

April 2018

Volume 23, Number 6

GEORGIA BAR
JOURNAL

From the Executive Director: Website and Directory Enhancements to Benefit Bar Members and the Public

Financial Institutions: Protecting Elderly Clients From Financial Exploitation

Bending the Arc: Georgia Lawyers in the Pursuit of Social Justice

Writing Matters: What e-Filing May Mean to Your Writing

**2018
ANNUAL
MEETING**

Amelia Island, Fla. | June 7-10



Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service

The Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism and the State Bar of Georgia honored 12 Bar members with awards for community and public service.

BY KARLISE Y. GRIER AND NNEKA HARRIS-DANIEL

The 19th Annual Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service, sponsored by the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism (Commission) and the State Bar of Georgia, was held Feb. 27 at the Bar Center. More than 350 people were on hand to honor and celebrate the deserving recipients.

Since 1998, the Commission has presented the Benham Awards to Georgia attorneys who go beyond their usual legal work or judicial duties to serve their communities. Judges and lawyers meet the criteria for these awards if they combine a professional career with outstanding service and dedication to their communities through voluntary participation in community organizations, government-sponsored activities, or humanitarian work outside of their professional practice or judicial duties. Service may be made in any field, including but not limited to: social service, education, faith-based efforts, sports, recreation, the arts or politics. The selection committee generally believes that community or public service is not service to a bar association; however, community service can be done through bar-sponsored or related activities or projects.

Awards Program

Honorees and program participants entered the auditorium to music provided by

attorney and vocalist Laurel R. Boatright, assistant U.S. attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia, Atlanta, accompanied on piano by Norman Lewis Barnett, assistant district attorney, Douglas County District Attorney's Office, Douglasville. Chief Justice P. Harris Hines welcomed everyone on behalf of the Supreme Court, while State Bar President Brian D. "Buck" Rogers and Young Lawyers Division President Nicole C. Leet brought greetings from the State Bar and YLD. Karlise Y. Grier, executive director of the Commission, served as the emcee for the program.

The audience then enjoyed an entertaining question and answer segment led by William J. "Bill" Liss, attorney, community service awards selection committee member and WXIA-TV News business editor. Liss used the interview format to introduce Justice Robert Benham, who shared his views on what professionalism and community service mean to him. Benham concluded the session by telling the audience that he believed that professionalism's most important factor is to heal and to bring together the community in a positive way.

Award Recipients

The Lifetime Achievement Award for Community Service recognizes a lawyer or a judge who, in addition to meeting



PHOTO BY DON MORGAN PHOTOGRAPHY



(Front row, left to right) Avarita L. Hanson, Justice Robert Benham, Chief Justice P. Harris Hines, Karlise Y. Grier and Hon. Robert “Bobby” Chasteen. (Back row, left to right) Gregory W. Edwards, Hon. Thomas L. Hodges III, Hon. Kathryn M. Schrader, La’Keitha D. Carlos, Tommy T. Holland, Robert B. Remar, Patrick T. O’Connor, Charles L. Jones, Allegra J. Lawrence-Hardy and Ann B. Bishop.

the general criteria for the Justice Robert Benham Award for Community Service, has also demonstrated an extraordinarily long and distinguished commitment to volunteer participation in the community throughout his or her legal career. This year’s recipients were Hon. Robert “Bobby” Chasteen Jr., chief judge, Cordele Judicial Circuit, Fitzgerald; and Avarita L. Hanson, former executive director of the Commission, legal consultant, Atlanta.

The Justice Benham Awards for Community Service were presented to: Ann B. Bishop, partner, Sponsler, Bishop, Koren & Hammer PA, Atlanta; La’Keitha D. Carlos, chief of staff, DeKalb County Law Department, Decatur; Gregory W. Edwards, district attorney, Dougherty Judicial District, Albany; Hon. Thomas L. Hodges III, chief judge, Northern Circuit Superior Court, Hartwell; Tommy T. Holland, attorney, Jonesboro; Charles E. Jones, attorney, Jones & Oliver, P.C., Fort Valley; Allegra J. Lawrence-Hardy, founding partner, Lawrence & Bundy LLC, Atlanta; Patrick T. O’Connor, managing partner, Oliver Maner, LLP, immediate past president, State Bar of Georgia, Savannah; Robert B. Remar, partner, Rogers & Hardin LLP, Atlanta; and Hon. Kathryn M. Schrader, judge, Gwinnett County Superior Court, Lawrenceville. This year’s honorees were exceptional servants to their communities and each has answered Benham’s charge for lawyers and judges to help heal and to bring the community together in a positive way through their service and commitment.

In Grateful Appreciation

This year’s program was successful because of the contributions and hard work of many people. Selection committee members responsible for the selection of the deserving honorees included: Janet G. Watts, attorney, Chapter 7 Trustee, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Jonesboro; Mawuli Davis, The Davis Bozeman Law Firm, Decatur; Elizabeth L. Fite, DeKalb County Attorney’s Office, Decatur; Joy Lampley-Fortson, Georgia Commission on Equal Opportunity, Atlanta; Laverne Lewis Gaskins, Augusta University, Augusta; Michael Hobbs Jr., Troutman Sanders LLP, Atlanta; W. Seaborn Jones, Owen, Gleaton, Egan, Jones & Sweeney LLP, Atlanta; Hon. Chung Lee, associate judge, Duluth Municipal Court, Duluth; William J. “Bill” Liss, legal and financial advisor, WXIA-TV News, Atlanta; and Brenda C. Youmas, Edwards & Youmas, Macon. Their work was invaluable.

