

# THE PROMULGATOR

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*The Official Magazine of the Lafayette Bar Association*



***PRO BONO ATTORNEYS:  
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OCTOBER 2025 | VOLUME 38 | ISSUE 5



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## LAFAYETTE BAR ASSOCIATION & FOUNDATION

**OUR MISSION** is to serve the profession, its members and the community by promoting professional excellence, respect for the rule of law and fellowship among attorneys and the court.

**THE PROMULGATOR** is the official magazine of the Lafayette Bar Association, and is published six times per year. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial Committee.



### ON THE COVER

Pictured are some LBA members who volunteer to serve as Pro Bono Attorneys and provide legal assistance to individuals who might not otherwise be able to afford it. National Celebration of Pro Bono is held the last week in October. Please read more on Page 6.

Jonathan Jarrett, Kelsi Flores, Ann-Kathryn Daigle, Dean Doherty, Blake David, Corrie Gallien, Leslie Beam, Gregory Landry, Dean Cole, Joshua Barnhill, Kyle L. Gideon, John Swift, L. Shaun Trahan, Tommy Hightower, Sarah Lyles, Kenny Oliver, Maggie Simar, Andy Veazey, Brittany LaCombe, and Wesley Galjour.

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Clay Shoot Tournament

Wilderness Gun Club  
October 17, 2025

#### Elder Wills and Wills for Heroes

LBA Office  
October 18, 2025

#### Champions of Justice Awards Breakfast

Petroleum Club of Lafayette  
October 24, 2025

#### Board Installation

Warehouse 535  
November 6, 2025, 5:30 P.M.

#### LBA Christmas Party

Artmosphere  
December 4, 2025, 5:30 P.M.

#### CLE BY THE HOUR DATES:

December 10, 11, 12,  
15, 17, 19, 22, 29, 30

To register for events,  
visit [lafayettebar.org](http://lafayettebar.org) or  
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is with a sense of gratitude and nostalgia that I write my final President's Column for The Promulgator. On November 6, leadership of the Lafayette Bar Association will pass to Trey Hightower, who will continue the tradition of addressing you in these pages every other month.

I am pleased to share that the LBA's recent Bench Bar conference at The Grand Hotel in Point Clear, AL, was an outstanding success. Attendance was impressive, the programming was excellent, and feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. The Bench Bar Committee—made up of Maggie Simar, Jonathan Jarrett, Jason Matt, and Trey Hightower—deserve the highest praise for organizing and putting on such an amazing conference. I also extend my appreciation to the LBA staff for managing another memorable event, and to our generous sponsors who made it all possible. This marked a truly special celebration of 25 years of Bench Bar.

As we look ahead, our fall calendar is full of exciting events:

- The annual clay shoot fundraiser for the Lafayette Bar Foundation is set for October 17 at Wilderness Gun Club. All proceeds will support the Foundation's vital pro bono programs—please consider signing up for this much-anticipated event.

- On November 6, we will host our Installation Banquet to honor incoming LBA President Trey Hightower as well as new section presidents JP Graf (YLS) and Logan Istre (FLS). We hope you'll join us as we welcome our new leadership.
- Following the Installation Banquet, we turn to CLE by the Hour, our primary fundraiser. We aim to offer even more engaging and relevant topics this year—please support our efforts by enrolling in our programs throughout December and sharing the word with colleagues.
- Lastly, mark your calendar for our annual Christmas party at Artmosphere on December 4. More details will be available soon.

In closing, I want to thank our remarkable staff, board members, volunteers, and sponsors for a wonderful year. Thanks to your commitment, and in spite of your President, the LBA continues to reach new heights. The Association is in excellent hands, and I am confident in its continued growth and community service. Thank you for the privilege of serving as President—it has truly been my honor.



**Stuart Breaux**

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It is that time of the year when we have a changing of the guard at the Lafayette Bar Association. As we move forward, I would be remiss without remarking on how I have learned anew about the incredible amount of time our volunteer leaders spend in serving our legal community and the greater citizenry of Lafayette Parish and beyond. Coming off of an incredibly successful Bench Bar, I can attest that none of our work would be possible without our dedicated team of volunteers who make things happen!

Marking my first full year as Executive Director on October 16, it is hard to believe that Stuart Breaux is just completing his tenure as a successful Bar President, and we will be installing a new set of leaders! I want to thank Stuart and the entire Executive Committee and Board of Directors for trusting me to lead our organization as Executive Director.

On Friday, October 24, at 7:00 a.m. at the Petroleum Club, the Bar Foundation will host its annual Champions of Justice Awards Breakfast, honoring the volunteers of the Lafayette Bar Foundation Pro Bono Programs. This is a complimentary breakfast which we invite you to join to celebrate the pro bono attorney heroes among us! There are many

of you who assist those who most need assistance; if you want to learn more, this breakfast is the place to begin and witness the magic.

