

New Orleans  
**CITY BUSINESS**

2 0 1 2

LEADERSHIP

in  
**LAW**

sponsored by:

**1792**  
*Ridgemont Reserve*



**PEOPLES HEALTH**



**Mercedes-Benz**  
Mercedes-Benz of New Orleans



Nina Dreiss and Charles Marino, Peoples Health plan members

## When Can I Enroll?

If you're turning 65, you can sign up for a Peoples Health plan:

- as early as 3 months before the month of your birthday,
- the month of your birthday, or
- up to 3 months after the month of your birthday.

If you already have Medicare coverage, Medicare may make you wait until later in the year to change your plan. ***But you may qualify for an exception*** and be able to join Peoples Health now – for example, if you...

- have just moved into the area,
- are losing your coverage through your employer and you're eligible for Medicare,
- make less than \$1,396 per month, or
- have Medicaid too.

## Newly eligible for Medicare?

If you're new to Medicare you have a lot of options and probably a lot of questions. Is Medicare enough by itself? Do I need to buy a supplement? What about Part D drug coverage? Or a Medicare Advantage plan that combines benefits and Part D?

Make a phone call and find out why so many Louisiana residents get their Medicare benefits – including their prescription drug coverage – through a **\$0 plan premium Peoples Health plan**. Call Peoples Health today. There's no obligation.

Call toll-free 24 hours a day,  
7 days a week

**1-800-947-2008**

TTY users, please call 711

**PEOPLES HEALTH**

Your **Medicare Health Team**

[www.peopleshealth.com](http://www.peopleshealth.com)

The benefit information provided herein is a brief summary, not a comprehensive description of benefits. For more information, contact the plan. Individuals must have both Part A and Part B to enroll. You must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium and live in the plan service area. Members may enroll in the plan only during specific times of the year. Contact Peoples Health for more information. Benefits, formulary, pharmacy network, premium and/or co-payments/co-insurance may change on January 1, 2013. Peoples Health is a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract.

H1961\_12N2MPA\_CMSApproved12182011



## Contents

Introduction.....	4	Keith Colvin.....	27	Frank Liantonio.....	46
Past honorees.....	7	Dalton Courson.....	28	Timothy Madden.....	47
<b>COURT ASSOCIATED</b>		Mark Cunningham.....	29	Richard McCormack.....	48
Derwyn Bunton.....	9	George Fagan.....	30	Jackie McCreary.....	49
Daniel Friel.....	10	William Finn.....	31	Robert McNeal.....	50
Karen Roby.....	15	George Fowler.....	32	Mark Moreau.....	51
<b>IN-HOUSE COUNSEL</b>		George Freeman.....	33	Dwight Paulsen.....	52
Charles Booker.....	17	Monica Frois.....	34	Darleene Peters.....	53
Jade Russell.....	19	Kirk Gasperecz.....	35	Minor Pipes.....	54
<b>FIRM ASSOCIATED</b>		Jerry Glas.....	36	Christopher Ralston.....	55
Bill Aaron.....	20	Jennifer Greene.....	37	Kermit Roux.....	56
Lee Adler.....	21	Stephen Hanemann.....	38	Richard Stanley.....	57
Morris Bart.....	22	Christopher Kane.....	39	Molly Steele.....	58
James Carter.....	23	Kenneth Klemm.....	40	David Strauss.....	59
Pamela Carter.....	24	Harvey Koch.....	41	Max Swetman.....	60
Lawrence Chehardy.....	25	Stephen Kreller.....	42	Daniel Tadros.....	61
Justin Chopin.....	26	Martin Landrieu.....	43	Benjamin Varadi.....	63
		Ted Le Clercq.....	44	Deborah Villio.....	65
		Brian Lenard.....	45	Irving Warshauer.....	66

Published by NOPG LLC  
 3445 N. Causeway Blvd., Suite 901  
 Metairie, LA 70002  
 504-834-9292 - Fax: 504-837-2258

**Publisher & President:** D. Mark Singletary  
**Associate Publisher:** Lisa Blossman  
**Editor:** Greg LaRose  
**News Editor:** Christian Moises  
**Art Director:** Alex Borges  
**Photography:** Frank Aymami  
**Account Executives:** Liz Baldini, Jeanne Farrell-Bindewald,  
 Cassie Foreman, Coco Evans Judd, Jaclyn Meith  
**Production Manager:** Julie Bernard



BARRASSO  
 USDIN  
 KUPPERMAN  
 FREEMAN  
 SARVER, L.L.C.

Proudly congratulates our members  
**GEORGE C. FREEMAN, III**  
 & **H. MINOR PIPES, III**  
 on being named to CityBusiness Leadership in Law Class of 2012 and  
**ANDREA MAHADY PRICE**  
 on becoming a member of the Firm.



George C. Freeman, III



H. Minor Pipes, III



Andrea Mahady Price

909 POYDRAS ST. 24TH FLOOR | NEW ORLEANS, LA 70112 | 504-589-9700

INFO@BARRASSOUSDIN.COM | WWW.BARRASSOUSDIN.COM

*Congratulations to our colleague*  
**ROBERT B. McNEAL**  
*for being named to CITYBUSINESS'*  
**LEADERSHIP IN LAW CLASS OF 2012.**



**LISKOW & LEWIS**

**Tough Questions. Smart Answers.**

Liskow.com | New Orleans | Lafayette | Houston  
 A Professional Law Corporation; R. Keith Jarrett, Managing Partner



William T. Finn

## We take client business personally.

Since our founding over 18 years ago, our guiding commitment from outstanding lawyers like William T. Finn has always been to provide clients with the highest standards of professional expertise, innovative thinking and strong service. We are proud of the example he has set and the peer recognition he has earned as a member of the CityBusiness Leadership in Law 2012 class.

CARVER, DARDEN,  
KORETZKY, TESSIER, FINN,  
BLOSSMAN & AREAUX LLC

NEW ORLEANS  
(504) 585-3800

PENSACOLA  
(850) 266-2300

WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT  
[www.carverdarden.com](http://www.carverdarden.com)

Banking & Finance – Bankruptcy & Creditor’s Rights – Business & Corporate  
Commercial Litigation - Construction - Insurance Coverage - Intellectual Property  
Labor & Employment - Oil & Gas - Real Estate - Renewable Energy & Clean Technology

# 2012 CITYBUSINESS LEADERSHIP in LAW

## Introduction



Christian Moises  
News Editor

Helping people. It’s as simple as that for the Leadership in Law class of 2012, which recognizes 50 area attorneys based on their professional and community achievements.

In the program’s eighth year, honorees discuss their most challenging, memorable or rewarding case, while others tell the story of how they ended up in the law profession.

This year’s honorees say the new cases and the challenges they bring are reasons why the field remains compelling to them after so many years of service.

Education is also key, whether it’s teaching classes at area law schools, holding forums for the general public or reaching out to high school students.

Energy litigation, pro bono work, employee benefits, medical lawsuits — the specialties of 2012 honorees run the gamut. Many have argued cases that have paved the way for important precedents or fought for professional standards that have had a profound impact of the general practice of law.

Several have laid the framework for business to be conducted in the region, some have gone back to school to earn a degree in their specialty to give them an advantage in the courtroom and others have crossed international borders to defend their clients.

Six honorees are being recognized for a second time — Bill Aaron, Keith Colvin, George Fowler, Monica Frois, Ted Le Clercq and Max Swetman — while one, Chris Ralston, joins the Hall of Fame for being honored three times.

