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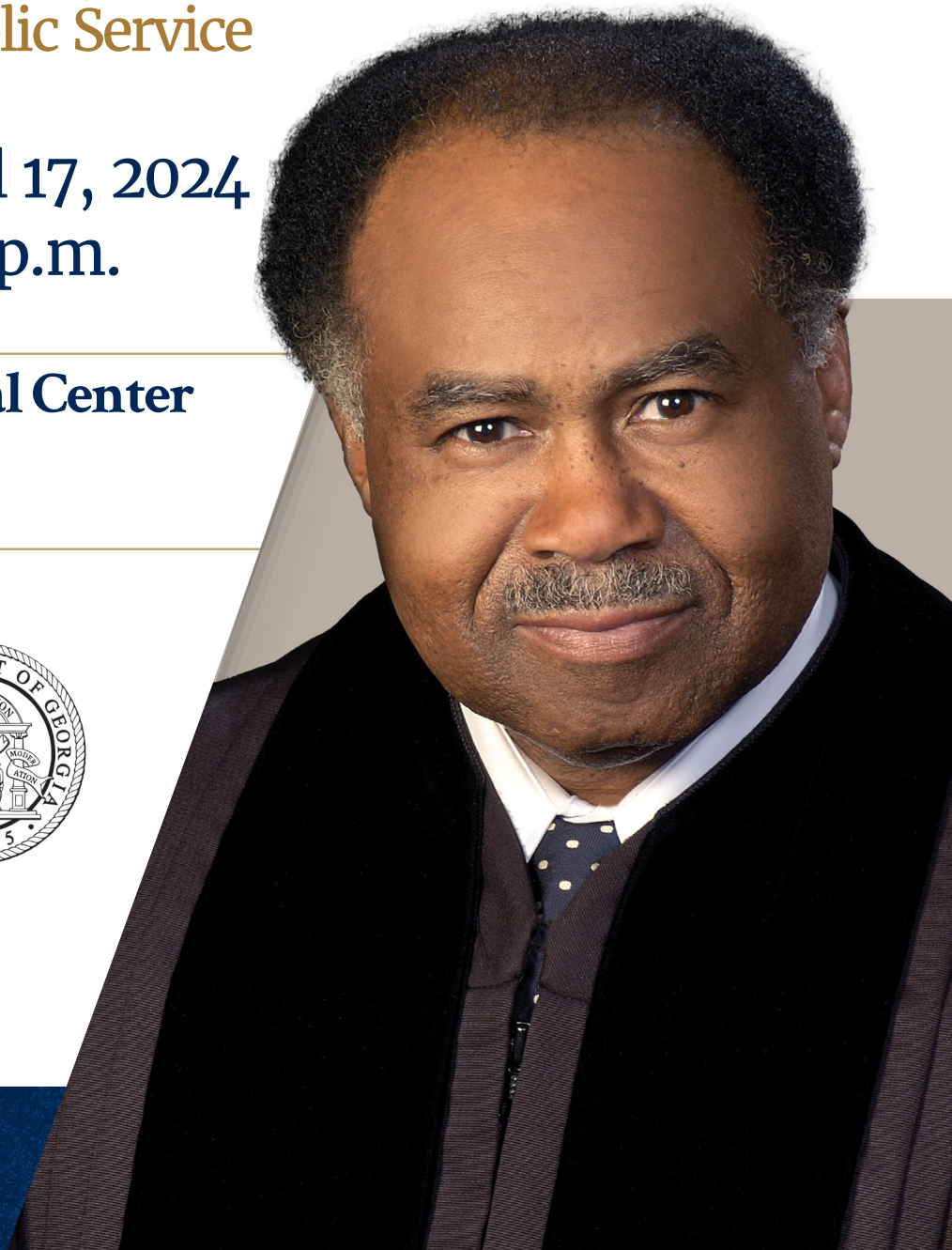
presents

The 24th Annual — Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service

Honoring Outstanding
Community & Public Service

Wednesday, April 17, 2024
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Nathan Deal Judicial Center
330 Capitol Avenue SE
Atlanta, GA 30334



Our Community, Our Responsibility

We believe in what we do. We also believe in where we do it. That's why we support our communities in every way we can, from pro bono services to financial contributions.

Greenberg Traurig is proud to sponsor the **24th Annual Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service Awards Ceremony.**

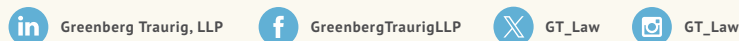


Congratulations to our friend and colleague, Atlanta Shareholder **JEFF SMITH**, 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.



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Awards Presentation & Reception

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An aerial photograph of a large, modern, multi-story building with a prominent arched entrance, likely a courthouse or government building, taken at dusk. The building's windows are illuminated from within, and the sky is a deep blue. In the foreground, there are some outdoor areas and parking lots.

**THE CHIEF JUSTICE'S COMMISSION
ON
PROFESSIONALISM**

**Enhancing professionalism among Georgia's
Lawyers and Judges since 1989**



www.cjcpgea.org

— The 24th Annual — Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service

History of the Awards

These awards are named in honor of The Honorable Robert Benham who, during his term as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia from 1995 to 2001, focused the attention of lawyers and judges on the community and public service aspects of professionalism. Justice Benham explains:

The public impression of the legal profession is not shaped just in the courtroom. It is shaped in all kinds of activities. When lawyers are involved in community activities, people will see them as neighbors, swimming team coaches, baseball coaches, house builders, and a whole host of other community servants. And if lawyers are also community servants, people will see the legal profession as a community-spirited profession. Such an impression can help but benefit the profession and increase the understanding of the role of the law and lawyer.

In 1997, the Executive Committee of the State Bar of Georgia created the Annual Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service to honor lawyers and judges who have made outstanding contributions in the area of community service.

The awards were created with the following objectives:

- 1. To recognize that volunteerism remains strong among Georgia's lawyers;*
- 2. To encourage all lawyers to become involved in serving their communities;*
- 3. To improve the quality of life of lawyers through the satisfaction they receive from helping others; and*
- 4. To raise the public image of lawyers.*

The First Annual Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service were presented at the Annual State Bar of Georgia Meeting on June 18, 1998, in Atlanta. The 1999 to 2001 awards were given out at the Annual Meetings in Savannah and Kiawah Island, S.C. The presentations moved to the January Midyear Meetings of the State Bar in Atlanta from 2004 to 2006. Since 2007, the awards ceremony has been an independent event held in the Atlanta area or at the Georgia Bar Center in Atlanta, free and open to the public, with increased attendance from the community, and the bench and bar.