On Thursday, November 6, Thomas Reginald "Trey" Hightower, III will officially take over as President of this great organization. The event will be held from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Warehouse 535 and will feature cocktails, conversation, delicious food from Poor Boy's Riverside Inn, and the installation of our Association leadership, as well as our Bar Foundation, Young Lawyer Section and Family Law Section. I hope you will join us!

If you have not already gotten your 12.5 CLE credits for this year, the LBA will be offering numerous opportunities for you to do so throughout December. These seminars are designed to be flexible to accommodate busy schedules as well as offer an array of legal topics to choose from. Remember, when you choose to attend a seminar



**Jan Swift**

sponsored by LBA, it directly impacts our bottom line. We promise to make a return on your investment in the form of increased member services and benefits.

Mark your calendars for Thursday, December 4, for our annual Holiday Party, to be held at Artmosphere in Downtown Lafayette. There is a rumor that we will enjoy a possible appearance by Santa himself. Mark your calendars now!

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& ASSOCIATES**

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# ACCESS TO JUSTICE

A report of the Lafayette Bar Foundation, provided by Foundation Chair Dean Cole



We had a great time at the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition of the Bench Bar Conference at The Grand in Point Clear, Alabama. I have been involved in this event since it's inception, and I'd like to congratulate Maggie, Johnathan and Jason for spearheading this year's Bench Bar and continuing to make it one of the premier events of our local bench and bar. Thanks to all of our bar staff for the hard work they did to make this this year's event very successful. I want to cordially invite everyone to our annual Champions of Justice awards breakfast banquet. This year's event is scheduled for Friday, October 24, at the Petroleum Club. I encourage everyone to mark their calendars for this important occasion. The attorneys who engage in pro bono work look forward to seeing a strong turnout, as your presence helps to honor the valuable contributions made to the Lafayette Bar Foundation and the

community at large. Attorneys who do pro bono work play a vital role in our communities. They provide legal assistance to individuals who might not otherwise afford it. These lawyers are passionate about justice and often go above and beyond to support their clients. At the Champions of Justice event, we celebrate their hard work and commitment to making a difference in the lives of others. So, please mark your calendars for Friday, October 24, 2025, at 7:00 a.m. and be part of this memorable occasion. Your participation not only honors the hard work of pro bono attorneys but also shows your commitment to promoting justice for all. Together, we can make a difference and inspire others to join the fight for fairness and equality. Thank you very much to all of you who have continued to provide legal services through the Lafayette Bar Foundation.

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# FAMILY LAW SECTION

AN UPDATE FROM PRESIDENT

LESLEY BEAM

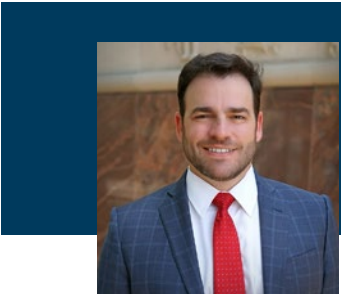
This is the last article I will write as president of the Family Law Section of the Lafayette Bar Association. It has been an honor to serve, and I am proud of the work we have done to further the mission of this section on behalf of the dedicated members in our field. In this post-COVID era, it takes effort to bring people together, as we are all busy with professional and personal obligations. It's easy to feel overwhelmed and not want to add one more thing to the calendar. Yet this section provides not only education but also personal connection, helping us work cases with better communication and less animus. It has given me a network of colleagues who have been there for me when I've needed advice or encouragement. To everyone who has attended functions, meetings, or CLEs—thank you. To those who have stepped back, I hope to see you return soon.

Before I pass the baton to our incoming president, Logan Istre, I must thank the Executive Committee for their dedication, especially Logan and incoming VP Brittany

LaCombe. Brittany has been consistently available, even while on maternity leave. I am grateful as well for the guidance of immediate past president Claire Bergeron Edwards and the support of Maggie Simar, who continues to share her time and experience generously with the Acadiana legal community.

I also thank the incoming EC members for agreeing to serve this year: president Logan Istre, vice president Brittany LaCombe, Secretary Jonathan Jarrett, Treasurer Wesley Galjour, and at-large members Richard Mere, Maggie Simar, and Rachel Godley. With their combined experience, I know the section is in good hands.

By the time you read this, we will have held our joint social with the YLS at Corner Bar on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Our next Family Law meeting and CLE is set for November 14, 2025, at the LBA. The meeting begins at 12:30 pm, followed by a one-hour CLE at 1:00 pm. Lunch will be served, and I hope to see you there!



# YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION

AN UPDATE FROM PRESIDENT

KENNY HEBERT

Happy Fall everyone,

I first want to congratulate all of you, as this will be my final update as the President of the Young Lawyers Section of the Lafayette Bar Association. You've stuck through it for an entire year, and you will soon be rewarded with J.P. Graf as the newly inducted President of the YLS.

It has been an incredible honor to serve in the capacity as the YLS President this past year. The YLS hosts CLEs, socials, mock trial, and other successful events. However, our board and the Lafayette Bar Association staff deserve all the credit. Every event or function was chaired by a specific committee chairperson and committee that worked diligently with the Bar Association staff to ensure everything went off without a hitch. I am forever grateful to everyone that worked together in such capacities this past year.

That said, at the time of this publishing, we're still not done! Tyler Frederick, his committee, and the Bar Association staff have been working hard to prepare for the annual clay shoot. The clay shoot will be held on Friday, October 17, 2025, at the Wilderness Gun Club. If you haven't registered a team yet, please do so as it's always a fun event for a great cause with incredible food and loud noises!

Installation will be held on Thursday, November 6, 2025, at Warehouse 535. It is at this installation that J.P. Graf will officially be handed the reins of the YLS, and other officers and board members will be sworn into their new roles. We hope to see you all there.

Finally, thank you again for the honor of serving in this role as (probably the oldest ever) Young Lawyers Section President.

**Champions of Justice Breakfast**  
Location: Petroleum Club of Lafayette  
Address: 111 Heymann Boulevard Lafayette, Louisiana 70503  
Date: Friday, October 24, 2025  
Time: 7:00 a.m. breakfast  
7:30 a.m. program begins  
**RSVP at [marilyn@lafayettebar.org](mailto:marilyn@lafayettebar.org)**



# Mental Health in Law: Reflections, Progress, and the Road Ahead

By Corrie Gallien

## Introduction

Law is a demanding profession, one that often takes a significant toll on judges, lawyers, law students, and legal staff. The legal field continues to rank among those with the highest rates of chronic stress, depression, and substance use.

Just as society is shifting to broaden its views on mental health, the legal profession is also evolving. What was once taboo is now being cultivated and embraced. For too long, the legal profession has normalized burnout, anxiety, and perfectionism. We were taught that perfection is the gold standard and that helping others should come at the expense of helping ourselves.. But thankfully, we're beginning to understand that individuality, self-care, and wellness matter more than the relentless pursuit of perfection.

We have made great strides in addressing mental health within the legal community, but we must keep moving the needle forward. We should strive to reach a point where mental wellness is not just accepted; it is celebrated.

## A Personal Reflection

I care about mental health, because it is deeply personal to me. In early 2022, I experienced a mental health crisis and was placed on Interim Disability Status by the Louisiana Supreme Court until I was readmitted to practice subject to a monitoring period through the Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program (JLAP).

That season of my life taught me a powerful truth found in an old proverb: **an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure**. When it comes to mental health and wellness, we are far better off taking a proactive approach of balancing work and life, de-stressing regularly, and finding healthy ways to manage stress before we reach the breaking point.

It's with this lens that I reflect on where we've been, what progress we've made, and where we still need to go in our pursuit of mental wellness for all attorneys.

## A Look Back: Where We Were

The legal profession was built within a small, insular community, one that often resembled a fraternity. It was tight knit, but attorneys had little support, few resources, and almost no guidance on wellness. The prevailing mentality was, "If I made it through the trenches, you can too."

But a hazing mindset is no substitute for a culture of care; instead, it's quite harmful.

In 2016, the American Bar Association conducted a groundbreaking survey that revealed alarmingly high rates of depression, anxiety, and substance use among attorneys.<sup>1</sup> The survey also found that 10% of attorneys had contemplated suicide at some point in their careers.<sup>2</sup> That's a number we cannot afford to ignore.



## Progress We've Made

Thankfully, change is underway. At the local, state, and national levels, our bar associations are beginning to prioritize mental health. The Lafayette Bar Association has developed a Lawyer Wellness resource list on its website at [www.lafayettebar.org/lawyer-wellness](http://www.lafayettebar.org/lawyer-wellness). Similarly, the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) has a "Quality of Life" initiative with mental health resources at [www.lsba.org/Professionalism/QualityofLife.aspx](http://www.lsba.org/Professionalism/QualityofLife.aspx). LSBA also launched SOLACE (Support of Lawyers/ Legal Personnel – All Concern Encouraged), which connects members who opt into the SOLACE network with colleagues experiencing tragedy, illness, or loss. You can join the network by visiting [www.lsba.org/Members/Solace.aspx](http://www.lsba.org/Members/Solace.aspx).