Meanwhile, all but 10 of this year’s honorees graduated from a law school

## — Congratulations —

### Richard C. Stanley

for being named to the  
CityBusiness’ Leadership in Law Class of 2012



Rick Stanley

STANLEY, REUTER, ROSS  
THORNTON & ALFORD, LLC

909 Poydras Street, Suite 2500, New Orleans, LA 70112  
Telephone: (504) 523-1580 | Facsimile (504) 524-0069  
[www.stanleyreuter.com](http://www.stanleyreuter.com)

## — Congratulations —



John Jerry Glas



Frederic Theodore “Ted”  
Le Clercq



Kermit (Tre’) Roux III

Named to  
New Orleans CityBusiness’  
Leadership in Law 2012

DK&S  
DEUTSCH,  
KERRIGAN  
& STILES

Civil Litigation  
Commercial &  
Professional Liability  
Law  
Construction Law  
Labor &  
Employment Law  
Marine & Energy Law  
Toxic Tort &  
Environmental Law

New Orleans, LA  
Monroe, LA  
Gulfport, MS

(800) 467-5141  
[www.dkslaw.com](http://www.dkslaw.com)



in Louisiana, with Tulane University Law School and Loyola University College of Law each producing 15 honorees, while Louisiana State University's Paul M. Hebert Law Center matriculating eight and Southern University Law Center two.

Those are encouraging figures, showing our legal community is committed to staying in the area and helping the region.

Many honorees are not from South Louisiana, but they say the city captivated them after attending law school here.

At the end of the day, most attorneys are committed to fighting for what's right and are devoted to social justice. They defend the people and businesses that define our region.

CityBusiness thanks each of them for their professional and civic efforts and the differences they make.

Congratulations to the Leadership in Law Class of 2012. •

*News Editor Christian Moises can be reached at 293-9249 or by email at christian.moises@nopg.com.*

### Hall of Fame

The following honorees have been inducted into the Leadership in Law Hall of Fame. Even though they are no longer eligible to be selected as honorees, these professionals will continue to drive our region forward and serve as outstanding representatives in the community.

**2012**  
Chris Ralston

**2010**  
Kim Boyle  
William Hines

**2009**  
John Houghtaling  
Steve Lane  
Walter Leger Jr.  
Wayne Lee  
David Sherman  
James Williams  
Scott Wolfe Jr.

## KING, KREBS, & JURGENS, PLLC PROUDLY CONGRATULATES MEMBERS

TIMOTHY S. MADDEN & DAVID A. STRAUSS



ON BEING NAMED AMONG NEW ORLEANS'  
TOP 50 LEADERS IN LAW.

## KING KREBS & JURGENS

201 ST. CHARLES AVE., 45TH FLOOR NEW ORLEANS, LA  
T: (504) 582-3800 WWW.KINGKREBS.COM



Lee R. Adler  
Partner, Business and Finance

## LEADERS IN THE COMMUNITY. LEADERS IN LAW.

Congratulations to Lee Adler and Chris Ralston for being named a 2012 *New Orleans CityBusiness* "Leader in Law."



Christopher K. Ralston  
Partner, Commercial Litigation

## PHELPS DUNBAR LLP

Louisiana | Mississippi | Texas | Florida | Alabama | North Carolina | London

[phelpsdunbar.com](http://phelpsdunbar.com)

Richard Dicharry, *Managing Partner*  
Canal Place | 365 Canal Street | Suite 2000  
New Orleans, LA 70130 | (504) 566-1311

# L&A

LEAKE & ANDERSSON L.L.P.

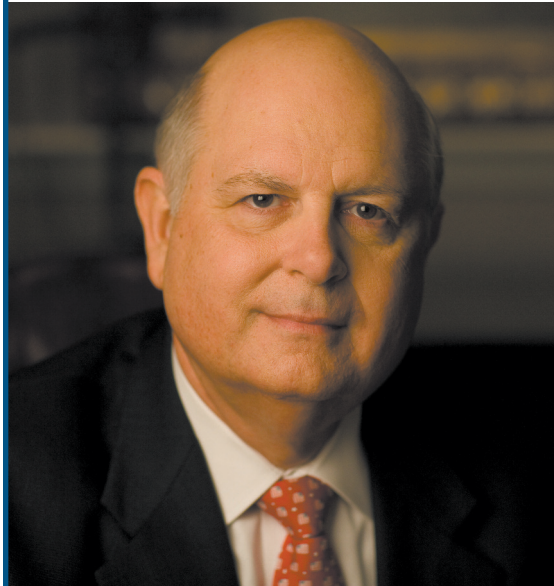
Congratulations to our Partner  
**GEORGE D. FAGAN**  
on being named by New Orleans  
CityBusiness as one of the  
Top 50 Attorneys in the Greater  
New Orleans Area.

[www.leakeanderson.com](http://www.leakeanderson.com)

**WITH OFFICES IN NEW ORLEANS + LAFAYETTE**

Administrative / Admiralty & Maritime / Banking &  
Business Insurance / Bankruptcy / Casualty / Complex,  
Class Action & Multi-District Litigation / Construction /  
Corporate & Transactional / Criminal / Drug & Medical  
Device / Government Relations / Intellectual Property /  
International Trade & Business / Labor & Employment /  
Medical Malpractice / Nursing Home Malpractice /  
Pharmacy Malpractice / Products Liability / Professional  
Liability / Real Estate / Securities Litigation / Sexual  
Misconduct / Transportation / Workers' Compensation

*We congratulate our Partner*  
**Lawrence Chehardy**



On being recognized as  
one of the CityBusiness  
Leadership in Law  
Class of 2012  
honorees.

**CHEHARDY SHERMAN**  
CHEHARDY, SHERMAN, ELLIS, MURRAY, RECILE, GRIFFITH, STAKELUM & HAYES, L.L.P.

One Galleria Blvd., Suite 1100 | Metairie, LA 70001  
(504) 833-5600 *ph* | (504) 833-8080 *fax* | (855) 833-5600 *toll free*  
Lawrence E. Chehardy, *Managing Partner*  
[www.chehardy.com](http://www.chehardy.com)

**IRWIN FRITCHIE  
URQUHART & MOORE LLC**

— C O U N S E L O R S   A T   L A W —



**Richard McCormack**



**Darleene Peters**

*Congratulations*

**RICHARD MCCORMACK and DARLEENE PETERS**  
for being named to CityBusiness'  
Leadership in Law Class of 2012

400 Poydras Street, Suite 2700 | New Orleans, LA | 504.310.2100  
2600 CitiPlace Drive, Suite 500 | Baton Rouge, LA | 225.615.7150  
[www.irwinllc.com](http://www.irwinllc.com)

# Past Honorees

2011

**Educators**

Mark Davis  
Oliver Houck

**In-house Counsel**

Donna Klein  
Christopher Mora

**Court Associated**

Robin Pittman  
Henry Sullivan

**Firm Associated**

Edward Arnold  
Brent Barriere  
Regina Bartholomew  
Kay Baxter  
Michael Brandner  
Joseph Bruno  
Bob Burvant  
Carl Butler  
Ray Cornelius  
Daniel Davillier  
Edward Downing  
Brooke Duncan  
Stephen Dwyer  
Michael Ecyer  
William Forrester  
Mike Gertler  
Joseph Giarrusso  
Richard Goins  
Alida Hainkel  
Susan Henning  
Keith Jarrett  
James Klick  
Amelia Koch  
A.J. Krouse  
Terrence Lestelle  
Paul Masinter  
Carey Menasco  
Michael Mentz  
David O'Quinn  
Brian Quirk  
Michael Riess  
Antonio Rodriguez  
David Salley  
Michael Schneider  
Tim Scott  
Phillip Shuler  
Karen Shipman  
Robert Stefani  
Charles Stern  
Margaret Sunkel  
Max Swetman  
Jack Truitt  
Jason Waguespack  
William Wright

2010

Neil Abramson  
Paul Batiza  
Christopher Beary  
Walter Becker  
Marcus Brown  
Stephen Bruno  
Leon Cannizzaro  
David Carrigee  
Richard Chopin  
Celeste Coco-Ewing  
Stephen Conroy  
James Conway  
Christopher Couch  
Meredith Cunningham  
Rene Curry  
Martha Curtis  
Leonard Davis  
Richard Exnicios  
Delos Flint  
Philip Franco  
Francine Giugno  
Lambert Hassinger  
Jan Hayden  
Stephen Herman  
Stephen Huber  
Greg Johnson  
Henry King  
Ted Le Clercq  
Andrew Lee  
Ivan Lemelle  
Jim Letten  
Marjorie McKeithen  
Malcolm Meyer  
Lori Mince  
Jeffrey Mitchell  
Kim Moore  
Bryce Murray  
Edward Poitevent  
Christopher Ralston  
Monica Sanchez  
Bradley Schlotterer  
Seth Schmeckle  
Marta-Ann Schnabel  
William Schwartz  
Richard Simmons  
Robert Steeg  
Charles Taylor  
Rykert Toledano  
Marie Williams  
Rachel Wisdom