The Justice Robert Benham Award for Community Service is an original glass sculpture, designed by Patrise Perkins-Hooker, Past President, State Bar of Georgia and former chair and long-term member of the Awards Selection Committee. Since their inception in 1998, the Awards have been produced by Lillie Glassblowers, Inc. of Atlanta. The design features three figures in a cooperative posture holding the seal of the State Bar of Georgia.



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Award Criteria & Eligibility

Each year the Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism, in conjunction with the State Bar of Georgia, invites nominations for the Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service. A wide net is cast, as nominees are solicited from around the State of Georgia and from all ten judicial districts. Any person who is not a member of the Selection Committee may submit a nomination, including members of the public, bar leaders, and fellow legal practitioners. The Selection Committee, consisting of members of the bar and the public, receives nominations, conducts confidential deliberations, and selects award recipients from eligible nominees who meet the award criteria.

The Selection Committee generally believes that community or public service is not service to the bar; however, community service can be done through bar-sponsored or related activities or projects. Judges’ service must not be merely doing their judicial tasks, but must be service outside of their official duties. Normally, the award is not given to persons who have served a single cause or single-purpose organization, but to those who have made wide contributions to a variety of causes outside of their professional practice or judicial service.

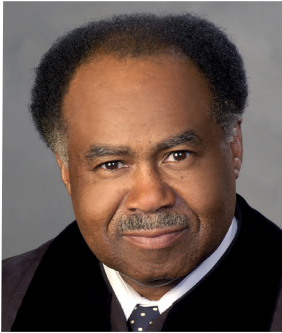
General Criteria. Judges and lawyers meet the criteria for these awards if they have combined a professional career with outstanding service and dedication to their communities through voluntary participation in community organizations, government-sponsored activities, or humanitarian work *outside of their professional practice or judicial service*. Contributions may be made in any field, including but not limited to: social service, education, faith-based efforts, sports, recreation, the arts, or politics.

Lifetime Achievement Award Criteria: The Lifetime Achievement Award is the highest recognition given by the Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service Selection Committee. This award recognizes a judge or a lawyer who, in addition to meeting the criteria for receiving the Justice Robert Benham Award for Community Service, has demonstrated an extraordinarily long and distinguished commitment to volunteer participation in the community throughout his or her legal career.

Eligibility Requirements: Nominees must:

1. Be a member of the State Bar of Georgia, in good standing, or have been a member, in good standing, at the time of death;
2. Have a record of outstanding community service and continuous service over a period of time to one or more causes, organizations or activities;
3. Not be a member of the Selection Committee, staff of the State Bar of Georgia or Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism; and
4. Not be in a contested judicial or political election 2023 or 2024.

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THE HONORABLE ROBERT BENHAM
Justice, Supreme Court of Georgia (RET.)
Atlanta, GA

Justice Robert Benham was the longest serving member of the nine-member Supreme Court of Georgia until his retirement on March 1, 2020. Appointed by Gov. Joe Frank Harris in December 1989, he was the first African-American ever appointed to the Supreme Court in its more than 140 years. On July 17, 1990, he won statewide election to a full term on the Supreme Court. He served as Chief Justice from 1995-2001, elected by his peers. Prior to his appointment to the Supreme Court, Justice Benham served on the Georgia Court of Appeals for five years. Justice Benham served as the Chair of the Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism from 1996 through 2001. During his tenure as Chair of the Commission, Justice Benham expanded the definition of professionalism beyond merely promoting civility between advocates to an umbrella concept and structure with essential elements and values. Justice Benham’s dedication to the Commission’s primary charge of assuring that the legal profession in Georgia remains a high calling, enlisted in the service of both client and public good, has been an example for all lawyers for many years.

A lifelong resident of Georgia, Justice Benham was born to Jesse Knox Benham and Clarence Benham in Cartersville, Georgia. He obtained a B.S. in Political Science from Tuskegee University in 1967 and also attended Harvard University. In 1970, he obtained his Juris Doctor from the University of Georgia, Lumpkin School of Law. He obtained a Master of Laws degree from the University of Virginia in 1989.

After completing law school, Justice Benham served in the U.S. Army Reserve, attaining the rank of Captain. He then served briefly as a trial attorney for the Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Inc. He later returned to Cartersville, where he engaged in the private practice of law. He served as a Special Assistant Attorney General and enjoyed two terms as the President of the Bartow County Bar Association.

Justice Benham has been a member of the American Judicature Society, the Lawyers’ Club of Atlanta, the National Criminal Justice Association, and the Georgia Bar Foundation. He was a Trustee of the Georgia Legal History Foundation. He is a past vice president of the Georgia Conference of Black Lawyers, a former board member of the Federal Lawyers Association and of the Georgia Association of Trial Lawyers. He is also the former chairman of the Governor’s Commission on Drug Awareness & Prevention and a member of the National Conference of Chief Justices. He is a member of the Federal-State Jurisdiction Committee and a member of the Governors Southern Business Institute.

Justice Benham is married to the former Nell Dodson of Cartersville and they have two sons and six grandchildren.

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THE HONORABLE MICHAEL P. BOGGS
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Georgia
Atlanta, GA

Chief Justice Michael P. Boggs was appointed to the Supreme Court of Georgia on December 7, 2016, by Governor Nathan Deal. He was re-elected state-wide in 2018. Previously, Chief Justice Boggs served in elective office as a Judge on the Court of Appeals of Georgia, as a Superior Court Judge for the Waycross Judicial Circuit, and as a member of the Georgia House of Representatives.