On the national level, the ABA's Well-Being Pledge Campaign encourages legal employers to create healthier, more sustainable work environments. Lawyer assistance programs across the nation offer essential support to attorneys and judges in need. Wellness-related CLEs are more common. Additionally, courts and law firms are becoming receptive to the importance of mental health.

These steps matter. They are part of a culture shift that would have been unthinkable just a decade ago.

## The Road Ahead: Gaps and Opportunities

Still, let's be honest: stigmas remain. And these stigmas often hit hardest for solo practitioners, small firm lawyers, women attorneys, and lawyers of color.

Too often, when a lawyer self-reports a mental health crisis, they risk being perceived as incompetent, lazy, or unfit to practice. Also, mental health issues are often handled similarly to disciplinary complaints.<sup>3</sup> This needs to change.

Here are five ways we can continue to move our profession forward:

1. Ensure access to confidential, low-cost therapy for attorneys
2. Reevaluate and reduce unrealistic billable hour requirements
3. Promote peer support and mentorship networks statewide
4. Reform disciplinary review procedures for mental health concerns
5. Make CLEs on wellness and mental health mandatory—not optional

Bar associations must go beyond collecting data on mental health. We must prioritize the well-being of every member.

## Closing: What Progress Really Means

Yes, we should commend ourselves for the progress we've made. But true change is more than programs or policies. It's about how we treat ourselves and one another.

**My final thoughts:** The most powerful reform we can make is to build a culture where lawyers feel safe getting help before it's too late. For too long, we have suffered in silence. It's time to reach out—quickly, unapologetically, and without shame—when we need support.

I'm here, judgment-free, for any attorney who needs a listening ear. **Are you?**

<sup>1</sup> Am. Bar Ass'n Comm'n on Lawyer Assistance Programs & Hazelden Betty Ford Found., *Lawyer Wellness Study: National Study on Attorney Substance Use and Mental Health* (2016), <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/images/news/PDFs/Lawyer-Study.pdf>; First Legal, *Understanding ABA Survey Results About Attorney Well-Being* (Apr. 21, 2022), <https://www.firstlegal.com/understanding-aba-survey-results-about-attorney-well-being/>.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> See Corrie Gallien, *The Cost of Silence: How the Legal Profession Fails Survivors Within Its Ranks* (Corrie Gallien Collective 2025) for a detailed look at how we can improve the responses to self-reports of mental health crises.





# THE GRAPEVINE

Congratulations to **Jared Nelson**, Associate Attorney at Galloway Johnson Tompkins Burr & Smith, who is among the winners of the 2025 ABA On the Rise – Top 40 Young Lawyers!

Awarded by the ABA Young Lawyers Division, the association highlights those who have shown forward-looking approaches and a clear vision for the future of the legal field, driving meaningful change and inspiring others.

Gordon Arata congratulates twenty-nine attorneys named to the 2026 The Best Lawyers in America® and Best Lawyers: Ones-to-Watch® lists, including Lafayette attorneys **Meaghan M. Anderson, Bob J. Duplantis, Gregory G. Duplantis, Armistead M. Long, Samuel E. Masur, J.P. Graf, and Gerald H. Schiff**. Gregory G. Duplantis was further honored as Lafayette Best Lawyers® “Lawyer of the Year” in Energy Law.

Do you have a new member at your firm, a new edition to your family, or just any life updates that you'd like to share? Submit it for The Grapevine and you'll be featured in our next Promulgator!

Email your submission to [marketing@lafayettebar.org](mailto:marketing@lafayettebar.org).

## A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Clare Roubion, Louisiana Legal Ethics

Friends,  
October always feels like a turning point. The days grow shorter, the pace of work quickens, and we begin looking toward the year's end. It's a good moment to pause, reflect, and reconnect with one another as colleagues and as a bar.

This journal is at its best when it reflects not only legal updates and announcements, but also the experiences, insights, and voices of our members. Do you have a courtroom story that still

teaches you something today? A perspective on a recent case or professional challenge? Even a practical tip that helps you manage the demands of practice more effectively? Those contributions—short or long, serious or light—make this publication stronger and more meaningful.

I invite you to share your ideas with us. Whether you write a short piece, suggest a feature, or volunteer for an interview, your perspective matters. Together we can make this

journal a true reflection of the breadth and spirit of our bar.

Warmly,

Clare Svendsen Roubion  
337-258-0101

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We are pleased to announce the establishment of a new law firm, **Gauthier & Granger, LLC**, by attorneys Daniel J. Gauthier and Christopher D. Granger.

Daniel and Chris bring complementary strengths to the practice. Together, they have represented a broad range of clients in both public and private sectors, providing counsel and advocacy in a range of matters including real estate transactions, property disputes, business law and litigation, land use and zoning, and municipal representation.