2009

Hirschel Abbott  
Lawrence Abbott  
Jesse Adams  
Paul Andersson  
Jonathan Andry  
Mark Carver  
Robin Cheatham  
Christopher Couch  
James Daigle  
Timothy Daniels  
Kelly Duncan  
Ernest Edwards  
Gene Fendler  
Robert Fisher  
Richard Foster  
Gus Fritchie  
Monica Ann Frois  
Lawrence Hand  
Pauline Hardin  
A.J. Herbert  
William Hines  
Ralph Hubbard  
Robert Johnston  
Howard Kaplan  
Brian Katz  
Bob Kerrigan  
Roselyn Koretzky  
Gerald Meunier  
Christopher Mora  
William Patrick  
Sharon Perlis  
Kenneth Pickering  
Loulain Pitre  
Christopher Ralston  
William Reinhardt  
Jerome Reso  
Charles Rice  
Tara Richard  
Monica Sanchez  
Scott Schneider  
Danny Shaw  
David Sherman  
Randy Snyder  
Mark Spansel  
James Swanson  
Frank Tessier  
Tania Tetlow  
Derek Walker  
Hal Welch  
James Williams

2008

William Aaron  
Nan Alessandra  
Gilbert Andry  
Raymond Areaux  
Peter Barbee  
Charles Branton  
Kenny Charbonnet  
William Credo  
Taylor Darden  
Christopher Davis  
Bobby Delise  
Richard Duplantier  
Leslie Ehret  
Richard Exnicios  
Tracey Flemings-Davillier  
Donna Fraiche  
Duris Holmes  
John Houghtaling  
Chauntis Jenkins  
Robert Kerrigan Jr.  
Keva Landrum-Johnson  
Walter Leger Jr.  
Lynn Luker  
Eve Masinter  
Michael Mitchell  
Max Nathan  
Glenn Orgeron  
Marshall Page  
Erin Parkinson  
Joseph Peiffer  
Robert Perez  
Fredrick Preis Jr.  
Deborah Rouen  
David Sherman  
Randall Smith  
Renee Smith  
Ray Steib  
Martin Stern  
Patrick Talley  
Susan Talley  
Patrick Vance  
David Waguespack  
Joel Waltzer  
David Ware  
George Wentz Jr.  
Scott Whittaker  
James Williams  
Scott Willis  
Brett Wise  
Scott Wolfe Jr.

2007

Robert Angelico  
Mark Beebe  
Lucia Blacksher  
Kim Boyle  
Peter Breslin  
Dana Douglas  
Sandra Feingerts  
Janice Martin Foster  
Alan Goodman  
Deborah Harkins  
Peter Hilbert Jr.  
William Hines  
John Houghtaling  
William Howard III  
Ashlye Keaton  
Steven Klein  
Stephen Kupperman  
Robert Kutcher  
Steven Lane  
Wayne Lee  
Walter Leger  
Georges Legrand  
Julie Livaudais  
Nancy Marshall  
Robert Mathis  
Pam Metzger  
Carole Cukell Neff  
Robert Nuzum  
John Olinde  
Lawrence Orlansky  
Allison Penzato  
Keith Pyburn Jr.  
Harry Rosenberg  
Dionne Rousseau  
James Roussel  
Kyle Schonekas  
Paige Sensenbrenner  
David Sherman  
Lloyd Shields  
Stuart Smith  
Peter Sperling  
Marx Sterbcow  
Jeffrey Thomas  
Quentin Urquhart Jr.  
Steve Usdin  
Laurie White  
Constance Willems  
Henri Wolbrette III  
Scott Wolfe Jr.

2006

Marguerite Adams  
Nan Alessandra  
Thomas Beron  
Carmelite Bertaut  
Kim Boyle  
Elwood Cahill Jr.  
Kathryn Caraway  
James Carroll  
Charlie Cerise  
Shaun Clarke  
Philip deV. Claverie  
Miles Clements  
Frank D'Amico Jr.  
Nancy Scott Degan  
John Duck  
Val Exnicios  
George Fritel III  
John Galloway  
Covert Geary  
Russ Herman  
John Houghtaling  
Grady Hurley  
James Irwin  
Steven Lane  
Patricia LeBlanc  
Edward LeBreton III  
Andrew Lee  
Wayne Lee  
Jon Leyens Jr.  
Kelly Longwell  
John Manard Jr.  
Robert Manard  
Joseph Marino III  
Robert McCalla  
Corinne Morrison  
Thomas O'Brien  
Paul Pastorek  
Lawrence Ponoroff  
Fredrick Preis Jr.  
Richard Richter  
Howard Shapiro  
Jack Stolier  
Noel Vargas Jr.  
Nelson Wagar III  
Kenneth Weiss  
David Willenzik  
John Wilson  
Phillip Wittmann  
Scott Wolfe Jr.  
Robert Worley Jr.

2005

Donald Abaunza  
Robert Acomb Jr.  
Judy Barrasso  
Hilton Bell  
Edward Benjamin Jr.  
Virginia Boulet  
Kim Boyle  
Alan Brackett  
William Bradley  
James Brown  
Paula Brown  
Joseph Bruno  
Peter Butler Sr.  
McChord Carrico  
Roy Cheatwood  
James Coleman  
Keith Colvin  
Howell Crosby  
Howard Daigle Jr.  
Christopher Dicharry  
Anthony DiLeo  
Kelly Duncan  
Ernest Edwards Jr.  
Michael Ellis  
Frank Fontenot  
George Fowler III  
James Garner  
William Grace Jr.  
Mat Gray III  
Harry Hardin III  
Russ Herman  
Bill Hines  
John Houghtaling  
Richard Ieyoub  
Donna Klein  
Roselyn Koretzky  
Cheryl Kornick  
Steven Lane  
Dwight LeBlanc Jr.  
Wayne Lee  
Jonathan McCall  
Michael McGlone  
Robert Mouton  
Antonio Rodriguez  
Dionne Rousseau  
Leopold Sher  
Mark Surprenant  
Robert Vosbein  
David Ware  
Scott Whittaker

The 789 attorneys  
of LEWIS BRISBOIS  
congratulate our  
New Orleans-based  
colleague JUSTIN CHOPIN,  
a 2012 CityBusiness  
Leader in Law



**LEWIS  
BRISBOIS  
BISGAARD  
& SMITH LLP**  
ATTORNEYS

www.lbbslaw.com

ATLANTA • BEAUMONT • CHARLESTON • CHICAGO • DALLAS • FORT LAUDERDALE • HOUSTON  
LAFAYETTE • LAS VEGAS • LOS ANGELES • NEW ORLEANS • NEW YORK • NEWARK • ORANGE COUNTY  
PHOENIX • SACRAMENTO • SAN BERNARDINO • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO • TAMPA • TUCSON

From all of us at Chaffe McCall on your selection as  
“One Of The Top 50 Lawyers In New Orleans.”

## Congratulations Daniel Tadros

C H A F F E  M c C A L L  
L. L. P.

