

Focus on Diversity

For more information on items in this special section, contact Louisiana State Bar Association Director of Member Outreach and Diversity Kelly McNeil Legier, (504)619-0129, (800)421-5722, ext. 129, or e-mail kelly.legier@lsba.org.

Diversity/inclusion workshop coordinated with court renaming in Alexandria

The Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) partnered with the Alexandria Bar Association and the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, Inc. of Central Louisiana to host a free, half-day diversity and inclusion workshop on Oct. 21, in connection with the renaming of the Alexandria City Court Building to the “Gravel Berry City Court Building.” About 30 attorneys and judges attended the CLE at the Alexandria Museum of Art.

Louis Berry was the first African-American lawyer in Rapides Parish. At that time, attorneys had to be introduced in each judicial district court before they could file material in the court. Berry could not get a local attorney to introduce him. Attorney Camille Gravel stepped in and introduced Berry to the court. Berry then filed the suits that desegregated much of Louisiana. “They both, but I believe Mr. Gravel in particular, are real-life Atticus Finches who not only did not flinch when confronting the ills of our past, but charged headlong into the fights and, by the very fiber of their beings, caused others around them to recognize that things were not as they should be,” said Zebulon Winstead, president of the Alexandria Bar Association.

Also participating in the renaming ceremony were Alexandria City Court Judge Richard Starling, Alexandria Mayor Jacques Roy, Alexandria City Council President Roosevelt Johnson, Louis Martinet Legal Society President Clifton Spears, and various members of the Gravel and Berry families.

For information on future events in the Alexandria area, contact Kelly McNeil Legier, (504)619-0129, kelly.legier@lsba.org; Zeb Winstead, (318)445-1488, zwinstead@crowellandowens.com; or Clifton Spears, (318)442-6251, cspears@suddenlinkmail.com.



The Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA), the Alexandria Bar Association and the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, Inc. of Central Louisiana hosted a diversity and inclusion workshop in Alexandria. LSBA Member Outreach and Diversity Director Kelly McNeil Legier, standing, moderated a panel discussion with, from left, Hon. Harry F. Randow, Monique Y. Metoyer, Hon. Richard E. Starling, Jr. and Barbara B. Melton on legal scenarios presenting multi-cultural conflicts and missteps.

in the SPOTLIGHT

38th Judicial District Court

Considering the role our judiciary plays as a leader in the profession, it is important to also note its influence in the furtherance of our profession’s diversity objectives.

This spotlight recognizes the practices of the 38th Judicial District Court, Cameron Parish.

On behalf of the court, Hon. Penelope Q. Richard said, “The 38th Judicial District Court promotes diversity by educating our staff and the public, by encouraging people to be different, and by embracing our differences. By taking an active role and seeking out each of our differences, everyone benefits. To accomplish this, we strive to treat everyone who visits the

Cameron Parish courthouse with respect. By being open and accepting to diverse ideals and cultures, we acknowledge that everyone has something unique to offer for which we all truly benefit.”

The “InTheSpotlight” section highlights diversity achievements and groundbreaking diversity accomplishments, primarily of signatories of the LSBA’s Statement of Diversity Principles. If you have recommendations for attorneys, judges or legal organizations that should be considered for future articles, call or email Kelly McNeil Legier, (504)619-0129, kelly.legier@lsba.org.



United States Attorney Jim Letten hosted the Oct. 20 Disability Summit, in partnership with the Louisiana State Bar Association.

LSBA inaugural Disability Summit a success

About 55 attorneys and judges participated in the inaugural Disability Summit on Oct. 20 in New Orleans. The Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) Diversity Committee and the Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities Committee, in partnership with United States Attorney Jim Letten, hosted the summit, titled "The Dawn of An Enabled

Era: Unraveling the Myths of Attorneys with Disabilities." The summit addressed challenges and solutions for attorneys with disabilities.

Anyone interested in serving on the planning committee for the 2012 program should contact LSBA Member Outreach and Diversity Director Kelly McNeil Legier, (504)619-0129, email kelly.legier@lsba.org.



Lawyers Assistance Program, Inc. Executive Director J.E. (Buddy) Stockwell participated as a panelist for the inaugural Disability Summit on Oct. 20.



Coordinating and participating in the Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) inaugural Disability Summit on Oct. 20 in New Orleans included, from left, United States Attorney Jim Letten, LSBA Member Outreach and Diversity Director Kelly McNeil Legier, Louisiana Supreme Court Justice Catherine D. Kimball and 4th Circuit Court of Appeal Judge Max N. Tobias, Jr.

Nominations sought for 2012 Human Rights Award

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2012 Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) Human Rights Award. The nomination deadline is Jan. 27, 2012. The award will be presented at the LSBA Annual Meeting in June 2012.

The award recognizes outstanding efforts made by a bar association, a law firm or law department, an individual attorney or judge, a court or a community organization or individual in promoting diversity in the legal profession, particularly efforts ensuring the full and equal opportunity of all persons for entry and advancement in Louisiana's legal profession.

The first Human Rights Award was presented posthumously in June 2011 to the late Baton Rouge attorney Brace Godfrey.

For more information on the 2012 award and to submit a nomination, go to: www.lsba.org/diversity. Or contact LSBA Member Outreach and Diversity Director Kelly McNeil Legier, (504)619-0129, email kelly.legier@lsba.org.

Diversity Reception scheduled during LSBA Midyear Meeting

The Louisiana State Bar Association's (LSBA) Diversity Committee, in partnership with several specialty bars, is co-hosting a Diversity Reception on Jan. 19, 2012, in conjunction with the LSBA's Midyear Meeting in New Orleans. For more information, contact LSBA Member Outreach and Diversity Director Kelly McNeil Legier, (504)619-0129, email kelly.legier@lsba.org.

Diversity Resources on the Web

- ▶ LSBA Diversity Resources Page
www.lsba.org/diversity/resources.asp
- ▶ ABA Disabilities News and Resources
<http://new.abanet.org/disability/Pages/default.aspx>