In addition, Daniel joins Chris as a part of Maison Title, which has offered both residential and commercial real estate closing and escrow services throughout Acadiana since 2016. With Daniel now a part of the team, he hopes to further Maison Title's goal to accommodate their client's real estate needs – “Whenever, wherever.”

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2025  
7:00 A.M. BREAKFAST  
7:30 A.M. PROGRAM BEGINS

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YOU ARE INVITED TO  
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Thursday, November 6, 2025  
5:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.  
Warehouse 535  
535 Garfield Street, Lafayette, LA 70501

*Thomas R. "Trey" Hightower III*  
AS PRESIDENT OF LAFAYETTE BAR ASSOCIATION  
AND THE 2025-2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*J.P. Graf*  
AS PRESIDENT OF YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION  
AND THE 2025-2026 YLS BOARD & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

*Logan Istre*  
AS PRESIDENT OF FAMILY LAW SECTION  
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We are actively working to resurrect the LBA's Real Estate and Transaction Section! On September 11, we met with about 30 attorneys who joined us as we look to planning programming for 2026.

If you would like to join in, please email Jan Swift at [jan@lafayettebar.org](mailto:jan@lafayettebar.org) to sign up!

We will hold 6 CLE classes next year, with the first being scheduled on January 22, Noon, featuring Ted Hoyt speaking on Tax Issues in Real Estate Transactions. Your involvement is invaluable as we work to build a better learning environment for our transactional attorneys.





# Daring to Dream: Jules D. Edwards III

A man of profound faith, family devotion, and public service, Judge Edwards' life was rooted in his motto: *"Dare to Dream."* He was not just an accomplished jurist, a dedicated soldier, a caring mentor, a loving minister, and a concerned community leader; he was a change-agent who believed in dreaming big and working tirelessly to turn those dreams into reality for the greater good.

His journey from a humble New Orleans upbringing to the bench of the 15<sup>th</sup> JDC and later to Lafayette City Court was marked by an unwavering commitment to his community and justice. Born in New Orleans, Judge Edwards was the eldest of five. His father worked as a shoemaker, while his mother balanced roles as an educator and seamstress. From these roots, he inherited a strong work ethic, deep respect for education, and an unwavering determination to make his dreams of a better humanity a reality.

Edwards summed up his educational background by saying, "I was enrolled in Catholic school from grade school through law school." In NOLA, he attended St. Stephen's Elementary School, De La Salle High School, and Loyola University (undergraduate and law school). It was in law school that he met his wife, Orida Broussard, and where they both earned their Juris Doctorates in 1984. The couple

eventually settled in Lafayette to raise their family. Edwards expanded his expertise with a Master of Public Administration from Louisiana State University (1994) and a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College (2015).

Judge Edwards' public service began long before he stepped into a courtroom. In 1977, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps Reserve, later joining the Louisiana Army National Guard. Over the course of three decades, he served in the Infantry, Artillery, Judge Advocate General's Corps, and as Inspector General for the 256<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade. One of his most challenging assignments came with Hurricane Katrina, when he was deployed to assist with relief operations at the Superdome. He remained there on extended active duty, coordinating legal services during what became one of the largest peacetime mobilizations of the National Guard in U.S. history. During this time, the Edwards family opened their Lafayette home to four displaced households, temporarily expanding their household to 17 members. After 30 years of military service, on March 15, 2007, Colonel Edwards retired from the Louisiana Army National Guard and was recognized as the best **Staff Judge Advocate** in the United States.

Before his tenure on the judicial bench, Edwards worked as an



indigent defender and then as a prosecutor in New Orleans. He and his wife co-founded Edwards & Edwards, LLC. He also served as legal counsel to the Louisiana Senate's Select Committee on Crime and Drugs. Winning the judicial seat in Division B of the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court, he was sworn to the bench in 1993 and held the position until 2020. From 2001 to 2003, he served as chief judge.

Known for his forward-thinking, he was an early advocate for drug and re-entry court programs, helping to craft statewide uniform sentencing policies. Edwards chose to run for city court judge because he wanted to "get people off the wrong road onto the right road" and not wait for people to commit felonies; instead,



he aimed to address their poor behaviors early. In January 2023, he began serving as Lafayette City Court Judge, Division A, while also working as Louisiana's liaison for the American Bar Association Judicial Outreach Liaison Program (JOL). In this capacity, Judge Edwards dedicated his time to educating other judges on best practices for presiding over impaired driving and traffic safety cases, with the goal of saving lives.

