar Foundation.

**Richard K. Leefe**, a partner in the Metairie firm of Leefe, Gibbs, Sullivan, Dupre & Aldous, L.L.C., was recognized for his service as chair of the LSBA's Senior Lawyers Committee.

He graduated with an engineering degree in 1969 from Louisiana State University and was a combat engineer officer in the U.S. Army, serving as company commander in Viet Nam. On his return from Viet Nam, he graduated in 1974 from Loyola University College of Law, where he served on the *Law Review*

more

## Awards

### Add 1

Editorial Board. He later received an LLM (Master of Laws) degree in international commercial law from Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, Scotland. He has practiced law for 37 years, handling legal matters in the United States, Asia, South America, Africa and Europe.

Leefe has been a member of the LSBA's Board of Governors for three years and is beginning a two-year term as secretary and editor of the *Louisiana Bar Journal*. He has served on numerous LSBA committees.

He is the author of the *Louisiana Code of Evidence Practice Guide* published by LexisNexis, now in its third edition. He updates the work with a pocket part every year. He taught at Loyola College of Law for 26 years as an adjunct professor, primarily teaching the course in evidence. He also taught American law to Chinese law students in 2002 at a Chinese law school in Wuhan, China. He returned in 2009 and taught English to Chinese engineer Ph.D. candidates.

**Hon. William A. Morvant**, judge for the 19th Judicial District Court in East Baton Rouge Parish, was recognized for his service as chair of the 2011 Criminal Justice Summit. He currently serves as co-chair of the LSBA's Criminal Justice Committee.

A native of Thibodaux, Judge Morvant received a BA degree from Springhill College in Mobile, Ala., and his Juris Doctor degree from Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center. Before being elected to the bench in 1996, he was a partner in the firm of Shows, Cohn & Cali and practiced in the area of commercial litigation.

From 1997-2002, he presided over the Drug Court for the 19th JDC. He also is an alumnus of the National Judicial College.

He is an adjunct faculty member for LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center, teaching Louisiana Civil Procedure. He has been very involved in Baton Rouge Bar Association activities, including chairing the fund-raising Ball Maul Golf Tournament and chairing the annual Bench Bar Conference.

In his community, Judge Morvant served on the boards of Family Services of Greater Baton Rouge, the Paula Manship YMCA, the Baton Rouge CYO and the I Care Advisory Council.

**Lauren McHugh Rocha**, general counsel for the Louisiana Supreme Court, was recognized for her many contributions to the LSBA. She has worked for the Supreme Court since 2007. Prior to her employment at the court, she practiced general corporate law in New York.

Rocha received her Juris Doctor degree in 2000 from Tulane Law School. She is admitted to practice in Louisiana and New York. She is a member of the LSBA and the New Orleans Bar Association and is a Fellow of the Louisiana Bar Foundation.

**Edward J. Walters, Jr.**, a partner in the Baton Rouge firm of Walters, Papillion, Thomas, Cullens, L.L.C., was recognized for his service as chair of the Lawyers in Transition Committee.

Walters received a bachelor of science degree in 1969 from Louisiana State University and his Juris Doctor degree in 1975 from LSU Law Center, where he was named to its Hall of Fame. He has represented clients in personal injury cases for more than 30 years. Because of his courtroom experience and dedication to the Louisiana and Baton Rouge Bars and to the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center, he was recognized as the Louisiana Bar Foundation's Distinguished Attorney in 2009. His practice focuses on all areas of personal injury and wrongful death matters, including products liability, automobile accidents, industrial accidents and sexual abuse by professionals.

## Awards

### Add 2

Walters has been board certified in civil trial advocacy by the National Board of Trial Advocacy since 1988. He is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and the International Academy of Trial Lawyers.

Dedicated to educating future lawyers, he has served as adjunct professor at LSU Law Center for more than 20 years, teaching a course he co-developed with Baton Rouge attorney Michael A. Patterson entitled “Advanced Trial and Evidence,” a year-long “hands-on” trial skills course.

A lecturer and author on litigation, ethics and professionalism topics, Walters is a past president of the Baton Rouge Bar Association and received its President’s Award in 1995 and 1998. He has been the editor of its monthly publication, *Around the Bar*, for 25 years. He also has served on the *Louisiana Bar Journal*’s Editorial Board for several years.

**Scott T. Whittaker**, a member of the New Orleans office of Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann, L.L.C., was recognized for his service as chair of the Special Committee to Study Proposed Changes to the Louisiana Bar Exam.

Whittaker received his undergraduate degree, *cum laude*, in 1982 from Tulane University and his Juris Doctor degree, *magna cum laude*, in 1984 from Tulane Law School (Order of the Coif and *Tulane Law Review* Board of Editors).

He chairs Stone Pigman’s Business Section. He represents clients in a variety of transactions, including buying, selling and merging companies; private placements of securities; venture capital and private equity transactions; joint ventures; and all phases of real estate acquisitions, development and financing.

