

2026 LSBA Annual Meeting & LJC / LSBA Joint Summer School

May 31 – June 5, 2026 • Destin, Florida



LSBA Installs 2026-27 Officers and Board of Governors

The Louisiana State Bar Association's 2026-27 officers and members of the Board of Governors were installed June 4 at a ceremony during the LSBA's Annual Meeting in Destin, Fla. Judge Carl E. Stewart of the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals administered the oath of office to the president. Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice John L. Weimer administered the oaths of office to members of the Board of Governors and the Young Lawyers Division leadership.

Curtis R. Joseph, Jr., a partner in the Shreveport law firm Blanchard, Walker, O'Quin & Roberts, APLC, was installed as the 86th LSBA president for the 2026-27 term.

Lawrence J. (Larry) Centola III, a principal in the New Orleans law firm Martzell, Bickford & Centola, was installed as the 2026-27 president-elect. He will assume the presidency in 2027-28.

Bradley J. Tate, an attorney with Sternberg, Naccari & White, LLC, in New Orleans, is beginning the second year of his two-year term as secretary. He also serves as editor of the *Louisiana Bar Journal*.

Carrie LeBlanc Jones, Of Counsel in the Baton Rouge office of Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson, L.L.P., is beginning the first year of her two-year term as treasurer.

Edward J. Walters, Jr., a partner in the Baton Rouge law firm Walters, Thomas, Cullens, LLC, will continue his service to the LSBA as the 2026-27 immediate past president.



Curtis R. Joseph, Jr., 2026-27 LSBA President, is given the oath of office by Judge Carl E. Stewart, U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals during the Installation Luncheon.

Christopher J. (Chris) Sellers Jr., assistant vice president and associate general counsel for Ochsner Health in New Orleans, was installed as the 2026-27 chair of the LSBA Young Lawyers Division.

Members of the 2026-27 Board of Governors also were installed by Chief Justice Weimer.

First District

► Lindsey A. Cheek, founding attorney of The Cheek Law Firm LLC in New Orleans.

► J. Christopher (Chris) Zainey, Jr., a partner in the New Orleans law firm Lambert Zainey Smith & Soso, PLC.

Second District

► Sandra K. Cosby, a solo practitioner in Metairie.



The Louisiana State Bar Association's 2026-27 officers and members of the Board of Governors. Seated from left, Sen   D. Hall, Lindsey A. Cheek, Bradley J. Tate, Carrie LeBlanc Jones, Curtis R. Joseph, Jr., Edward J. Walters, Jr., Lawrence J. (Larry) Centola III, Christopher J. (Chris) Sellers Jr. Standing from left, Charles D. Elliott, Sandra K. Cosby, John M. Church, Tina L. Suggs, Todd S. Clemons, Shannon Seiler Dartez, Valerie Briggs Bargas, Daniel A. Cavell, Christopher K. Jones, G. Trippe Hawthorne, J. Christopher (Chris) Zainey, Jr. and Kristen D. Amond. All photos by Matthew Hinton Photography.

Third District

► Shannon Seiler Dartez, an attorney with Glenn Armentor Law Corporation in Lafayette.

Fourth District

► Todd S. Clemons, founder of Todd Clemons & Associates in Lake Charles.

Fifth District

► Christopher K. Jones, a partner in the Baton Rouge law firm Keogh Cox.

► Valerie Briggs Bargas, a partner with Long Law Firm in Baton Rouge.

Sixth District

► Barry M. Barnett, a partner in the law firm LaCroix, Levy & Barnett, LLC, in Alexandria.

Seventh District

► Amy J. Miller, an assistant U.S. attorney in the Western District of Louisiana, where she serves as a federal prosecutor in the Criminal Division in Ruston.

Eighth District

► Sen   D. Hall, an assistant district attorney in the Caddo Parish District Attorney's Office in Shreveport.

At-Large Members

► Tina L. Suggs, managing attorney at State Farm Insurance Company's Claims Litigation Counsel Office in Metairie.

► Daniel A. Cavell, a partner in the Thibodaux law firm Morvant & Cavell, LLC.

► Charles D. Elliott, a solo practitioner with Charles Elliott & Associates, LLC, in Alexandria.

LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center/ Faculty Representative

► Prof. John M. Church, professor of law at the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center in Baton Rouge.

Tulane University Law School/ Faculty Representative

► Prof. Ronald J. Scalise, Jr., the

John Minor Wisdom Professor of Civil Law at Tulane University Law School in New Orleans.

Louisiana State Law Institute Representative

► G. Trippe Hawthorne, an attorney with Kean Miller in Baton Rouge.

House of Delegates Liaison Committee

► Chair Larry E. Pichon, a solo practitioner in Lake Charles.

► Member Aaron R. Wilson, an attorney with Aaron R. Wilson, Attorney at Law, APLC, in Bossier City.