Judge Edwards also believed that justice required collaboration. In addressing the challenge of jail overcrowding, he emphasized the importance of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (CJCC) as a means to unite judges, law enforcement, mental health professionals, and community stakeholders. He once explained that "when the key leaders...get together to discuss the operation of the adult and juvenile criminal justice system in our parish, we can identify the barriers and gaps that interfere with our capacity to provide public safety and access to justice." He held a holistic philosophy of justice, grounded in compassion, accountability, and shared responsibility.

In 2013, Judge Edwards was inducted into the Louisiana Justice Hall of Fame. He served as Chairman of the Louisiana Judiciary Commission (2015–2016), President of the Louisiana District Judges Association (2014–2015), and a member of the Louisiana



Sentencing Commission (2011–2018). He also contributed to statewide efforts on the Advisory Council on Heroin and Opioid Prevention and Education and the Louisiana Drug Policy Board. He remained active in the Louis Martinet Legal Society, often presenting continuing legal education sessions.

Beyond his professional and military careers, Judge Edwards was rooted in his Christian faith and gave generously of his time, talent, and treasure. He was active in the Cursillo Movement, leading and recruiting other men into the program, while also engaging in multiple study groups and breakfast meetings that nurtured both friendships and

by the Diocese of Lafayette with the **Martin Luther King Jr. Award** for his service to his parish and community. Family, faith, and service were central pillars of his life.

His colleagues, friends, and community leaders described him as a true gentleman of integrity, faith, and service whose energy and enthusiasm were infectious. The judge's legacy continues on in the courts he reformed, the soldiers he led, the proteges he guided, the families he sheltered, the parishioners he served, and the countless individuals whose lives were touched by his joy, passion, compassion, and love for humanity. Judge Jules D. Edwards, III's life serves as both an

*"A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work."—Colin Powell*

mentorships within his community. A longtime member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, together with his wife, Judge Edwards facilitated Bible study in their church parish. He actively served and ministered to others, including the hospitalized and homebound, as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion and during his participation in the diocesan deaconate formation program. He served on the Boards of Directors for Bridge Ministries of Acadiana and Hospice of Acadiana. He was honored

inspiration and a challenge: to live with faith, to serve with integrity, and above all, to be a change-agent who... **Dares to Dream.**

"I had the good fortune to have him become my mentor... He provided insight, advice, reflections, and humor...always with a big smile, a twinkle in his eye, and a very big dose of modesty."—Hon. Todd Meurer (Ret.), Wisconsin JOL

"The passing of Judge Edwards... closes a chapter written by a remarkable person, whose life and career were dedicated to his family, his faith, his profession, and most precious his country and community."—Judge Douglas J. Saloom, Lafayette City Court



**Written by:**  
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## Bench Bar Conference Marks 25 Years—A Milestone Gathering

*By Maggie Simar*

The Lafayette Bar Association celebrated the **25<sup>th</sup> Bench Bar Conference** August 21–23, 2025, at the Grand Hotel Golf Resort & Spa in Point Clear, Alabama. For a quarter century, this gathering has brought together judges and attorneys for continuing legal education and the chance to strengthen professional ties in a scenic Gulf Coast setting.

### Legal Education Highlights

CLE sessions reflected the diversity of today's legal landscape:

- Chief Justice John Weimer shared reflections on his career and life lessons.
- Jonathan Jarrett presented “beer law” with a Fairhope Brewery tasting.
- Panels of Federal and State Judges, Magistrates, and attorneys led sessions on new rules, case law, and courtroom civility showing how to work together to achieve the best outcomes.
- Secretary of State Nancy Landry provided updates on election law.
- Panels explored artificial

intelligence in practice, federal court issues, and emerging medical technology.

- Veterans of past conferences, including Tommy Hightower, Dean Cole, Gary McGoffin, Judge Doug Saloom, and Ret. Judge Guy Holdridge, offered a lively retrospective on 25 years of Bench Bar.
- The program concluded with ethics, presented by Clare Rubion.

### Social & Networking

Between CLE sessions, attendees connected at a Thursday shrimp boil and a Friday formal dinner, both filled with laughter, delicious food, and lively conversation.

### A Word of Thanks

None of this would be possible without sponsors, committee members, and LBA staff. Special thanks to:

- **Jason Matt**, for spearheading sponsorships;
- **Trey Hightower**, for invaluable insight and curating standout speakers;
- **Jonathan Jarrett**, co-chair, for programming insights, social planning, and comic relief, while being my sounding board.