Whittaker is a member of the LSBA’s Corporate and Business Law Section and is a former chair of its governing council. He is president and a board member of the Louisiana Chapter of the Association for Corporate Growth and is an active member of the Committee on Mergers and Acquisitions of the American Bar Association, serving in various leadership positions.

He is a former chair of the Louisiana Supreme Court’s Committee on Bar Admissions; he served on this committee for more than 17 years (including more than 10 years as examiner for Business Entities and Negotiable Instruments). An author and lecturer in business mergers and acquisitions, he has been listed in *The Best Lawyers in America* in Corporate Law, Mergers and Acquisitions, Securities Law and Real Estate, in *Chambers U.S.A.* in Corporate Law/Mergers and Acquisitions, and in “Who’s Who Legal: The International Who’s Who of Merger & Acquisitions Lawyers” 2011.

#### • Stephen T. Victory Memorial Award

**James H. Napper III** of Baton Rouge received the Stephen T. Victory Memorial Award, recognizing the author of the *Louisiana Bar Journal* article deemed the most outstanding in the past volume year.

Napper received the award for his article, “Who Dat: The NFL, New Orleans and the Implication of *LSU v. Smack Apparel*,” published in the October/November 2010 issue.

Napper is a 2009 LLM (Master of Laws) graduate of The George Washington University Law School and a former judicial clerk to Judge R. Michael Caldwell. His Baton Rouge practice focuses on intellectual property, film and commercial litigation.

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.

## Awards

### Add 3

#### • Leah Hipple McKay Memorial Award for Outstanding Volunteerism

**Hon. Jay C. Zainey**, appointed by President George W. Bush to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana in 2002, received the 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 Louisiana attorneys and judges who have made significant long-term contributions in volunteerism in his/her state or local community.

During his 1995-96 term as LSBA president, Zainey created the Community Action Committee and the Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities Committee.

Judge Zainey is a co-founder of SOLACE (Support of Lawyers/Legal Personnel, All Concern Encouraged), now with more than 7,000 attorney volunteers in Louisiana offering all types of assistance to the legal community in times of tragedy. SOLACE programs also have been developed in Delaware, Rhode Island, Nebraska, Missouri, Kentucky and Puerto Rico, with plans to establish more programs nationwide.

In 2004, Judge Zainey organized the Homeless Experience Legal Protection (H.E.L.P.) Program. Attorneys provide legal consultation and notary services at homeless centers in New Orleans, including assisting the homeless to obtain birth certificates, identification cards and Social Security benefits. To date, Judge Zainey has initiated similar programs in 20 other cities. He also helped coordinate a Homeless Court in New Orleans.

Judge Zainey has worked with the LSBA's Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities Committee in providing pro bono legal services to the disabled and their families. He has assisted Tulane Law School in developing its Disability Law Society.

Judge Zainey and his wife, Joy, founded the God's Special Children Program, offering assistance to special-needs children, and the St. Andrew's Village in Abita Springs, a faith-based, long-term living community for adults with disabilities. He is serving as Village board president.

Judge Zainey is the current president of the Pro Bono Project in New Orleans, serves on the Executive Board of the New Orleans Chapter of the Federal Bar Association and is a member of the American Bar Association's Hurricane Katrina Task Force.

#### • Human Rights Award

**Brace B. Godfrey, Jr.**, attorney and civic leader in Baton Rouge, was recognized, posthumously, as the first recipient of the LSBA Human Rights Award. He died on March 13, 2010, at the age of 58.

Godfrey received a bachelor of arts degree, with honors, from Southern University and his Juris Doctor degree, *magna cum laude*, from Southern University Law Center (SULC). He was a Fellow of the National Political Science Association and the Louisiana Bar Foundation, a member of the Louisiana State Law Institute's board and an associate bar examiner. He was an adjunct professor at SULC and Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center. He was inducted into the SULC Hall of Fame in 2007.

In 1973, he was the first African-American assigned to the full-time professional staff of the Louisiana Legislature. In 1988, he returned to the Legislature as counsel, elevated to senior counsel in 1991. He drafted legislation leading to the establishment of majority African-American election sections at the district and appellate court levels and for the Louisiana Supreme Court.

Godfrey was partner-in-charge of the Baton Rouge office of Adams and Reese, L.L.P., from 2001-03. He was lead counsel in the Louisiana insurance "No Pay-No Play" litigation and in the international case

## Awards

### Add 4

involving the Louisiana Insurance Receivership Office. In 2005, he formed, with John Schneider, the law firm Godfrey & Schneider, Ltd., serving as managing partner.

He was the first African-American chair of the Greater Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce. He was founding president of 100 Black Men of Metro Baton Rouge, later elected to the organization's national executive board, and was the catalyst for the establishment of the national African-American History Challenge Scholarship.

In 2003, he was appointed to the board of the Baton Rouge Downtown Development Authority, elected chair in 2004.

*High-resolution photos of award recipients are available for download at:*

<http://www.lsba.org/2007NewsResources/pressphotos.asp?Photos=29>.

*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.*

#####