Chief Justice Boggs was raised in Waycross and obtained his undergraduate degree in Political Science and Psychology from Georgia Southern College in 1985. Upon graduation, Chief Justice Boggs worked as a legislative aide in Washington, D.C. for Georgia Congressman J. Roy Rowland for two years. In 1990, he earned his Juris Doctor degree from Mercer University School of Law, where he was a member of the Moot Court Board and the ABA/Law School Division moot court competition team, was awarded membership in the Order of Barristers, and was elected to the Student Government Association. Following his graduation from law school, Chief Justice Boggs practiced insurance defense litigation in Atlanta until returning to his hometown of Waycross. In Waycross, he maintained a general civil trial practice until his election to the Superior Court bench, focusing primarily on personal injury, domestic relations, and real estate matters while also serving as a County Attorney, Special Assistant Attorney General, and as Counsel to the regional Development Authority. In 2000, he won election as a State Representative to the Georgia General Assembly, where he served on the Judiciary, Public Safety, and Government Affairs Committees, and as chair of the Probate Law and Elections Law subcommittees. After his election to the Superior Court in 2004, Chief Justice Boggs founded the Waycross Judicial Circuit Drug Court Program, served as its Presiding Judge, and served as a member of the Judicial Council of Georgia's Standing Committee on Accountability Courts. Chief Justice Boggs served as a member of Georgia's Special Council on Criminal Justice Reform in 2011, and as co-chairman of the Georgia Criminal Justice Reform Council from 2012 to 2018 upon his appointment by Governor Nathan Deal.

Chief Justice Boggs serves as chair of the Judicial Council of Georgia, the policy-making body for the judicial branch. In 2023 Chief Justice Boggs was selected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Conference of Chief Justices, an organization dedicated to improving the administration of justice, rules and methods of procedure, and the organization and operation of state courts and judicial systems. Chief Justice Boggs also serves as a member of the Mercer University Board of Trustees, the Mercer University School of Law Board of Visitors, and the Board of Directors of the Bobby Dodd Coach of the Year Foundation. Chief Justice Boggs received the prestigious St. Thomas More Award from the St. Thomas More Society of Atlanta in 2017 for his work in leading the state in criminal justice reform, and in 2019, he received the "Spirit of Justice" award from the Appellate Practice Section of the State Bar of Georgia.

The Chief Justice serves as an advisory member of the Council on Criminal Justice, a national criminal justice policy organization and serves as a member of the Council's Veterans Justice Commission. He also serves on the Conferences of Chief Justices Artificial Intelligence Rapid Response Team. His previous court-related policy work includes past service as chair of the Board of Directors of the Council of State Governments Justice Center, a national nonpartisan criminal justice policy organization; service as a member of the National Center for State Court's Evidence Based Sentencing Peer Group and the Task Force on Fines, Fees and Bail Reform; and service as chair of the national steering committee of Justice Courts, an initiative led by the Council of State Governments Justice Center and supported by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance working to improve the availability and utility of criminal justice data in policy-making.

Chief Justice Boggs lives in Pierce County with his wife Heather, a kindergarten teacher in the Ware County public school system.

A LAWYER'S CREED



To my clients, I offer faithfulness, competence, diligence, and good judgment. I will strive to represent you as I would want to be represented and to be worthy of your trust.

To the opposing parties and their counsel, I offer fairness, integrity, and civility. I will seek reconciliation and, if we fail, I will strive to make our dispute a dignified one.

To the courts, and other tribunals, and to those who assist them, I offer respect, candor, and courtesy. I will strive to do honor to the search for justice.

To my colleagues in the practice of law, I offer concern for your welfare. I will strive to make our association a professional friendship.

To the profession, I offer assistance. I will strive to keep our business a profession and our profession a calling in the spirit of public service.

To the public and our systems of justice, I offer service. I will strive to improve the law and our legal system, to make the law and our legal system available to all, and to seek the common good through the representation of my clients.

Entered by Order of Supreme Court of Georgia, October 9, 1992, nunc pro tunc July 3, 1990; Part IX of the Rules and Regulations of the State Bar of Georgia, as amended September 10, 2003 and April 26, 2013

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* *Names in Italics are non-lawyer lay members, advisors, or liaisons of the Commission*

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2024 J.D. Candidate

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Court of Appeals of Georgia, Albany, GA

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Hon. Brenda Carol Youmas
Bibb County Civil and Magistrate Court, Macon, GA

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Executive Director, Chief Justice’s Commission
on Professionalism

Ms. Zaria Page
Administrative and Communications Specialist
Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism

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Benham Awards Planning Committee Leadership Team



CHRISTOPHER J. CHAN

Christopher J Chan IP Law, Co-Chair

With 25+ years of extensive IP and industry experience protecting and enforcing intellectual property rights, **Chris Chan** can tailor your company's IP strategy to fit its growing needs. Whether advising in-house counsel at a Fortune 100 corporation, or counseling principals at a technology start-up, Chris helps clients identify key intellectual property and implement state of the art legal strategies to protect it. His practice encompasses all facets of patent law including international and domestic portfolio management and strategy, patent procurement, opinions and clearance studies, due diligence, licensing and related litigation. Chris also has extensive experience in all aspects of trademark and copyright law. Chris offers clients a unique combination of intellectual property legal knowledge, advanced technical training and an intimate understanding of the international marketplace. He obtains and enforces key patent, trademark, copyright and trade secret rights for a variety of technologies, from computers, software, and financial transaction systems, to power generation equipment and controls, electro-mechanical devices and medical devices. Chris is a graduate of Georgia Tech, and received his law degree from Georgia State University College of Law.



LATOYA SIMONE WILLIAMS, ESQ., LL.M.

Co-Chair

LaToya Simone Williams is currently a Managing Attorney for the Specialized Unit II at the Georgia Public Defender Council Central Office in Atlanta, GA. LaToya began her quest for excellence at an early age. She graduated as Valedictorian of the 2005 senior class of George Washington Carver High School in Columbus, GA. LaToya then continued her education at Albany State University, where she graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts in English. She then went on to matriculate at Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law where she obtained her Juris Doctor and then an LL.M. (Master of Laws) in Federal Criminal Practice and Procedure. LaToya is a servant leader who believes in providing her clients with zealous advocacy and compassionate service. She is a member of the Gate City Bar Association, a member of the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys, and a member of Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers where she has served as a faculty member of the Bill Daniel trial advocacy program. She also serves as a faculty member of the National Criminal Defense College. LaToya is a past president of the Houston County Bar Association, a past president of the Houston County Young Lawyers Division, a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and many more civic and social organizations.



GREGORY (GREG) K. SMITH

Georgia Legal History Foundation Liaison

Gregory (Greg) K. Smith is a Partner in the Construction, Energy, and Government Contracts Practices at Smith Gambrell Russell. Greg practices in all areas of construction law, energy law, contract law, and government procurement. His practice consists of dispute resolution and litigation, counseling in contracting issues, counseling in government procurement, and the drafting, structuring, and reviewing of energy, construction, and other contracts. He advises businesses on a wide range of legal, compliance, and strategic issues. Being trained in transactions and disputes, he understands the complex interplay and consequences of decisions faced by businesses. Prior to practicing law, Greg served in the United States Navy.