2300 Energy Centre • 1100 Poydras Street  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70163-2300  
Phone: 504.585.7000 • Fax: 504.585.7075

103 Two United Plaza  
8550 United Plaza Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809  
Phone: 225.922.4300  
Fax: 225.922.4304

801 Travis Street  
Suite 1910  
Houston, Texas 77002  
Phone: 713.546.9800  
Fax: 713.546.9806

www.chaffe.com

**LEBLANC BUTLER LLC**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

CONGRATULATIONS  
**DEBORAH VILLIO**

FOR BEING NAMED TO CITYBUSINESS'  
LEADERSHIP IN LAW CLASS OF 2012

WE OFFER LEGAL SERVICES  
TO LARGE AND SMALL  
BUSINESSES INCLUDING:

- ▶ Review of all Insurance Coverage Questions
- ▶ Complex Commercial Litigation
- ▶ Real Estate and Commercial Transactions
- ▶ Debt Collection
- ▶ Employment Practices
- ▶ Zoning and Permitting Issues

Patricia S. LeBlanc, Esq. member  
2010 CityBusiness Women of the Year Honoree  
Carl A. Butler, Esq. member  
2011 CityBusiness Leadership In Law Honoree

3421 N. Causeway Blvd. • Ste. 301 • Metairie, LA 70002  
504.828.1010 Phone • 504.828.1079 Fax  
web: LeblancButler.com

**UP to the MINUTE NEWS**

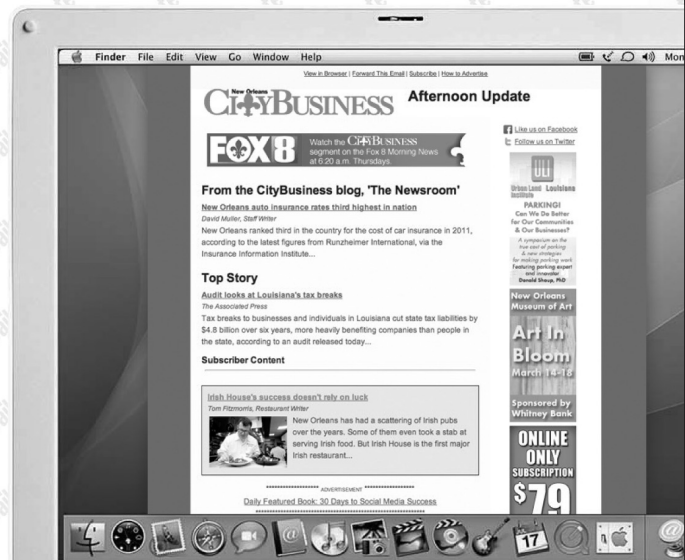
Arriving daily on your computer!

New Orleans  
**CITYBUSINESS**  
Daily Update

**FREE**

Register today

www.neworleanscitybusiness.com/dailyupdate.cfm





# Derwyn Bunton

**Position:** Orleans Parish chief public defender

**Age:** 39

**Family:** wife, Eileen; children, Chloe, 3, Reilly, 1

**Education:** bachelor's degree in political science, San Diego State University; juris doctor, New York University School of Law

Derwyn Bunton was raised in Palm Springs, Calif., by his mother, who had trouble making ends meet and was always a foot ahead of eviction — most of the time.

“We were poor growing up in California,” Bunton said. “But I noticed that folks listened to lawyers, and I was good in school. So I become an attorney to listen to people like my mom and help them navigate complicated matters.”

Bunton moved to Louisiana after law school in 1998 to work as an attorney for the Juvenile Justice Project. In 2008, he became executive director of Juvenile Regional Services, a nonprofit public interest law office that advocates for indigent youth in the New Orleans juvenile justice system.

A year later, he was appointed chief public defender for Orleans Parish, overseeing about 60 lawyers who take on some of the most serious criminal cases in New Orleans.

“Murder and sex offense cases are similar, and many don’t have a lot of evidence,” Bunton said. “We don’t always get the hair on the carpet that proves or disproves a case, so they get to be complicated, expensive and time consuming.”

Bunton said the most impactful case of his career started in the summer of 1998 when he worked with the U.S. Department of Justice to sue the state of Louisiana for violating the civil rights of juvenile prison inmates. At the start of the case, there were more than 2,000 children in five juvenile facilities throughout the state. When a settlement was reached in 2000, there were fewer than 500 inmates and two prisons had been closed.

“This case was a lot of work and both terrifying and exciting as a young lawyer,” he said. “We had a chance to make a real difference. Today, there are still only three juvenile prisons in Louisiana.”

Outside the public defender’s office, Bunton supports the Audubon Zoo and Samuel J. Green Charter School. He works closely with the American Civil Liberties Union, the Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana and Juvenile Regional Services.

He is a member of the Council of Chief Defenders, a national organization comprised of executives of public defender programs from throughout the country, and he sits on the Louisiana State Bar Association Criminal Justice Committee, where he helps develop policy recommendations on public defense.

The group also helped put together the American Bar Association’s 10 Principles of Public Defense.

“All these community efforts help support my work and give me a line into a reservoir of knowledge,” he said. “It helps me stay sharp and allows me to bring ideas and resources back to my office so we can do our job better.”

— Kerry Duff



# Daniel Friel

**Position:** Eastern District of Louisiana assistant U.S. attorney, Strike Force Unit

**Age:** 35

**Family:** wife, Kathryn; daughters, Adelaide, 3, Lillian, 2

**Education:** bachelor's degree in English and Spanish, University of Richmond; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

In the past five years, Daniel Friel has successfully served as the lead counsel in the prosecution of former New Orleans City Councilwoman Renee Gill Pratt, co-counsel in the prosecution of former state Sen. Derrick Shepherd and co-counsel in the six-defendant trial involving extortion and theft within New Orleans Public Schools.

These were all multi-layered, high-profile cases that the former assistant district attorney for Suffolk County in Massachusetts pursued relentlessly.

"With any trial, you have the complexity of the facts and then you have the complexity of the law," said Friel, who also spent two years as a litigation assistant for the Boston-based firm of Hale and Dorr.

"Sometimes there are cases where the law is simple and the facts are complex, and then you have the opposite," he said. "Some cases in public corruption are both, where you have very complex facts and very complex law."

The Gill Pratt case involved the misappropriation and theft of hundreds of thousands of dollars earmarked for charitable and educational programs. The Shepherd case was a money-laundering scheme where the state lawmaker plead guilty and co-defendant Gwendolyn Moyo went to trial.

Friel argued that despite the defense's contention that Gill Pratt did not know money was being stolen from a group of charities, she was aware of what she was doing at all times. He likened her role to that of a queen in a criminal game of chess, contending in the trial that she was "absolutely at the top of this pyramid."

Gill Pratt was subsequently convicted of a single conspiracy count and sentenced to serve seven years in a federal prison and pay \$1 million in restitution. She remains free pending an appeal.

The public school case saw six teachers in a conspiracy trial for the misappropriation and theft of public money.

Friel originally moved to New Orleans to work on mail and wire fraud cases and prosecute the theft of government funds after hurricanes Katrina and Rita. He said he goes about his work keeping in mind everything he does is a reflection on himself and his family.

"That doesn't mean that you can't fight hard. It doesn't mean that you can't try to win," Friel adds. "But you always have to be cognizant of what you are doing and how your actions affect other people."•

— Garry Boulard

S·B·M  
LLC

Swetman Baxter Massenburg

Experience. Dedication. Results.

Proudly Congratulates  
Glenn L. M. "Max" Swetman



2012 recipient of the  
CityBusiness Leadership in Law Award

LOUISIANA OFFICE  
650 Poydras St., Ste. 2400  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
(504) 799-0500 phone  
(504) 799-0501 fax

MISSISSIPPI OFFICE  
1700 S. 28th Ave., Ste. D  
Hattiesburg, MS 39402  
(601) 255-0259 phone  
(601) 255-0260 fax

www.sbm-legal.com

Thanks

CityBusiness & New Orleans!

50 Lawyers?  
Yes, and still  
growing!  
Thank you New  
Orleans for making  
that One Call!



ONE CALL, THAT'S ALL!  
MORRIS BART  
NEW ORLEANS

504 525-8000

# GOOD NEWS IS WORTH REPEATING!

## Digital Reprint

CityBusiness will reformat the article or list with "As seen in CityBusiness" on the top of the page and send it to you in PDF format. Cost includes copyright.

Total Cost: ~~\$500~~ \$400 SALE!

## Framed Reprint

Articles are reformatted to fit on either one or two pages with "As seen in CityBusiness" on the top of the page.

Article size is 8 1/2" x 11".

## Congratulatory Plaque

Remember your big award with a beautiful cherry wood plaque perfect for hanging in the office or home.

