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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2011

LSBA, Just the Beginning Foundation Present Inaugural Legal Internship Program for High School Students

NEW ORLEANS — The Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) is partnering with the Just the Beginning Foundation to present the inaugural “Suit Up for the Future” High School Summer Legal Institute and Internship Program. Seventeen New Orleans area high school juniors and seniors have been selected for the inaugural group and will participate in the five-week program (June 20-July 25), which includes lectures, field trips to New Orleans area courts and law schools, shadowing attorneys in area law firms, and mock trial competitions.

Week one programming includes a series of lectures at the Louisiana Bar Center, 601 St. Charles Ave., New Orleans, presented by area judges, lawyers and law school professors. Topics include Torts, Legal Research and Writing, Contracts and Criminal Law, with several break-out sessions for individual questions and discussion. LSBA President Michael A. Patterson will address the students on the first day of the program.

Programming for the next four weeks includes discussions about ethics, field trips to the courts (including Orleans Parish Criminal District Court, Orleans Parish Civil District Court, Orleans Parish Municipal Court and the United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana), field trips to law schools, and several Law Firm Internship Days.

The program ends on Monday, July 25, with mock trials in the courtrooms of Judge Ivan L.R. Lemelle (C-500) and Magistrate Judge Karen Wells Roby (C-431), both with the United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana.

Participating 11th and 12th graders attend the following schools: Academy of the Sacred Heart, Martin Luther King High School, St. Mary’s Academy, Thomas Jefferson Senior High School, Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies, Patrick F. Taylor Science and Technology, Slidell High School, Northshore High School, McDonogh 35 College Preparatory, Warren Easton Charter, St. Paul’s School, Benjamin Franklin High School and Academy of Our Lady High School.

“We hope that this program will encourage enthusiastic students to consider the opportunities available to them in the legal profession,” said Judge Roby, also coordinator of the internship program and a member of both sponsoring organizations. “The collaborative effort of each component of the legal profession in supporting this program demonstrates a true commitment to diversity in the legal profession in Louisiana.”

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“We are truly excited about the Suit Up Program because it will give the students positive educational exposure to the law and the legal profession that is not otherwise available,” said LSBA Diversity Committee Co-Chair Wayne J. Lee. “This is a chance to both enhance the image of the profession and inspire students to become the future lawyers and judges who will advance the profession.”

Media Attendance: Media outlets are encouraged to attend the opening day program on Monday, June 20, at the Louisiana Bar Center, 601 St. Charles Ave., New Orleans, La., and the final day of mock trials on Monday, July 25 at U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana. To RSVP, contact Kelly McNeil Legier by phone at (504)619-0129 or e-mail kelly.legier@lsba.org.

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.

The Just the Beginning Foundation is a multi-racial, non-profit organization comprised of lawyers, judges and other citizens. The Foundation is dedicated to developing and nurturing interest in the law among young persons from various socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds under-represented in the legal profession and to supporting their continued advancement.

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