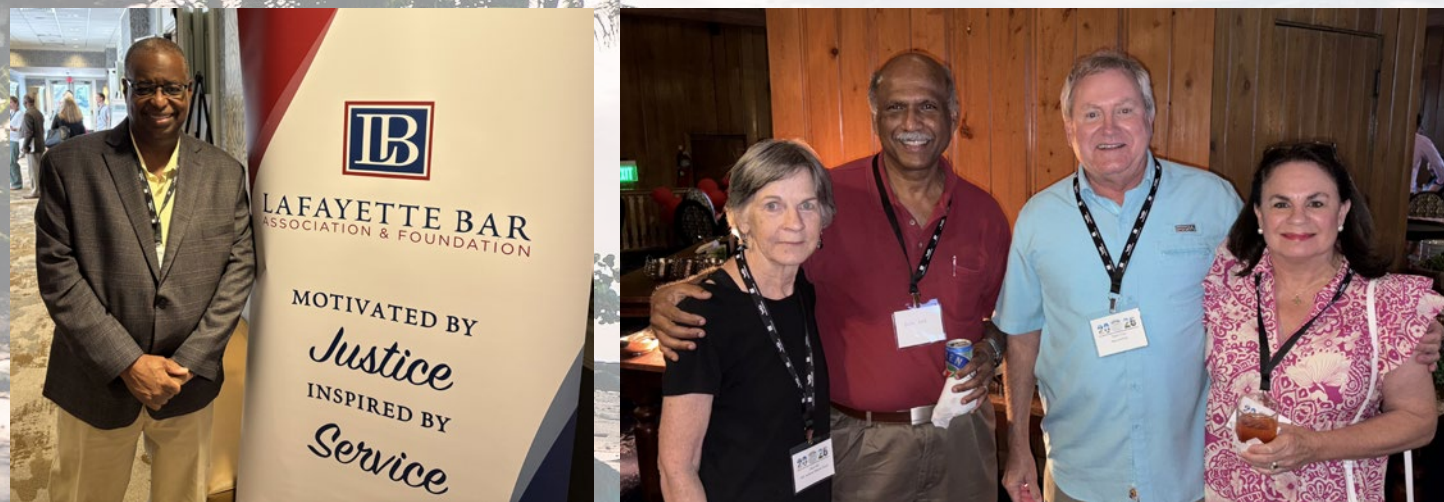
Their leadership, along with the dedication of staff and volunteers, ensured this year's event will be remembered as one of the best yet.

### Looking Ahead

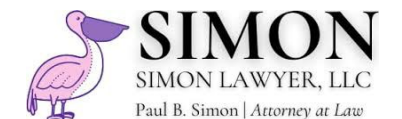
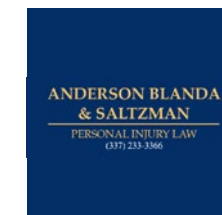
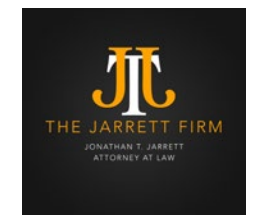
As attendees departed Point Clear, plans for Bench Bar 2026 were already in motion. With 25 years behind us, the Lafayette Bar Association looks forward to the next chapter of top-tier CLE, meaningful dialogue, and unmatched camaraderie. Cheers to another 25 years!



# Bench Bar 2025



*We are so grateful to our sponsors  
for helping make the 2025 Bench Bar  
a great success!*



**Babineaux, Poche',  
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L.L.C.**

**Maggie Simar**  
Hearing Officer,  
16th Judicial District Court



# HAUNTED BY CONFLICTS?

Conflicts of interest aren't always about past cases or money. Sometimes, they're about people. The ABA addressed this in Formal Opinion 494, which explores when personal relationships with opposing counsel create conflicts under Model Rule 1.7(a)(2).

Intimate relationships—marriage, engagement, or exclusive romantic ties—almost always require disclosure and client consent. Lawyers must also reasonably believe they can still provide competent representation.

Friendships are trickier. Close friendships—those involving vacations, holidays, or shared confidences—generally require disclosure and, in some cases, informed consent. More casual ties, like former colleagues or occasional lunches, may only call for disclosure. Remote connections, like law school classmates who rarely stay in touch, typically require neither.

Acquaintances—neighbors, gym members, or professionals who only cross paths occasionally—rarely create conflicts. Disclosure is unnecessary unless the relationship might realistically impair judgment.

The opinion is clearest at the extremes: intimate relationships almost always trigger obligations; acquaintances almost never do. Friendships fall in between, requiring careful evaluation of whether personal loyalties risk undermining professional judgment.

The takeaway is simple: when in doubt, disclose. Transparency builds trust with clients, preserves professionalism, and prevents personal ties from haunting your practice later.



## Quick Conflict Check

Ask yourself three questions:

- ☒ Would a reasonable client want to know about this relationship?
- ☒ Could it affect—or appear to affect—my professional judgment?
- ☒ If the roles were reversed, would I expect disclosure?