Total Cost: \$150

## Photo

JPG of photos taken at Events or seen in CityBusiness can be purchased separately or in addition to your reprint.

Total Cost Per Photo: \$125  
(\$50 with purchase of Reprint)

### NO REFUND • PREPAY

Please process my order for:

- Digital Reprint . . . . . \$400
- Framed Reprint 14" x 16 1/2" cherry . . . . . \$240
- Framed Reprint 23" x 16 1/2" cherry . . . . . \$350
- Congratulatory Plaque 9" x 12" cherry . . . . . \$150
- Photo from Event or Article . . . . . \$125  
with the purchase of Reprint . . . . . \$50/photo

Issue Date or Event \_\_\_\_\_ Page # \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-pay by:  Check  Master Card  Visa  American Express

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Authorized To Charge \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Fax or mail to: New Orleans CityBusiness

Attn: Jaclyn Meith, 111 Veterans Blvd. • Ste 1440 • Metairie, LA 70005

Fax (504) 293-9720 • email: jaclyn.meith@nopg.com

New Orleans  
CITYBUSINESS

*Make it Perfect New Orleans!*



*The Smoothest Vodka on Earth!*

Visit [www.PERFECT.com](http://www.PERFECT.com)

# Premium Sponsors

## MERCEDES-BENZ of New Orleans

**M**ercedes-Benz of New Orleans is the benchmark for luxury vehicle sales and service in Southeast Louisiana for over 25 years. Originally located on St. Charles Avenue, the franchise moved to a more centrally located area - Veterans Boulevard in 1993 to better service the needs of their customers.

The recent construction, including expansion and remodel, maintains Mercedes-Benz of New Orleans as not only Louisiana's largest Mercedes-Benz franchise, but one of the largest and state-of-the-art dealerships in the nation.

From its 6000 square foot expanded showroom with marble floors, children's play area, customer internet lounge, and executive seating, to the climate controlled technician bays with computer analysis ability, provides Mercedes-Benz of New Orleans' customers and their vehicles with the very finest care available.



These facts are just some of the reasons why Mercedes-Benz of New Orleans has received "The Best of the Best" award by Mercedes-Benz U.S.A. again for 2011. The "Best of the Best" Dealer Recognition Award, presented by the Mercedes-Benz USA, goes to the top performing Mercedes Benz dealership for demonstrating superior performance in various areas of business, including customer satisfaction, new vehicle sales, certified pre-owned sales, leadership and management, parts operations and market penetration.

Mercedes-Benz of New Orleans represents the essence of the Mercedes-Benz brand: An enduring commitment to excellence combined with an entrepreneurial spirit and the absolute dedication to customer satisfaction.

The new concept of the Mercedes-Benz Autohaus facility is designed with attention to detail and enhances the overall efficiency of the facility for their customers. It creates an even more inviting and professional environment, and showcase products in the commensurate technical setting, thus optimizing customer convenience while delivering a consistent global brand image.

Mercedes-Benz of New Orleans is one of the first dealerships in the United States to provide this facility to their customers.

Visit Mercedes-Benz of New Orleans, 3727 Veterans Boulevard in Metairie, (504) 456-3727, or [www.mbofno.com](http://www.mbofno.com).

## 1792 RIDGEMONT RESERVE

**O**n the site of the historic Barton 1792 Distillery, established in 1879 near the "Tom Moore Spring", the same spring we draw our iron-free limestone water from today. The 192-acre distillery is home to beautiful wildlife and many historic buildings, including our still house and 28 aging warehouses. The legendary 'Warehouse Z' stands tall on the western bluff enjoying full summer sun and optimal air-circulation for aging bourbon whiskey.

Every batch of 1792 Ridgemont Reserve is comprised of only the best barrels – each tasted and selected by Director of Distillation and Quality Assurance, Ken Pierce. Not only does Ken have talented taste buds, but years of experience. In 1994 he began work at the distillery and immediately



started crafting the flavor profile for 1792. Quality ingredients and barrel aging are two of the most important factors in making great bourbon. "Quality in, Quality out" Ken says, "and when it comes to barrel aging, it's just like real estate – location, location, location. That's why 1792 ages in 'Warehouse Z' up there on the bluff. Hope you enjoy the taste as much as I do!"

## PERFECT 1864 VODKA

**P**erfect 1864, "The Smoothest Vodka on Earth" is an ultra premium French vodka with a rich tradition that distinguishes it clearly from other luxury brand vodkas. It was developed by France's Grandes Distilleries Peureux de Fougères as a joint venture with Legacy Imports, Inc. of West Palm Beach, Florida.



Perfect's superior smoothness is attributable to being made from the best possible wheat for distilling and the character of its exceptionally pure spring water. For every batch produced, the wheat is sourced exclusively from a soft

variety found only in France's Brie Champagne region, where it can be traced back to the farm on which it was grown. Each batch is certified for the purity and origin of its water source, the legendary spring waters of the Vosges region located near France's border with Switzerland.

Perfect is the only vodka in the world that can provide certificates of origin and quality for each ingredient and every batch produced. This policy mirrors that of the appellation control system that France maintains to ensure the quality and consistency of the ingredients in its best French wines, champagnes and cognacs. For more information visit [www.Perfect1864.com](http://www.Perfect1864.com).

Perfect 1864 Vodka is the only vodka that is Kosher Certified.

## PEOPLES HEALTH

**A**s a senior healthcare specialist owned and operated by New Orleans-area physicians, Peoples Health provides proactive healthcare solutions to its plan members, fostering better health and affordable care.

Established in 1994, Peoples Health holds an accreditation by URAC and administers health plans across a 14-parish service area, including New Orleans, the Northshore and Baton Rouge. Members of the company's Medicare Advantage plans enjoy enhanced benefits—more than provided by Original Medicare—and have access to a variety of support services, including programs that help manage critical health conditions.

In addition to providing healthcare opportunities for plan members, Peoples Health recognizes that



the capacity for success is advanced through life experience. That's why, in collaboration with the New Orleans Saints and in collaboration

with Louisiana State University, Peoples Health recognizes seniors for their exceptional achievements through the company's Champions and Illustrious Alumnus programs.

Peoples Health believes in being engaged in the communities it serves—a value instilled by chief executive officer Carol Solomon—and does so by regularly hosting health and wellness events for plan members and community residents, as well as supporting the events and activities of many social, cultural, athletic and health organizations, including the New Orleans Council on Aging, New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation, Greater New Orleans Senior Olympics, American Heart Association, American Diabetes Association and National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

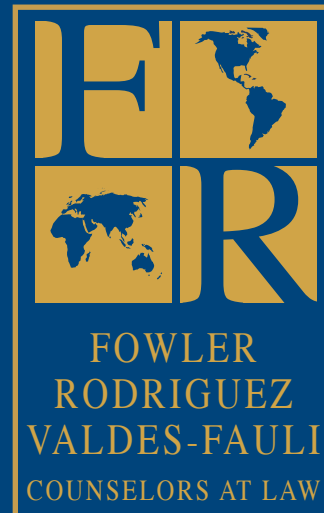
As evidenced by being named one of the Best Places to Work by New Orleans CityBusiness six years consecutively, Peoples Health values the employees who make all of this happen. Staff members are provided with opportunities through specialized programs, seminars, conferences and tuition reimbursement to learn, grow and improve.

For more information about Peoples Health, visit [www.peopleshealth.com](http://www.peopleshealth.com).



Congratulations  
**MR. GEORGE J. FOWLER, III**

Selected for the CityBusiness  
Leadership in Law Class of 2012



[www.frvf-law.com](http://www.frvf-law.com)

Houston  
713.654.1560

Miami  
786.364.8400

New Orleans  
504.523.2600

Gulfport  
228.822.9340

Mobile  
251.344.4721

Bogotá  
011.571.313.4488



Jennifer Greene

## Meet Jennifer Greene, In a Class All Her Own

Herman, Herman, Katz and Cotlar, L.L.P. is proud of attorney Jennifer Greene for being named to *CityBusiness*' Leadership in Law Class of 2012. Jennifer handles family law matters, as well as personal injury and wrongful death cases for HHK&C. She is also actively involved in several non-profit organizations, and currently serves on the Komen New Orleans Board of Directors and as the Sponsor Chair of the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure Committee.