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Programme

Wednesday, April 17, 2024 | 6:15 PM - 7:15 PM
NATHAN DEAL JUDICIAL CENTER

A General Reception will begin at 5:30 pm and a dessert reception will be held from 7:15 pm - 7:30 pm

MUSICAL PRELUDE **Atlanta Music Project Junior Youth Choir**

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME **Ms. Karlise Y. Grier**
Executive Director; Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism

INVOCATION **Hon. William P. ("Bill") Adams (Retired Judge)**
*President, Middle Georgia Justice
Former Award Recipient and Planning Committee Member*

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Founder; Atlanta Community Food Bank

REMARKS ON BEHALF OF **Justice Harold D. Melton (Retired)**
TROUTMAN PEPPER HAMILTON SANDERS LLP *Partner*

INTRODUCTION OF CHIEF JUSTICE MICHAEL P. BOGGS **Ms. LaToya S. Williams, Esq., LL.M.**
Atlanta, GA

REMARKS AND SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS **The Honorable Michael P. Boggs**
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Georgia

INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT **The Honorable Andrew A. Pinson**
OF JUSTICE BENHAM *Justice, Supreme Court of Georgia*

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARD PRESENTATIONS **Ms. Karlise Y. Grier**

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Programme Continued...

PRESENTATION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS **Chief Justice Michael P. Boggs**
Justice Robert Benham (Ret.)
Karlise Y. Grier

DISTRICT AWARD RECIPIENTS

JUDICIAL DISTRICT 4 **Ms. Vicky Ogawa Kimbrell**
Project Director, Family Law Unit, Georgia Legal Services Program
Atlanta, GA

JUDICIAL DISTRICT 7 **Mr. Samuel S. Olens**
Partner, Dentons US LLP
Marietta, GA

JUDICIAL DISTRICT 8 **Hon. Kathy Stephens Palmer**
Senior Superior Court Judge, State of Georgia
Swainsboro, GA

JUDICIAL DISTRICT 10 **Hon. Cheveda McCamy**
Superior Court Judge, Alcovy Judicial Circuit
Covington, GA

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT

Mr. Jeffrey M. Smith

Principal Shareholder, Greenberg Traurig LLP
Atlanta, GA
(Judicial District 5)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & CLOSING REMARKS **Chief Justice Michael P. Boggs**

MUSICAL POSTLUDE **Atlanta Music Project Junior Youth Choir**

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MS. VICKY OGAWA KIMBRELL

Director, Family Law Unit
Georgia Legal Services Program
Atlanta, GA

Judicial District 4

Vicky Ogawa Kimbrell serves as the Director of the Family Law Unit for the Georgia Legal Services Program (GLSP). As a child, Kimbrell saw her mother – who was born in Japan and who came to rural Georgia as a war bride – called names, treated poorly, or simply dismissed. Kimbrell wanted to ensure that such treatment never again happened to anyone, which led to her passion for public interest law. Kimbrell began her legal career at GLSP as a law student working on voting rights issues. After graduating from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1980, Kimbrell became the first known Asian-American woman member of the State Bar of Georgia. In her current position at GLSP, Kimbrell litigates cases on behalf of people she says “are often told to sit down and not make a fuss.” She has litigated Medicaid cases for women and children who were denied healthcare, and class action suits on behalf of parents with children in foster care and tenants evicted from public housing. She has also helped to lead or support more than 50 successful appellate cases involving domestic violence, Medicaid, public benefits, or parental rights.

Kimbrell focuses her community service in two areas. First, Kimbrell has worked to increase access to the legal system for clients that GLSP and other organizations funded by the federal Legal Services Corporation cannot serve and that otherwise may be unable to hire a lawyer. Second, Kimbrell on her own time is a legislative advocate since she is prohibited from lobbying in her capacity as a GLSP attorney. With respect to her access to justice work, Kimbrell has been instrumental in creating legal forms to help individuals who do not have attorneys. In the 1980s, Kimbrell helped to create the first statewide set of forms used to obtain Temporary Protective Orders (TPOs) after helping to secure the passage of the first Family Violence Act. More recently, Kimbrell assisted the Judicial Council’s Standing Committee on Access to Justice (ATJ) with developing family-law forms in plain English for use in courts throughout the state by self-represented litigants. Justice Verda Colvin, Chair of the ATJ, observed, “Vicky supports those who have been victims of injustices and she seeks to find avenues to address issues. Her commitment to advocacy in multiple arenas is admirable and she certainly epitomizes the spirit of Justice Benham, a man who was always for the people.”

Kimbrell is perhaps best known for her legislative advocacy and policy work. Kimbrell worked on legislation to prevent “mutual TPOs,” which often led to abusers intimidating their victims. She also lobbied for child support legislation that would provide sufficient financial support for battered women seeking to leave abusive situations. Most recently, Kimbrell helped to craft the new Dating Violence statute. As a member of the Supreme Court of Georgia’s Committee on Justice for Children she also helped a state agency to develop and institute policies to provide wrap-around services to families when children are returned home from foster care. Three Governors have appointed Kimbrell to the Georgia Family Violence Commission. Kimbrell has also served the community in more personal ways. For example, in partnership with organizations like the Center for Pan Asian Services and the Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association, Kimbrell has participated in projects like the People’s Law School where she taught individuals who were immigrants about family violence and health law. After hearing Judge Peggy Walker share that foster children were being housed overnight in hotels or in DFCS office’s, Kimbrell and her husband took 26 weeks of classes and became foster parents. Kimbrell has also volunteered at Ahimsa House and PAWS Without Homes, transporting and fostering pets for family violence survivors who have temporarily surrendered their pets.

Kimbrell said “the best thing about what I do is knowing that when someone thinks they are going to push someone around in court or in life, I get to say: ‘not today, not on my watch.’”

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MR. SAMUEL S. OLENS

Partner
Dentons US LLP
Marietta, GA

Judicial District 7

Samuel S. Olens is a partner in Dentons’ Public Policy practice and is a member of the firm’s State Attorneys General group. His practice focuses on state attorneys general and local government affairs matters. Olens was twice elected attorney general of Georgia, in 2010 and 2014. Prior to being elected attorney general, Olens was chairman of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners, serving from August 2002 through March 2010. He previously served as a county commissioner from 1999 through June 2002.

