

Focus on *Access to Justice*

For more information, visit www.lsba.org/atj.

2025 LSBA Criminal Justice Summit Examines Current Issues and Collaborative Solutions

On Friday, Feb. 7, the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) Criminal Justice Committee hosted its 10th Criminal Justice Summit, titled “Justice in Focus: Current Issues, Collaborative Solutions.” The inaugural summit was held in 2010 to address challenges within Louisiana’s criminal justice system, and since then, the committee has consistently organized summits that serve as a forum for discussion and learning.

The LSBA Criminal Justice Summit was a gathering of minds, with attendees representing a broad spectrum of stakeholders within the criminal legal system. The diverse group included district attorneys, public defenders, judges, and law enforcement, as well as representatives from city, district, and appellate courts, nonprofit organizations, law schools, state agencies, private firms, the Louisiana Supreme Court, and community organizations. This event was a melting pot of perspectives, bringing people together to learn, discuss, and work toward change.

This year, the Summit examined current issues across various criminal justice topics, featuring five presentations and panels on critical legal issues impacting the criminal justice system. The topics included legislative updates from the 2024 sessions, forensic toxicology, medical marijuana, the Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (ICJIS), current challenges in juvenile justice, mental health diversion programs, and specialty courts. Each presentation highlighted experts in their fields, providing a range of perspectives from practitioners to judges.

The event also emphasized collaborative solutions, featuring a Q&A



Criminal Justice Summit welcome remarks were given by Hon. Loren M. Lampert, 9th Judicial District Court.



Speaking at the “ICJIS: Integrating Systems for Uniformity and Data Collection” session was Hon. Scott Schlegel, Louisiana Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal.



Participating in the “Updates from the 2024 Legislative Sessions” panel were, from left: Sarah Whittington, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU); Meghan Garvey, Louisiana Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers; Zach Daniels, Louisiana Association of District Attorneys; Hon. Fred Crifasi, 19th Judicial District Court.



Criminal Justice Summit attendees listen to a panel presentation.

SUMMIT continued on page 13

SUMMIT continued from page 12

session after each presentation and an entire hour dedicated to facilitated discussions, enabling attendees to learn from one another and engage in conversations about tackling the issues presented. These conversations were highly informative and productive, providing attendees with practical information on serving their

clients and suggestions for the Criminal Justice Committee about future resources or training that could benefit its members.

The 2025 LSBA Criminal Justice Summit was a success as well as a testament to the commitment and dedication of a diverse legal community willing to come together to educate one another and discuss their perspectives on various challenges in the criminal justice system.



The “Current Issues in Juvenile Justice” Session. From left: Hon. Kathleen Richey (ret.), State of Louisiana Child Ombudsman; Hon. Gail Grover, East Baton Rouge Parish Juvenile Court; Courtney E. Myers, Office of Juvenile Justice; Robin Capps, Office of Public Defender, 19th JDC.



Facilitated Discussion of Summit Topics.

Take the First Steps: LSBA’s “25 in 2025” Initiative

The Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) has launched the “25 Hours in 2025” initiative, aimed at expanding access to justice across Louisiana. The program encourages LSBA members to volunteer 25 hours of pro bono service throughout the year to assist those who cannot afford legal representation.

Rather than making a large commitment all at once, attorneys are encouraged to start small by dedicating a few hours at a time. Attorneys can visit www.probono.net/la to review organizations in Louisiana actively seeking legal assistance. The LSBA’s Access to Justice department encourages



members to identify a cause that aligns with their skills or interests and directly contact organizations to offer their services.

The initiative provides a tangible way for attorneys to contribute to expanding justice in underserved communities. Whether your expertise lies in family law, civil rights, or another area, every hour helps ensure justice remains accessible to all.

Participating in the “25 Hours in 2025” program offers attorneys the opportunity to make a meaningful impact in their communities while furthering the LSBA’s mission to promote the fair administration of justice in Louisiana.



VOLUNTARY PRO BONO REPORTING



Snap the above with your mobile device or click to visit

www.lsba.org/ProBono/ProBonoVoluntaryReporting.aspx