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# Lafayette Paralegal Association Hosts Annual Social and Membership Drive at LBA

The Lafayette Paralegal Association (LPA) held its annual Social and Membership Drive on Thursday, September 4, 2025, at the Lafayette Bar Association's office. We were proud to welcome the crowd at our space and to show our support for their integral role in a successful legal practice.

The evening brought together a large crowd of paralegals and supporters of the legal community for networking, refreshments, and information about the benefits of LPA membership. Attendees learned about the organization's continuing education opportunities, community service projects,

and professional development resources available to members throughout the year.

This annual event is designed to welcome new members, reconnect with colleagues, and highlight the important role paralegals play in the Acadiana legal community. The LPA looks forward to another year of growth and service as it continues its mission of supporting and advancing the paralegal profession.

For more information on the LPA, contact Kaye Pooler at Kaye at [kanderson46@myyahoo.com](mailto:kanderson46@myyahoo.com).



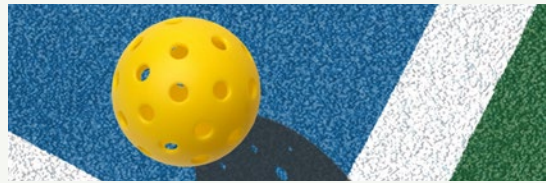
# August FLS CLE

The Family Law Section held a three-hour CLE and membership meeting on August 15, 2025 at the Lafayette Bar Association. Acadia Parish prosecutor Angie Wagar and attorney Claire Edwards teamed up for a one-hour presentation on CINC cases and juvenile court. Attorney Taylor Fontenot presented for an hour on the current state

of the law on relocation in custody matters. Finally, Attorney Brittany Lacombe gave a one-hour presentation on use of AI in the legal field. Turn-out for the event was great, with attendance by both members and nonmembers of the Section. The FLS sincerely thanks Angie, Claire, Taylor and Brittany for all of their time and effort.







# YLS PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT 2025

One pickleball duo reigned supreme as they competed against 15 other teams during this year's annual pickleball tournament held on September 12, 2025, at the Lafayette Pickleball Club.

Beating her son for first place was Judge Michelle Breaux and her teammate Mark Weber. Brennan Breaux and Tyler Frederick placed second, and Jim Gates and Murphy Carriere came in third.

We'll give honorable mention to Ambrose Stearns,

since he did a phenomenal job as pickleball chairman, and his teammate Chris Purser.

The tournament was hosted by the Young Lawyers Section, who received help from their generous sponsors: JD Bank, Kean Miller, Recovery Chiro MED, LB Legal Nurse Consultants, McCullough Cripps Settlement Planners, First Horizon Bank, Babineaux, Poché, Anthony & Slavich, L.L.C., and Magna Legal Services.



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# An Update from the Lafayette Bar Foundation

## PRO BONO HONOR ROLL

The following attorneys have volunteered with the Lafayette Bar Foundation in the past two months through various pro bono programs.

**Joshua Barnhill**  
*The Law Office of  
Joshua S Barnhill, LLC*

**Christopher Castro**  
*Castro Law Firm LLC*

**Ann-Kathryn Daigle**  
*NeunerPate*

**Tyler Frederick**  
*Dudley DeBosier  
Injury Lawyers*

**Ryan Goudelocke**  
*Goudelocke Law*

**Sarah Hinojosa**  
*Attorney at Law*

**David Kaufman**  
*David M. Kaufman,  
APLC, Attorney-Mediator*

**Gregory Landry**  
*Attorney at Law*

**Mark Owens**  
*Owens Law*

**Steven Ramos**  
*Federated Management  
Services, Inc.*

**Dyan Schnaars**  
*Schnaars Law Firm, LLC*

**Maggie Simar**  
*16<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court*

**Cherish van Mullem**  
*Attorney at Law*

**Andy Veazey**  
*Veazey Felder, LLC*

**Katherine Wiley**  
*Wiley & Jowers*

*We need a  
hero!*



Our Counsel on Call Program provides an opportunity for self-represented litigants to privately discuss legal matters with volunteer attorneys. This service helps fill a critical gap in the community, offering guidance to those who cannot afford traditional legal fees and whose income is just above the threshold for free legal assistance from our partners at ALSC. This program is offered every Friday from 9:00-10:00 am at the Lafayette Bar Office. We are seeking 2-3 volunteer attorneys each week to provide free 15-minute consultations on civil matters. Each attorney volunteer will help up to 4 participants in the hour. Your help in supporting this valuable community resource would be greatly appreciated. Don't wait another moment to unleash your inner superhero - use the code below to see the available dates. Your community needs you, and your pro bono powers are ready to be activated!

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