Jennifer is part of our upcoming generation of young, hard-working and fresh-thinking attorneys that inspire us all with their dedication and eagerness to work toward justice for all.

Congratulations, Jennifer. We're extremely proud of you.

—Steven Lane, Managing Partner

# HHK&C

HERMAN, HERMAN, KATZ & COTLAR LLP



BUSINESS LAW | CLASS ACTIONS | CONSTRUCTION LAW | MARITIME PERSONAL INJURY | CONTRACTS | FAMILY LAW | MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE

820 O'Keefe Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70113  
p: 504.581.4892  
[hhkc.com](http://hhkc.com)

# Karen Roby

**Position:** U.S. Magistrate Judge, Eastern District of Louisiana

**Age:** 50

**Family:** husband, Clarence; sons, Clarence, 20, Chad, 15

**Education:** bachelor's degree in business, Xavier University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

During the Wrinkled Robe investigation, U.S. Magistrate Judge Karen Roby was presiding over a civil rights case against Al Copeland, whose name and reported influence had surfaced in connection with the scandal.

Copeland's former wife, Luan, was suing the restaurant mogul, claiming that her civil rights, in an ongoing child custody case, were being violated because Copeland's influence with Jefferson Parish judges interfered with her right of access to the courts.

Knowing the couple's son would also be affected by the case before her, Roby obtained permission from the parties involved and from the presiding Jefferson Parish judge to take over the custody case, preferably outside of court. After meeting with the child at a lawyer's office, she eventually worked out a visitation agreement that satisfied everyone.

"In this job, you don't always know if you've made a positive difference in someone's life," Roby said. "But about four years later, the mother wrote me back and sent me a picture of little Alex to let me know that he's healthy, he's playing ball, he's academically sound. And he was there for his father when he passed away."

Roby is incoming president of the Federal Magistrate Judges Association — the first from Louisiana — with her one-year term beginning in July. Her primary goals will be to enhance communication within the organization and to determine the most important work-related issues to its members.

The upper courts have granted magistrate judges increasing authority over the years, Roby said, but a recent case before the U.S. Supreme Court raised questions about the scope of that authority in bankruptcy cases.

When a related case came before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans, Roby made a point to monitor the circuit hearing for FMJA members.

"What I plan to do is galvanize a coalition of district judges to be mindful of those cases popping up in different circuits so that we can get the support of the various bar associations to explain the position of the magistrate judges, and why it's important for us to continue to be able to do what they've been allowing us to do," she said.

One of Roby's most passionate pursuits away from the bench is civic education. She laments the absence of civics classes in public schools and the public's misunderstanding about how the court system and other aspects of government work.

"If you don't understand how your government works, then you can't change things in the government that you think need to be changed," she said. •

— Sonya Stinson





KEAN MILLER CONGRATULATES OUR PARTNER STEPHEN C. HANEMANN AND THE ENTIRE LEADERSHIP IN LAW CLASS OF 2012.



Stephen C. Hanemann  
Leadership in Law Class of 2012



Christopher J. Dicharry  
Leadership in Law Class of 2005



Michael A. McGlone  
Leadership in Law Class of 2005



Glenn P. Orgeron  
Leadership in Law Class of 2008



Bradley J. Schlotterer  
Leadership in Law Class of 2010



Karen Waters Shipman  
Leadership in Law Class of 2011

KEAN MILLER  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

NEW ORLEANS | BATON ROUGE | LAKE CHARLES | KEANMILLER.COM  
Gary A. Bezet, Managing Partner  
© 2012 Kean Miller LLP

For the latest legal developments,  
please visit [louisianalawblog.com](http://louisianalawblog.com)

Join our Leaders in Law. Contact Gary A. Bezet at  
[Gary.Bezet@keanmiller.com](mailto:Gary.Bezet@keanmiller.com) to discuss how we are  
growing our full service practice in New Orleans.

# LIKE THE BOOK?

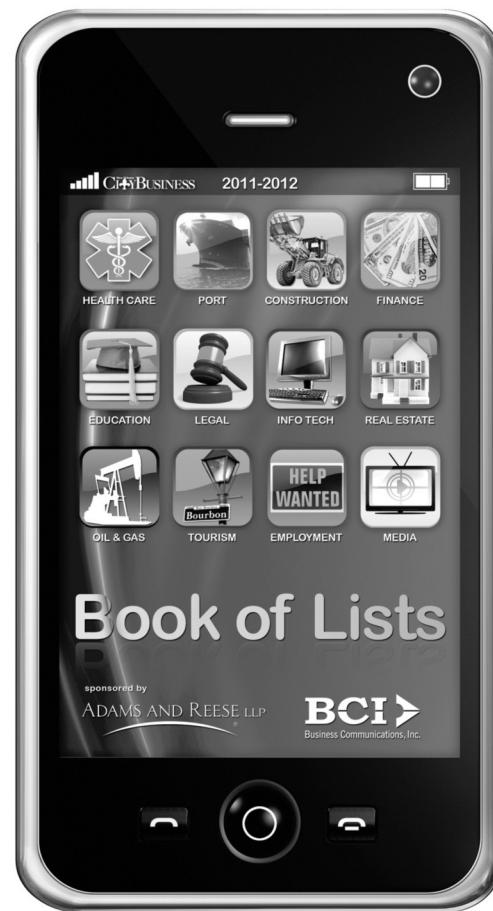
## You'll love the electronic version!

Use it to:

- hunt for new business
  - enhance existing data
  - supplement job search
  - raise funds
- ...and much more!!!

**ORDER NOW**

To order your Electronic Version of the  
2011-2012 Book of Lists  
contact Jaclyn Meith  
(504) 293-9229 • [jaclyn.meith@nopg.com](mailto:jaclyn.meith@nopg.com)



Book of Lists

sponsored by  
ADAMS AND REESE LLP

BCI  
Business Communications, Inc.



# Charles Booker

**Position:** Advantage Capital Partners principal

**Age:** 42

**Family:** wife, Suzie Fuzzard; daughter, Abigail, 2 ½

**Education:** bachelor's degree in English, Vanderbilt University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Charles Booker believes the U.S. economy needs to do more manufacturing and exporting. And that's what he strives to accomplish in his day-to-day work.

That was evident in his work with Game Equipment, a Napoleonville-based agricultural machinery manufactory and distributor. The company, which became an official John Deere dealer and distributor in 2007, obtained the rights to manufacture pineapple and kenaf harvesting tools, which John Deere had discontinued.

To continue growing, Game Equipment needed a small business loan, but traditional banks denied their applications.

That's where Booker, principal, legal adviser and in-house counsel for Advantage Capital Partners, where he works with BizCapital, a small business lender, came in. He agreed to give Game Equipment the loan for several reasons, including wanting to keep business in Louisiana.

"Just the story, what they do is exciting," Booker said. "They have found a niche in the world where they can compete with China and Brazil."

The company, which does 95 percent of its sales internationally, created three additional positions and continues to grow because of the loan, Booker said.

After a few years working for Advantage Capital Partners, where he is involved in the firm's capital transactions, national expansion efforts, sourcing and structuring of investment transactions, and serving as corporate counsel, Booker said he became more interested in its small business lending division, and "at one point they sort of gave me the reins of the operation," he said.

As BizCapital's chief operating officer, he has increased total lending from \$100 million in 1999 to \$258 million, today in six states.

"The great thing about going to law school is it really trains you to do just about everything," he said. "I don't have a business degree but my legal background kind of prepared me to get up to speed quickly."

When he took over BizCapital, he said the division was just beginning and lacked focus.

"This was sort of the post-Katrina era, these people came from different fields and now they're pretty experienced at what they do," Booker said. "I'm pretty proud of our growth internally."

Since then, he's been helping small businesses by doing what banks won't.