Olens’ broad-based community service has included politics, the faith-based community, and social services. Most recently, Olens partnered with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and a broad coalition of other organizations to pass the Georgia Hate Crimes Law of 2020. He is also a Regional Board Member of ADL Southeast and their National Commission. Eytan Davidson, the Regional Director of ADL Southeast said, “Sam Olens is a servant leader who believes in advocating throughout the system and pursuing strategic solutions that advance the causes of justice and democracy. Mr. Olens is respected throughout the community for his integrity, accomplishments, service, and counsel. He is an invaluable volunteer leader for ADL Southeast.” In addition to his work with ADL, Olens is also currently chairing Congregation Etz Chaim’s long range taskforce committee. He also co-chaired Leadership Cobb’s 2023 Class to cultivate more impactful leaders in his community.

Sharon Mason, President & CEO, Cobb Chamber of Commerce said of Olens, “I have known Sam for nearly 20 years and have witnessed how much of a difference he’s made and continues to make in our community, region and state through all his endeavors.” She also shared that while Olens was Georgia’s Attorney General, he worked to strengthen the penalties for and to protect the victims of sex trafficking, guided a comprehensive revision of Georgia’s sunshine laws and led the effort to stem the epidemic of prescription drug abuse. Robert Ingram, a past president of the State Bar of Georgia and Olens’ nominator wrote about another of Olens’ projects during this time. Ingram noted, “While serving as Attorney General [in 2012], Sam started the Legal Food Frenzy to raise money for the Georgia Food Bank to help provide food to those throughout our state who are in need.” Now in its 13th year, the Georgia Legal Food Frenzy has become an annual two-week fundraising competition created in partnership with the Georgia Attorney General, the State Bar of Georgia, the Young Lawyers Division of the Bar, and Feeding Georgia to see which law firm, legal organization, and corporate/in-house counsel can have the biggest impact on hunger. All of the funds raised remain local and benefit the regional food bank that serves the community in which the funds are raised.

Olens practiced law with a private law firm for many years and developed an excellent reputation as a trial lawyer and a capable adversary, said Ingram. Yet, Ingram continued, he also found time to serve on – and eventually chair – the Cobb County Board of Commissioners. During those years, Olens helped secure supplemental pay raises for Cobb County judges and fund the new Cobb Superior Court building. Some of Olens’ other service while in public office as Attorney General included serving as vice president of the National Association of Attorneys General in 2016, having previously served as chair of the 13-state Southern Region both in 2013 and 2015. He also served as Vice-Chair of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, a 16-county planning entity dedicated to developing comprehensive regional and watershed-specific plans for the district.

Olens received his B.A. from American University and his Juris Doctor from the Emory University School of Law. He is married to Lisa Olens and they have two children.

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HON. KATHY STEPHENS PALMER

Senior Superior Court Judge
State of Georgia
Swainsboro, GA

Judicial District 8

Senior Judge Kathy Stephens Palmer was born and raised on a farm in Johnson County, Georgia.

After completing high school, Palmer matriculated at the University of Georgia (UGA) on a small 4-H scholarship and earned a B.S. in Home Economics. Thereafter, Palmer attended the UGA School of Law where she earned her Juris Doctor in 1979. After passing the Bar that same year, Palmer became a prosecuting attorney and then worked in a general law practice in Swainsboro, Georgia. In 2000, Palmer successfully ran a contested election for Superior Court Judge becoming the first female superior court judge elected in a rural circuit of Georgia without having first been appointed by a Governor. Palmer was re-elected four times without opposition and retired in 2020 as Chief Judge of the five-county Middle Judicial Circuit. After her retirement in 2020, Governor Kemp appointed Palmer as a Senior Superior Court Judge for Georgia.

Palmer has an extensive record of community service. Rizza P. O'Connor, Palmer's nominator wrote: "Judge Palmer's community service is not merely a list of accomplishments; it is a narrative of love, support, and genuine care for the well-being of others." Palmer's community service activities includes her roles as a Cub Scouts Den Leader; Swainsboro High School Mock Trial Coach; past president of the Emanuel County Chamber of Commerce; Past President of the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences State Advisory Council; Executive Board member of the UGA Alumni Association; and Chair of the Protocol Committee for the Family Violence Task Force of the Middle Judicial Circuit. Palmer was also Chair of the Board of Directors for the East Georgia Healthcare Center, where she was instrumental in establishing and developing the center that provides primary healthcare to the Swainsboro/Emanuel County community on a sliding fee scale. Palmer currently assists the Sunshine House Regional Advocacy Center for Abused Children in its yearly fundraising banquet by serving as the "celebrity desert chef" since she cannot solicit donations as a judge.

In her community, Palmer is known for her lifelong dedication to 4-H and her gift of hospitality. Courtney Joiner Anderson, one of Palmer's endorsers wrote: "Hailing from rural Emanuel County, she has made it her life's mission to give back to the very community that nurtured her." Since 1987, Palmer has served as an Emanuel County Volunteer 4-H leader, working to provide guidance, mentorship, and opportunities for young people. From 2009 to 2020, Palmer served as the Vice President of the Emanuel County 4-H Foundation and since 2020, she has served as a Board Member. Palmer's pastor, Reverend David Unkles, said Palmer is a cherished church member because of her selfless service, which has previously included teaching Sunday School, and currently includes serving on the Church Council since 2003, and chairing the church's kitchen committee for about 28 years. As chair of the kitchen committee, Palmer plans meals for the church's weekly Wednesday night services and when needed, after church for the family and friends of infants who were baptized during the service. She also personally bakes cakes for each child who is baptized. Outside of church, twice each year, Palmer serves as the coordinator, chief cook, flower decorator, and benefactor of the combined graduation ceremony for the Drug Court and the Department of Community Supervision's Day Reporting Drug Program. For those graduating from Drug Court, it is said that one of the rewards for maintaining drug-free status is that one gets to eat Judge Palmer's homemade mac & cheese at the Graduation Banquet.