► Member Kristen D. Amond, an attorney with Kristen Amond LLC, in New Orleans.



Chief Justice John L. Weimer inducts the 2026-27 Board of Governors during the Installation Luncheon.



Hon. Kelly E. Balfour presented with the LSBA President's Award by 2025-26 LSBA President Edward J. Walters, Jr.



Bradley J. Tate presented with the LSBA President's Award by 2025-26 LSBA President Edward J. Walters, Jr.



C.A. (Hap) Martin III presented with the LSBA President's Award by 2025-26 LSBA President Edward J. Walters, Jr.

LSBA Recognizes 2026 Annual Meeting Award Recipients

The Louisiana State Bar Association recognized members of the legal profession and an organization for their leadership, service and contributions to Louisiana's legal community during the LSBA's 2026 Annual Meeting in Destin, Fla.

Awards were presented June 4, 2026 during the General Assembly just before the House of Delegates met.

President's Awards

Three LSBA members received 2026 President's Awards. The recipients were selected by 2025-26 LSBA President Edward J. Walters, Jr. and recognized for their service to the association.

► Hon. Kelly E. Balfour of Baton Rouge was recognized for his leadership, service to the legal profession and support of the LSBA. Balfour serves on the Louisiana 1st Circuit Court of Appeal and previously served as a judge of the 19th Judicial District Court. He also has served in the LSBA House of Delegates and on the LSBA Nominating Committee. He received the LSBA Michaelle Pitard Wynne Professionalism Award in 2008.

► C.A. (Hap) Martin III of Monroe was recognized for his leadership and longstanding service to the LSBA. A member of Shotwell, Brown & Sperry, APLC, Martin previously served as LSBA secretary and editor-in-chief of the Louisiana Bar Journal. He remains active in LSBA leadership roles, committees and programs.

► Bradley J. Tate of New Orleans was recognized for his leadership and service to the LSBA. An attorney with Sternberg, Naccari & White, LLC, Tate serves as LSBA secretary and editor-in-chief of the Louisiana Bar Journal. He also serves as president of the Louisiana Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program.

Distinguished Service to the Profession Award

► Patrick A. Talley, Jr. of New Orleans received the 2026 Distinguished Service to the Profession Award in recognition of his longstanding leadership and service to the legal profession.

Recently retired from Phelps, Talley served as LSBA president in 2024-25. He previously served as president-elect, secretary and editor of the Louisiana Bar

Journal and as a member of the Board of Governors and House of Delegates.

► Annette Cambronero Buras received the 2026 Distinguished Service to the Profession Award posthumously.

Buras was recognized for her extraordinary dedication and service to Louisiana's legal community during more than 33 years with the LSBA. During her tenure, she coordinated more than 1,000 continuing legal education seminars and became widely known throughout the profession for her professionalism, kindness and dedication to LSBA members.

Catherine D. Kimball Award for Advancement of the Administration of Justice

► Hon. Rachelle D. (Shelly) Dick of Baton Rouge received the 2026 Catherine



Annette C. Buras' husband, Tommy, and son, Jack, are presented with her Distinguished Service to the Profession Award by 2025-26 LSBA President Edward J. Walters, Jr.





Edmund J. Giering IV awards Judy Y. Barrasso with the Curtis R. Boisfontaine Trial Advocacy Award.

D. Kimball Award for Advancement of the Administration of Justice.

Dick, chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana, was recognized for her leadership, commitment to public service and dedication to the fair administration of justice. She became the first woman to serve on the Middle District bench when she was appointed in 2013.

Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson Trailblazer Award

► Hon. Janis van Meerveld of New Orleans received the 2026 Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson Trailblazer Award.

Van Meerveld, chief U.S. magistrate judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana, was recognized for her leadership, commitment to inclusion and diversity, mentorship of younger attorneys and long-standing service to the profession and community.



Carrie LeBlanc Jones presented with the Stephen T. Victory Memorial Award by LSBA Secretary Bradley J. Tate.



Hon. Bryan D. Haggerty presented with the Judge Benjamin Jones Judges in the Classroom Award by Hon. Shayna Beevers Morvant.

Guardian of Diversity Award

► The A.P. Tureaud American Inn of Court received the 2026 Guardian of Diversity Award.

Founded in 2005, the Inn was recognized for its long-standing commitment to diversity, inclusion, professionalism and service. Its programming and outreach initiatives promote access, mentorship and professionalism throughout Louisiana's legal community.

Judge Benjamin Jones Judges in the Classroom Award

► Judge Bryan D. Haggerty of Slidell received the Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education's 2026 Judge Benjamin Jones Judges in the Classroom Award.

Haggerty, a judge of the City Court of East St. Tammany, was recognized for his commitment to civic education and public service. He has remained active in educational initiatives, judicial leadership organizations and outreach programs throughout Louisiana.