"We use BizCapital as a way of getting money into low income areas through small business loans," he said. "We sometimes take risks that a traditional bank would not take."•

— *Travis Andrews*



New Orleans  
**CITY BUSINESS**

**2 0 1 2**

LEADERSHIP

in  
**LAW**

— **S P O N S O R S** —

— **P R E M I U M** —



**Mercedes-Benz**  
Mercedes-Benz of New Orleans

**PEOPLES HEALTH**



**1792**  
*Ridgemont Reserve*

# Jade Russell

**Position:** Harrah's New Orleans general counsel

**Age:** 33

**Family:** husband, Donnie; daughter, Jadon, 6

**Education:** bachelor's degree in political science, Howard University; juris doctor, Southern University Law Center

When Jade Russell mentors young professionals at Harrah's New Orleans, where she serves as the company's general counsel, she said she preaches the importance of corporate citizenship.

There's nothing wrong with climbing the corporate ladder, Russell tells them. It's something she said she has thrived at since graduating from Southern University Law School.

Her goal, though, is to make sure her career accomplishments do not define her impact on the community.

Corporate citizens can excel at their profession, she says, but they must find a way to help others. Coupled with family time, her philosophy allows her to maintain a work-life balance.

"That's the biggest thing for me," Russell said. "That's what I hope my impact has been on my clients and the people I work with through community outreach."

Russell got her first break in 2003 at Sidley Austin Law Firm in Chicago. Five years later, she returned home to New Orleans to work for Adams and Reese. Since 2010, she has served in her current capacity — handling the day-to-day legal duties of Harrah's New Orleans Casino and Hotel, Horseshoe Bossier City, Louisiana Downs Racetrack in Bossier City and Thistledown Racetrack in Cleveland.

She augments her legal career with community involvement, with service ranging from Girl Scout troop leader to entrepreneur class instructor at the Community Work Center.

"You hear so often people talk about businesses they want to start, things that they've been writing down on napkins for years, just ideas that they've had in their heads," Russell said. "But it's really a challenge to get them motivated into thinking and really bringing ideas for those businesses to light."

Her volunteer efforts also include serving on the executive committee of the Downtown Development District and volunteering as co-chairwoman of the city's Homelessness Task Force. She's also director of the homeless advocacy Unity of New Orleans and serves as general counsel for the Young Leadership Council.

Giving back to the community, she tells her co-workers, helps them as much as the people they assist.

Her work with the Urban League of Greater New Orleans, where she served on the board of directors, allowed her to meet a contact at Harrah's who asked if she would be interested in the job she now holds. •

— Gary Estwick



Two-time honoree

# Bill Aaron

**Position:** Aaron PLC managing shareholder

**Age:** 61

**Family:** wife, Santa; children, Kiana, 35, Tazarra, 33, Bilanta, 23, William, 21

**Education:** bachelor's degree in social science, Duke University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Bill Aaron has been an attorney for more than three decades, serving the public and private sectors. He credits his success to putting clients first, hard work and providing top-notch service. The best advertisement for a lawyer, he says, is a satisfied client.

Two years ago, Aaron assisted the local district attorney's office in getting the U.S. Supreme Court to review a \$14 million civil rights judgment obtained against the DA's office by a former death row inmate. He assisted in writing the brief that convinced the Supreme Court to take the case, *Connick v. Thompson*.

"This case was memorable because it could have shut down the local DA's office if the jury verdict had not been reversed," Aaron said. "It was up to about \$21 million with interest, which would have bankrupted the DA's office."

Before joining Aaron PLC, he was a partner at Phelps Dunbar, in addition to serving as city attorney for New Orleans, assistant district counsel for the U.S. Small Business Administration and special prosecutor for the Orleans Parish district attorney's office. He concentrates his practice in the areas of business and commercial litigation, appellate advocacy, class and collective actions, government and regulatory affairs, professional liability and general business.

Aaron is also a licensed title insurance agent and regularly oversees complex commercial transactions for business and government clients.

Throughout his career, Aaron has served on the boards of more than a dozen nonprofits. Currently, he serves on the board of the Pontchartrain Park Community Development Corp., a nonprofit dedicated to rebuilding the community devastated in the levee breaks during Hurricane Katrina.

"As a board member, I work to keep funding sources in place that help people come back and build," he said. "I grew up in that neighborhood and it was one of the first neighborhoods where African Americans could buy a house, so it has historic significance."

Aaron is a board member of the New Orleans Museum of Art and 2012 chairman of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce where his main goal is to increase membership 50 percent.

"We are going to aggressively go after new members this year, including young people," he said. "We've started a group for young entrepreneurs who want to start businesses, and we're putting them in touch with mentors. We have created an ambassador committee, and we have increased seminars of interest for small businesses. We are pushing the envelope and involving business owners in pushing the envelope."•

— Kerry Duff

# Lee Adler

**Position:** Phelps Dunbar partner

**Age:** 48

**Family:** partner, Robert Marks

**Education:** bachelor's degree in history, Vanderbilt University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Lee Adler hesitates only a moment when asked to name his most important skill as an attorney.

"Listening," he says. "Truly hearing what other people are saying can save your client and yourself a lot of time later on."

He considers that skill crucial in a transactional-based practice where he brings together different parties in finance matters involving real estate, inventory, accounts receivable and maritime vessels.

"I am not involved in litigation," Adler said. "What I do instead is structure transactions for companies that buy, sell or lend, drafting documents for them."

The volume of those legal transactions varies depending upon the year. Adler's work at Phelps Dunbar, which he joined nearly two decades ago, has totaled at least \$1 billion annually.

His clients have included Audubon Capital, JP Morgan Chase, Whitney National Bank, Edison Chouest Offshore, Foundation Gaming Group, Mid-Gulf Co. and Simmonds Equipment.

Adler said the work is often intense because he must make sure all parties know what they are doing when they enter into a business relationship.

"At times, these are issues that people have to struggle with, and often there is a tendency not to deal with them," Adler said. "Some of the documents you are putting together are essentially mapping how a relationship is going to work, while in other situations you are simply trying to anticipate case scenarios, for better or worse, and hoping that you are just talking about theory."

Adler, who previously worked at Wilson and Strawn in New York, has served on the board of the nonprofit volunteer-based Start the Adventure in Reading program and was president of STAIR from 2006-08.

He has also been a member of the Success Preparatory Academy's board of directors and currently serves as the chairman for the board of advisers of Breakthrough New Orleans, a program designed to help motivated but underserved middle school students receive a college education.

His interest in education, Adler said, goes to the root of his belief in the future of New Orleans.

"Education is really the most important ingredient when it comes to whether or not the city is going to succeed."•

— Garry Boulard



# Morris Bart

**Position:** Morris Bart Attorneys at Law managing partner

**Age:** 59

**Family:** wife, Cathy; daughters, Carrie, 27, Michelle, 24, Jennifer, 17

**Education:** bachelor's degree in political science, University of New Orleans; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

One of Morris Bart's most memorable cases was a class action lawsuit filed in 1999 over the diet pill popularly known as Fen-Phen, which was linked to heart valve malfunction.

When the firm provided an EKG for one plaintiff, the test showed she needed surgery immediately. After the operation, her doctors told her she probably soon would have died of a massive heart attack without it. The client received a seven-figure settlement in the case, but Bart said she told him she was most grateful for that EKG.

"Today she's alive, she has plenty of money to provide for the rest of her life, and (that case) was really a life-changing event," he said.

With offices in Louisiana, southern Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas, Bart's is one of the largest personal injury firms in the United States. Motor vehicle accidents constitute the majority of cases, he said, but the firm also handles mass tort class actions such as the Fen-Phen case and a more recent one arising from the Gulf of Mexico oil spill.

"We have hundreds of businesses and individuals that we represent that were affected by the spill," Bart said. "We've been active not only in working with the Gulf Coast Claims Facility in attempting to get a fair settlement for our clients, but we've been active with the litigation team in federal court in preparing for the trial."

Bart, who leads the firm's pharmaceutical and medical sections, typically plots strategy rather than taking a prominent presence in the courtroom.

"At this stage, I'm not the first chair," he said.

His community work includes the United Way and the Jewish Federation, "which is like the United Way of the Jewish community in New Orleans," he said.