In addition to her civic, church, and community service, Palmer has also been a leader in Georgia's judicial community. She served as President of the Council of Superior Court Judges and the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education, where she led national searches for new Executive Directors for both Georgia organizations. She also served as Chief Superior Court Judge for the Middle Judicial Circuit; Administrative Judge for Georgia's Eighth Judicial Administrative District; and as a voting member of the Judicial Council of Georgia.

Palmer and her husband Danny have been married for 52 years. They have two sons, Kyle and Kirk, a daughter-in-law, Jessica, and three grandchildren.

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HON. CHEVEDA D. MCCAMY

Superior Court Judge, Newton County
Alcovy Judicial Circuit
Covington, GA

Judicial District 10

Judge Cheveda McCamy was appointed to serve as a Superior Court Judge in the Alcovy Judicial Circuit in October 2020. Prior to her appointment, she worked as a prosecutor and as an attorney in private practice, handling matters involving criminal law, family law, personal injury, estate planning and real estate.

McCamy is the visionary and founder of the Judge Horace J. Johnson, Jr. Beyond the Bar Scholarship Foundation, Inc. She recalled: “[W]hen my daughter graduated high school, I attended many award ceremonies. At these ceremonies, I saw the joy and concern on parents and students faces when they talked about where the student wanted to go and what it would cost to get them there. I knew then I wanted to help students further their education. I approached my local bar associations with the idea of starting a scholarship. NewRock Legal Society, Newton, Walton and Rockdale Bars agreed. I asked for volunteers to join the board and Beyond the Bar Scholarship Foundation, Inc. was born.” Last year, Beyond the Bar awarded six \$2,500 scholarships.

McCamy also currently serves as the Board Chair of Newton Mentoring Inc. (NMI), which is a grass roots organization that provides individual support for children who are considered at risk in the Newton County School System. Ruth Banks, the coordinator for NMI, shared that in addition to serving on NMI’s Board, McCamy also has served as a mentor. NMI requires mentors to see their mentees for at least 30 minutes to an hour a week at the mentee’s school, which was a time commitment that McCamy accepted and fulfilled. Banks shared, “McCamy is a true community servant because in addition to what she does for our program, she serves on other boards as well that support our youth, including the Newton County Arts Association. McCamy looks for ways that each organization can benefit through collaboration.” For example, said Banks, one summer, some of the students from NMI received financial assistance to participate in the summer programs of the Arts Association.

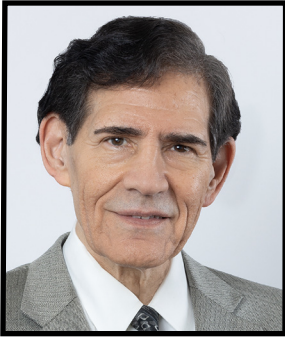
Michael Geoffroy, McCamy’s nominator said that he had worked closely with McCamy when he chaired the Board of the Newton County Boys and Girls Club. Geoffroy shared, “I witnessed her exceptional commitment to the children in our community. . . . Her impact on the lives of the children in the club’s programs is immeasurable.” Geoffroy also noted that McCamy consistently went above and beyond to provide mentorship, support, and guidance to the young participants in the club, making a lasting and positive influence on their lives. McCamy’s community service also includes participation on the boards of the Krimson Cornerstone Foundation, United Way of Walton County and the Athens Technical College Local Board of Directors. She is also a member of the Kiwanis Club of Covington, where she co-chairs the Scholarship Committee. Previously, McCamy volunteered as a cheer coach and as the director of Cheerleading for the Springfield Baptist Church.

McCamy is also active in several bar associations. She currently serves as the President of the Newton County Bar Association. In addition, she is a member of the Walton County Bar Association (where she was selected as the 2021 Member of the Year) and the NewRock Legal Society (where she serves as the Co-Chair of the Community Service Committee). She is also an active member of the State Bar of Georgia’s Committee on Professionalism.

McCamy was born and raised in Covington, Georgia. She earned a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Georgia in 1995 and a Juris Doctorate from the Mercer University School of Law in 1998. She is an active member of Springfield Baptist Church, where she serves in the Hospitality ministry. She is married to her husband of 24 years, Marcellus, and they have two children, a daughter who is also a graduate of the University of Georgia and a son who is attending the United States Naval Academy.

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Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient



MR. JEFFREY M. SMITH

Principal Shareholder
Greenberg Traurig, LLP
Atlanta, GA

Jeffrey M. Smith has been a Principal Shareholder with Greenberg Traurig for 27 years. Jeff's primary practice involves assisting world-wide brands resolve problems involving security laws and intellectual property rights in 18 countries and 11 states. His clients include Anastasia Beverly Hills, Margaritaville Enterprises, and the Michael Jackson Estate.

In 1966, during the Vietnam War, Jeff received a scholarship to attend the University of Malaysia, a multi-cultural country. That experience significantly impacted Jeff's view of how people from multiple cultures should work together respectfully and harmoniously. He received his Bachelor of Arts, summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, from the University of Minnesota in 1970 and his Juris Doctor, magna cum laude, Order of the Coif, from the University of Minnesota in 1973.

Jeff's initial pro bono efforts involved a health project with Native Americans in Minnesota from the Chippewa Tribe. Jeff continued his community service efforts in diverse ways. For example, Jeff started a project to improve the roads in Dharamshala, India, the capital of the Tibetan-in-exile community. Jeff helped Buddhist monks more effectively teach English to their students. Jeff also funded, on his own, a permanent seminar at Harvard to identify and resolve social issues in Thailand and a three-year program at Harvard to identify and resolve social issues in Nepal.

With urging from his wife, Ariel Lewin, Jeff coordinated the endeavor to bring a Tibetan Buddhist nun – Chuku – who was 17 and dying from scoliosis to the United States for medical treatment. Chuku lived in a Tibetan mountain village that was so remote it was not listed on government maps. Saving her required approximately 4 years of legal, charitable and diplomatic efforts and approximately 50 people in Tibet, China, India and America. This teamwork ended successfully at Philadelphia Shriners' Children's Hospital, where multiple operations saved her life.

Closer to home, Jeff has been pro bono general counsel, pro bono counsel, a member of the board of directors, donor, and/or fundraiser for numerous charities including in alphabetical order:

- ARC (the national organization for children with learning problems);
- Association of Chinese Americans;
- Atlanta Community Food Bank;
- Atlanta Music Project (which provides music education and instruments for underprivileged children);
- Atlanta Police Foundation (where Jeff supports various youth and safety projects);
- Freewishes Foundation (providing food and health support for underserved elderly African Americans);
- Georgia Heart Association;
- Himalayan Children's Charities (an orphanage in Kathmandu, Nepal);
- Ronald McDonald House (for Egleston Children's Hospital); and
- UNICEF.