A program of this magnitude is successful only with the assistance of others. We had a large number of volunteers on hand that evening to ensure everything ran smoothly. From decorating the venue to registering attendees and assisting our honorees, we thank them for their help: Aisha Hill, Precious Johnson, Shermela Williams, Jena Emory, LaQuierra Harris, Beza Tadessa, Josephine Frazier, Carrie C. Foster, Roberta Rhodes, Joyce Marsh, Vicki Hall, Bernadette Hartfield, Janet Prioleau, Avery Dixon, Antonia Hardin, Anthony Salgado, Joshua Crenshaw, Kira Jacobs, Lisa Dixon, Ressie Hardin and Sparkle Adams. A special thank you

to Angie Wright-Rheaves of Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasting who served as our commentator for filming, and to Hon. Carla Wong McMillian, Court of Appeals of Georgia, who served as our guest tweeter.

The Commission also appreciates our program vendor team members: Don Morgan, photographer; Vince Bailey, videographer; Eric Thomas, musician; AIB-TV, film production services; and Serendipity, catering. We’d like to also recognize our reception sponsors: Hon. J. Antonio DelCampo, DelCampo & Grayson LLC, Atlanta; and Gerald M. Edenfield, Edenfield, Cox, Bruce & Edenfield, Statesboro.

The awards ceremony would not have been possible without the tireless assistance of the Bar Conference Center staff: Faye First, Joyce Jarvis, Kyle Gause, Mark Brayfield and Ulysses Fred. Finally, the awards ceremony was a wonderful event because of the hard work of the Commission staff: Karlise Y. Grier, executive director; Terie Latala, assistant director; and Nneka Harris-Daniel, administrative assistant. ●



Karlise Y. Grier

Executive Director
Chief Justice’s Commission
on Professionalism
kygrier@cjcpga.org



Nneka Harris-Daniel

Administrative Assistant
Chief Justice’s Commission
on Professionalism
nneka@cjcpga.org

**Ann B. Bishop**

Past president and current member of the Board of Directors of Kids Chance of Georgia, Inc.; member, Board of Visitors for Mercer University Law School; Wesley Friendship Sunday school teacher at Northside United Methodist Church.

**La'Keitha D. Carlos**

Founder of It's My Birthday, Atlanta, a nonprofit organization for children facing life-threatening illnesses; past president, Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys; volunteer, Project Open Hand and Hosea Feed the Hungry; member, Executive Committee, American Constitution Society.

**Hon. Robert "Bobby" Chasteen Jr.**

Member, Board of Trustees, Wiregrass Georgia Technical College Foundation; volunteer, Habitat for Humanity "Great Day of Service"; founding member "LOVE OUT LOUD 365," youth mentoring group; president, Fitzgerald Rotary Club.

**Gregory W. Edwards**

Supporter of The Lily Pad "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" event; developed "Growing Albany's Next Generation," an initiative for at-risk local youth; life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; quizmaster for the Georgia Quiz Bowl Competition; co-chair, Board of Trustees, Hines Memorial CME Church of Albany.

**Avarita L. Hanson**

Founded legal ministry at Ben Hill United Methodist Church; past president, Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys; candidate for College Park City Council Ward 5; active in College Park Voters League; volunteer, Election Protection Taskforce; past president, Atlanta Chapter Links, Inc.

**Hon. Thomas L. Hodges III**

Little League coach; past president, Kiwanis Club and the Optimist Club of Elberton; board chair, Broad River District, Boy Scouts of America; president and treasurer of the Chancel Choir and finance committee chair of the Elberton First United Methodist Church; past director, Elbert County Chamber of Commerce.

**Tommy T. Holland**

Board member and former chairman of Calvary Refuge, Inc.; former chairman of deacons, Jonesboro First Baptist Church; led mission trips to build churches, schools and other facilities in approximately 25 countries, including Liberia, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Cambodia, Russia and the Dominican Republic.

**Charles E. Jones**

Works with the literacy program Leadership Education for Adults; board member, Mount de Sales Academy; baseball and football coach, Warner Robins Recreational League; advisor, Fort Valley Boys and Girls Club; coach, Macon County High School Mock Trial Team.

**Allegra J. Lawrence-Hardy**

Architect of Sutherland Scholars, a summer pre-law school program offered at no cost; member, Children's Museum of Atlanta Board of Directors; past executive committee member and board member, Girl Scouts of Greater Atlanta; Board of Trustees member and current chair, Atlanta Girls' School; created AT&T legal pipeline program.

**Patrick T. O'Connor**

Past president and executive board member, of the Coastal Georgia Council Boy Scouts of America; immediate past president, State Bar of Georgia; past chair, Savannah Country Day School Board of Trustees; past national president, Theta Chi fraternity; chairman of deacons, Ardsley Park Baptist Church; member, Auburn University's Dean Advisory Council for the School of Liberal Arts.

**Robert B. Remar**

Member and current vice president, secretary and treasurer, National Board of the American Civil Liberties Union; past president, Georgia Chapter of ACLU; past president, Georgia Center for Law in Public Interest a/k/a GreenLaw; member, City of Atlanta Board of Ethics; member and former chair, Board of Directors, Georgia Appellate Practice and Educational Resource Center.

**Hon. Kathryn M. Schrader**

Co-sponsored and organized inaugural Mental Health and Substance Abuse Summit in Gwinnett County; advisor, Central Gwinnett High School Legal Team; coach, Greater Atlanta Christian School Mock Trial Team; Marriage Enrichment small group leader, Cross Point, The Church at Gwinnett; member, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Gwinnett.

**partial list of honoree accomplishments*