Curtis R. Boisfontaine Trial Advocacy Award

► Judy Y. Barrasso of New Orleans received the Louisiana Bar Foundation's 2026 Curtis R. Boisfontaine Trial Advocacy Award.

Barrasso, a founding member of Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Freeman & Sarver, L.L.C., was recognized for her nationally distinguished trial advocacy career, leadership within the profession and decades of mentorship and teaching.



Margaret L. Manning presented with the Bat P. Sullivan, Jr. Chair's Award by 2025-26 YLD Chair Collin R. Melancon.

Stephen T. Victory Memorial Award

► Carrie LeBlanc Jones of Baton Rouge received the 2026 Stephen T. Victory Memorial Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions to the Louisiana Bar Journal.

Jones was honored for her article, "The Role and Regulation of Pharmacy Benefit Managers: A Legal Perspective from Louisiana," published in the August/September 2025 issue of the Journal.

John A. "T-Jean" Hernandez III Memorial Award

► John L. (Jay) Dardenne, Jr. of Baton Rouge received the 2026 John A. "T-Jean" Hernandez III Memorial Award, presented in recognition of achievements in Francophone leadership.

Dardenne, an attorney with Kennon, Odom & Dardenne and a mediator with Perry Dampf Dispute Solutions, was recognized for his decades of public service, leadership and support of Louisiana's Francophone heritage.

Bat P. Sullivan, Jr. Chair's Award

► Margaret L. Manning of New Orleans received the LSBA Young Lawyers Division's 2026 Bat P. Sullivan, Jr. Chair's Award.

Manning, an associate attorney with Stanley Reuter Alford Owen Munson & Paul, LLC, was recognized for her leadership and work with the YLD's Richard N. Ware IV Memorial Mock Trial Competition for high school students.

LSBA Young Lawyers Division Installs 2026-27 Officers and Council

The Louisiana State Bar Association Young Lawyers Division's 2026-27 officers and Council members were installed June 4 during the LSBA's Annual Meeting in Destin, Fla. Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice John L. Weimer administered the oath of office.

Christopher J. (Chris) Sellers Jr., assistant vice president and associate general counsel for Ochsner Health in New Orleans, was installed as the 2026-27 YLD chair.

Other officers installed were:

► Chair-Elect **Rachal Cox Cassagne**, an assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Louisiana in New Orleans.

► Secretary **Christina K. (Cristy) Chazan**, an associate attorney in the New Orleans office of Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith.

► Immediate Past Chair **Collin R. Melancon**, a partner and owner of Mansfield Melancon – Injury Lawyers in Baton Rouge.

Members of the 2026-27 YLD Council also were installed by Chief Justice Weimer.

District 1

► Margaret L. Manning, an associate attorney with Stanley Reuter Alford Owen Munson & Paul, LLC, in New Orleans.

► Jennifer Gordon Lampton, a research attorney for Judge Nakisha Ervin-Knott of the Louisiana 4th Circuit Court of Appeal, Division A, in New Orleans.

District 2

► Lauren T. Kirichkow, legal director at the Justice and Accountability Center of Louisiana in New Orleans.

► Andrew A. (Andy) Maberry, an attorney with Winston Bergeron LLP, in New Orleans.

District 3

► Jared E. Nelson, an associate attorney in the Lafayette office of Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith, LLP.

District 4

► Micah O. Clemons, an associate attorney with Todd Clemons & Associates, APLC, in Lake Charles.

District 5

► Manning P. Greene, an associate with Kean Miller, LLP in Baton Rouge.

► Mary Catherine Joiner, an associate with Bradley Murchison Kelly & Shea LLC in Baton Rouge.

District 6

► Ashley U. Johnson-Firven, a partner with Hammonds, Sills, Adkins, Guice, Noah & Perkins, LLP, in Baton Rouge.



Christopher J. (Chris) Sellers Jr., 2026-27 YLD Chair, is given the oath of office by Chief Justice John L. Weimer during the Installation Luncheon.

District 7

► Jana L. Robinson Tuma, senior legal counsel for U.S. operations at Drax, based in Monroe.

District 8

► Jasmine C. Cooper, an assistant district attorney for the Caddo Parish District Attorney's Office in Shreveport.

At-Large Representatives

► Taylor B. Ashworth, an associate in the Baton Rouge office of Kean Miller LLP.

► Malika L. Howard, judicial law clerk for Judge Robin D. Pittman, Section F, Orleans Parish Criminal District Court, in New Orleans.

► Joseph T.D. Tran, associate general counsel for LAMMICO in Metairie.

► Josef P. Ventulan, a staff attorney with the Louisiana State Law Institute in Baton Rouge.



Chief Justice John L. Weimer inducts the 2026-27 Young Lawyers Division Council during the Installation Luncheon.