Jeff has received numerous awards from these charities, including a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Atlanta Police Foundation.

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Jeff had a community service plan in 1973, when he came to Atlanta. He planned to help charities reward volunteer workers, express gratitude to donors, and create excitement at charity auctions by purchasing and giving away literally the very best tickets for the Atlanta Hawks games and for concerts at Lakewood Amphitheater. Jeff's plan worked. From 1989 through today, Jeff has purchased the center box, with seating for six people, at what is now known as the Cellairis (formerly Lakewood) Amphitheater. Jeff has also been purchasing six of the top 26 seats for Atlanta Hawks' games. Jeff attends either zero or one concert and zero or one basketball game per year. The other tickets are donated directly or indirectly to charities. This could not have occurred without the dedicated support of: (1) the Atlanta Hawks' owners, now primarily Tony Ressler, and the President of the Atlanta Hawks, Steve Koonin, and Senior Staff, such as Will Stephens; and (2) Live Nation, represented in Georgia by Peter Conlon.

Because food and safety are critical for anything else to work well, Jeff has focused his community service on those issues. Following great advice from Kirk McAlpin, a former Georgia State Bar President and mentor, Jeff has volunteered to be available for the needs and issues of the Atlanta Community Food Bank and Atlanta Police Foundation as those needs and issues arise. That includes resolving unusual legal issues and supporting special events fundraising.

The founder of the Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB), Bill Bolling, observed that Jeff had been a faithful and significant supporter of the ACFB over the years. Bolling continued, "When Jeff began volunteering with the ACFB, the food bank was a small, but growing, organization housed in the basement of St. Luke's church. As we grew so did our challenges. We relied on Jeff in the areas of liability, human resources, taxes, contracts, and strategy. If he did not know the answer, he knew someone who did. Like any good leader, he drew on the power of his experience and the trust of his network. He was invaluable to me and our Board of Directors. Through his experiences of growing the food bank over 43 years, he became part of the food bank family."

Dave Wilkinson, the president of the Atlanta Police Foundation and one of the five members of the Atlanta Emergency Board, had this to say about Jeff: "Jeff Smith has been a cornerstone of the Atlanta Police Foundation's success for nearly two decades. His unwavering commitment and exceptional leadership have helped us raise over \$50 million, providing essential support to our mission of making Atlanta a safer city. Jeff's pivotal role as the honorary chair for our Night in Blue event, which raised over \$400,000 for public safety programs, exemplifies his unwavering dedication and generosity. His gift of leadership, time, and counsel has been instrumental in shaping APF into the organization it is today. Jeff has left an indelible mark on our organization and the communities we serve."

Jeff was also an early supporter of Georgia's professionalism movement. When A. James ("Jim") Elliott, one of Jeff's mentors, was President of the State Bar of Georgia's Young Lawyers Division, he recommended lawyers take one hour of professionalism CLE each year. That proposal led to the creation within ICLE of a seminar entitled "Professionalism, Ethics and Malpractice." ICLE requested that Jeff be the volunteer Chairperson of the first seminar in 1982, and Jeff has continually volunteered to Chair the course for 42 consecutive years. Jeff has also presented several hundred other seminars, primarily involving professionalism, ethics and malpractice, in 37 states, Washington, D.C., at 25 universities and in 11 countries, including seminars for the Securities and Exchange Commission. One seminar on securities laws was presented to the China Supreme Court. The ALI-ABA awarded Jeff a Special Award of Merit for his teaching legal ethics and legal malpractice.

Jeff has authored, co-authored and/or edited several books and two treatises comprising more than 40,000 pages. He is currently the pro bono editor of a book on vocal cord surgery designed to raise money for operations that underprivileged people could not afford. The author is the world's leading vocal cord surgeon, Dr. Steven Zeitels.

Jeff has been guided by several mentors, including C.B. Rogers, who said to Jeff in 1973 that lawyers have a moral duty to spend significant time and resources helping people who are underprivileged. Rogers also said to be sure the remaining clients paid their invoices so that Jeff could support his family. Other mentors Jeff wishes to acknowledge include attorneys Emmet Bondurant, Arthur Norman Field, Jack Hardin, Steve Wellvang and Neil Williams and Professors Carl Auerbach, Hodge O'Neal and Bob Stein. Jeff has been very fortunate to have also benefited from the experience and wisdom of many state and federal judges. In the area of professionalism, which includes in particular former Chief Justices of the Georgia Supreme Court, Justice Hal Clarke, Justice Robert Benham, and Justice Leah Ward Sears.

Jeff is the father of two sons, Brandon and Jonathan.

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Past Award Recipients

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Hon. Robert Benham, *Atlanta*
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Upshaw C. Bentley, Jr., *Athens*
Miles J. Alexander, *Atlanta*
Willis A. DuVall, *Edison*
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Frank B. Strickland, *Atlanta*
Hon. Griffin B. Bell, *Atlanta*
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Rep. Mary Margaret Oliver, *Decatur*
Alan Tanenbaum, *Atlanta*
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Hon. P. Harris Hines, *Marietta**
Thomas William Malone, *Atlanta**
Jacqueline L. Payne, *Marietta*
Richard Gerakitis, *Atlanta*
S. Wade Malone, *Atlanta*
J. Michael Levensgood, *Lawrenceville*

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Albert Mazo, *Savannah*
Lisa L. White, *Savannah*
Elsie R. Chisholm, *Savannah*
Hon. Louisa Abbot, *Savannah*
Stephen F. Greenberg, *Savannah*
Carlton A. DeVooght, *Brunswick*
Michael L. Edwards, *Savannah*
Hon. James F. Bass, Jr., *Savannah*
Rebecca Crowley, *Waycross*
Howard E. Spiva, *Savannah*
Wanda Andrews, *Savannah*
Lovett Bennett, Jr., *Statesboro*
Christopher K. Middleton, *Savannah*
T. Mills Fleming, *Savannah*
Denise M. Cooper, *Savannah*
Patrick T. O'Connor, *Savannah*
Robert F. Mikell, *Statesboro*
Rita C. Spalding, *Brunswick*

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Cheryle Thompson Bryan, *Ashburn*
Suzanne P. Mathis, *Lakeland*
Kenneth B. Hodges, III, *Albany*
Roy W. Copeland, *Valdosta*
Michael S. Bennett, Sr., *Valdosta*
Joseph K. Mulholland, *Bainbridge*
Laverne L. Gaskins, *Valdosta*
Hon. James E. Hardy, *Thomasville*
Charles W. Lamb, Jr., *Albany*
D. Bradley Folsom, *Valdosta*
Michael S. Meyer von Bremen, *Albany*
Hon. Joe C. Bishop, *Albany*

John Randall Hicks, *Valdosta*
Karen B. Baynes-Dunning, *Albany*
Gregory W. Edwards, *Albany*
Christopher S. Cohilas, *Albany*
Christina L. Folsom, *Valdosta*
Jason Banks Moon, *Valdosta*

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William C. Rumer, *Columbus*
Ira L. Foster, *Macon*
Hon. S. Phillip Brown, *Macon*
Rebecca C. Moody, *Warner Robins*
Hon. William P. Adams, *Macon*
Hon. Maureen C. Gottfried, *Columbus*
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Michael L. Chidester, *Byron*
Tomieka R. Daniel, *Byron*
Jonathan A. Alderman, *Macon*
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Hon. Connie L. Williford, *Macon*

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Gloria L. Johnson, *Decatur*
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Hon. Gregory A. Adams, *Decatur*
Nisha K. Karmani, *Dumwoody*
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Hon. Johnny N. Panos, *Decatur*
Hon. Nancy Nash Bills, *Conyers*
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Hon. Asha F. Jackson, *Decatur*
C. Talley Wells, *Decatur*
Nora L. Polk, *Decatur*
Thua G. Barlay, *Decatur*
Hon. Dax E. Lopez, *Decatur*
Michael Thurmond, *Stone Mountain*
La'Keitha D. Carlos, *Decatur*
Hon. Clarence F. Seeliger, *Decatur*
Simon H. Bloom, *Atlanta*

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Cynthia Hinrichs Clanton, *Atlanta*
Jacquelyn H. Saylor, *Atlanta*
David M. Zacks, *Atlanta*
Christian F. Torgrimson, *Atlanta*

Antavius M. Weems, *Atlanta*
Hon. Herbert E. Phipps, *Atlanta*
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Douglas M. Towns, *Atlanta*
Linda T. Muir, *Atlanta*
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Judith A. O'Brien, *Atlanta*
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Sally Quillian Yates, *Atlanta*
Michael D. St. Amand, *Atlanta*
Paul E. Weathington, *Atlanta*
Mary T. Benton, *Atlanta*
Hon. Ronald J. Freeman, Sr., *Union City*
Edward H. Lindsey, Jr., *Atlanta*

DISTRICT 6 AWARD RECIPIENTS

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Hon. Eugene E. Lawson, *Jonesboro*
Hon. William H. Ison, *Jonesboro*
J. Byrd Garland, *Jackson*
Hon. Stephen E. Boswell, *Jonesboro*
James J. Dalton, II, *Jonesboro*
Avery T. Salter, *Jonesboro*
Hon. William Hal Craig, *McDonough*
Rudjard M. Hayes, *Tyrone*
Angela M. Hinton, *Fayetteville*
Hon. Robert M. Crawford, *Thomaston*
Cindy S. Manning, *Peachtree City*
Hon. A.J. Welch, Jr., *McDonough*
Tommy T. Holland, *Jonesboro*
Elicia N. Hargrove, *McDonough*

DISTRICT 7 AWARD RECIPIENTS

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Richard J. Lundy, *Cedartown*
Constance McManus, *Marietta*
Hon. Adele L. Grubbs, *Marietta*
W. Allen Separk, *Marietta*
Robert A. Cowan, *Dalton*
Cindi L. Yeager, *Marietta*
Nathan J. Wade, *Marietta*

J. Kevin Moore, *Marietta*
Justin B. O'Dell, *Marietta*
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Thomas David Lyles, *Dallas*
Stephanie L. Steele, *Marietta*
Hon. Robert Dale Leonard II, *Marietta*
Lindsay Beth Gardner, *Marietta*

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Samantha F. Jacobs, *Metter*
Jehan Y. El-Jourbagy, *Monticello*
Dexter M. Wimbish, *Madison*
Hon. John J. Ellington, *Soperton*
Wallace H. Wright, *Metter*

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Hon. Frank C. Mills, *Canton*
Rodney S. Harris, *Lawrenceville*
Wendy J. Glasbrenner, *Gainesville*
Hon. James E. Drane, *Canton*
Hon. Kathlene F. Gosselin, *Gainesville*
Hon. Cliff L. Joliff, *Gainesville*
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John Acklin Gram, *Gainesville*
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Mark O. Shriver, IV, *Woodstock*
Hon. M. Anthony Baker, *Canton*
Eric A. Ballinger, *Canton*
Hon. Chung Hun Lee, *Duluth*
Peter A. Gleichman, *Woodstock*
Nicki Noel Vaughan, *Gainesville*
Hon. Kathryn M. Schrader, *Lawrenceville*
Julia K. Greene, *Greensville*

DISTRICT 10 AWARD RECIPIENTS

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John M. Clark, *Elberton*
Edward D. Tolley, *Athens*
Dennis C. Sanders, *Thomson*
Hon. Duncan D. Wheale, *Augusta*
David B. Bell, *Augusta*
Walter James Gordon, Sr., *Hartwell*
David E. Hudson, *Augusta*
Hon. Samuel D. Ozburn, *Covington*
Victor Y. Johnson, *Danielsville*
Laura C. Nehf, *Athens*
J. Edward Allen, Jr., *Athens*
Hon. Lawton Stephens, *Athens*
Hon. J. Virgil Costley, Jr., *Covington*
Hon. Thomas L. Hodges, III, *Hartwell*
Regina M. Quick, *Athens*
Hon. Donarell Rhea Green IV, *Athens*

* *posthumously*

Acknowledgments of Volunteers

Thank You To Our Event Day Volunteers for the 24th Annual Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Services

Thank you to our event day volunteers who are not also program participants for their time and assistance on April 17, 2024!

Samantha Beskin-Schemer

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Shinnay Richards

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