Along with enjoying the excitement of the game, he also cheers the economic impact of the New Orleans Hornets.

"It's tremendous as far as attracting business and talented individuals to the New Orleans area," he says.

He has partnered with the organization in a community service program called Bart's Bees. Students at five participating elementary schools who earn a B or better receive game tickets, T-shirts, bookbags and other loot.

Bart also provides financial support to Newman, Country Day and McGehee, as well as his alma maters, the University of New Orleans and Loyola University College of Law.

"If you plant that love of learning, that seed of education, into a lower-school child, then that child has a good chance of succeeding in life," Bart said. •

— Sonya Stinson

# James Carter

**Position:** James Carter and Associates managing partner

**Age:** 42

**Family:** wife, Rene; son, Bryce, 9

**Education:** bachelor's degree in philosophy, Howard University; juris doctor, Howard University School of Law

James Carter, a former New Orleans City Council member and now Mayor Mitch Landrieu's criminal justice commissioner, recounts a court victory against one of the city's largest companies as one of the most significant of his career at an attorney.

After Hurricane Gustav, a man who ended up being Carter's client got out of his car and brushed a live electricity wire. The voltage tossed him 7 feet in the air and severely burned his shoulder. He cracked two ribs when he hit the ground, and his burns required him to undergo skin grafts.

After he filed suit against Entergy, Carter said the utility company claimed his client wasn't paying attention to his surroundings after the storm. During the 2010 trial, Carter cross-examined Entergy's expert witness, an inspector who went out to the accident scene and noticed only a dangling telephone wire — on the wrong side of the street.

"He was frustrated going through the questions," Carter said.

His last query for the witness turned the tide: "Was there anything you learned from the experience?"

The inspector's frazzled response, "I should have double-checked myself," helped seal the case, said Carter, who said he had rehearsed the seemingly impromptu question.

The \$4.1 million Entergy paid in damages to Carter's client is a "substantial judgment in recent times," he said.

In another noteworthy case, Carter represented the family of Lorraine Edwards, a woman who died at Methodist Hospital during Hurricane Katrina. Her health was reportedly compromised when the hospital's emergency power failed.

"It's a seminal case that's affected how medical facilities will prepare for storms, and it's having an impact on (similar) class actions and on the value of those cases," Carter said.

The hospital settled privately with the woman's family in 2010.

Carter's role as the city's criminal justice commissioner often takes him to homicide scenes. He was also appointed to the Criminal Justice Act panel for the U.S. Eastern District of Louisiana in 2009.

On the City Council, he represented District C from 2006-10.

Describing himself as the "argumentative" boy from Gentilly, Carter said he strives to be a role model for younger family members, including a relative who strayed into illegal activity a few years ago.

"When he got into trouble, I responded in a loving, supportive way," Carter said, "understanding that we all fall short. He came around because I didn't give up on him."•

— Anne Berry



# Pamela Carter

**Position:** Carter Law Group founder

**Age:** 36

**Family:** husband, Jerome; children, Princeton, 13, Kennedy, 11

**Education:** bachelor's degree in journalism, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, Southern University Law Center

Pamela Carter says she practices what she preaches. As a longtime proponent of diversity in law firms, she stepped out on her own in 2010 to form Carter Law Group.

Carter, who is black, has a strategic of-counsel relationship with Carroll Bufkin, a Jackson, Miss.-based firm led by two white men, Thomas Bufkin and Mark Carroll.

"I think there's a whole lot of value in bringing a case before a jury with a diverse team," she said. "I wanted to create something different."

Carter says the law profession has been unkind to women of color, who she characterizes as having to fight many battles but are questioned at every turn.

"I think it's blatant. Lots of people are surprised that we haven't progressed quicker," she said. "It's an issue that is surprising to many."

Over the years, Carter has developed and implemented national programs to address how diversity fits into a law firm's plans, including recruitment, retention, attrition, promotion, mentoring and client development.

Carter left a shareholder position with Baker Donelson Bearman Coldwell and Berkowitz to take a chance on herself and said she hasn't looked back. She was previously an associate with Phelps Dunbar and Deutsch, Kerrigan and Stiles.

"It was just a lot of prayer. I stepped out on faith and here I am today," she said. "I hardly missed a beat."

Carter has built a firm representing businesses and individuals in a variety of areas such as employment and transportation, insurance disputes and product liability. The majority of her cases involve defense.

Carter has written and lectured on diversity and won the 2012 Diversity Leadership Award from the American Bar Association, Section of Litigation.

She almost didn't go into the law industry. Carter started in the world of broadcast journalism, convinced she couldn't afford law school. Attorneys she interviewed while working as a television reporter encouraged her to enter the field and helped her prepare.

"I don't believe in chance or luck. It's all about intervention," said Carter, who mentors young girls throughout the area. "I wanted them to know I wasn't very different from them. I made up my mind I was tired of being poor."

She hopes to offer paid internships for middle school students at her firm to expose them to other role models.

"They're lost," she said. "We've got to get them at middle school. We've got to change the thought process. By high school, it's very imbedded."•

— Diana Chandler



# Lawrence Chehardy

**Position:** Chehardy, Sherman, Ellis, Murray, Recile, Griffith, Stelukum and Hayes managing partner

**Age:** 59

**Family:** wife, Mickie; daughter, Meredith

**Education:** bachelor's degree in business administration and accounting, Loyola University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Having previously served as the tax assessor of Jefferson Parish for 34 years, Lawrence Chehardy was instrumental in rewriting portions of state property tax laws and other tax initiatives to give residents a break from rising homeowner taxes in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Chehardy may be retired as a public servant, but he's still doing much for his community.

"I enjoyed doing it very much," he said, "but it was time to give someone else a chance."

Aside from being the managing partner of his Metairie law firm, where he specializes in real estate law, he recently led the Kenner Streamlining Task Force, which provided recommendations on ways the city could reduce its budget and operate more efficiently.

"They (Kenner) were trying not to overspend," Chehardy said. "And they were working on reversing shortfalls in the budget ... deficits, so we had to look at numerous fiscal issues and look where we could cut expenses, which we did."

Chehardy, who's served on various boards and in different positions during three decades of service, including president of the Louisiana Assessors' Association, said he's most proud of the legislation he's spearheaded to help residents.

Chehardy supported the homestead exemption in Louisiana, which made the cost of homeownership more affordable for residents, he said. He also was instrumental in freezing the assessed home values for senior citizens so their property taxes wouldn't go up.

In the aftermath of Katrina and Rita, Chehardy helped revise state property tax laws that allowed assessed values of home and businesses that were valued before the storm to be amended after the storm so respective business and homeowners affected by the hurricanes wouldn't be forced to pay taxes on damaged properties.

"If not for that, you would've had people paying property taxes up to \$100,000 for buildings that were significantly damaged or just out right weren't even there anymore after the storm," he said. "The point of it wasn't just fairness, but encouraging people to come back and rebuild after Katrina. .... We wanted to let them know that we weren't going to tax you for something that's not there anymore or not even worth what it was previously appraised at." •

— Kyle Jackson



# Justin Chopin

**Position:** Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard and Smith associate

**Age:** 32

**Family:** fiancée, Lindsey Harreld

**Education:** bachelor's degree in psychology, University of Dallas; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

When Justin Chopin graduated from law school in 2007, he was the 17th member of his family to become an attorney.

"Initially, I was going to be a doctor and the black sheep of the family," he said. "But when I got out of college and started working, I gravitated toward law and before I knew it, I was in law school."

Chopin is an associate with Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard and Smith, where he focuses on maritime and admiralty, professional liability, insurance coverage and bad faith, commercial litigation and creditor's rights. Prior to that, he was an associate for two years at his father's firm, Chopin, Wagar, Richard and Kutcher.

His most memorable case during that time was *Dupree v. Louisiana Medical Mutual Insurance Co.*, a medical malpractice case involving a pregnant woman who died, along with her unborn child, from a pre-eclampsia seizure shortly before she was going to give birth.

"This is a very sad case and the time I spent on it was very challenging legally," he said. "Even though it's about winning the case for the client, it's easy to feel yourself becoming emotionally involved in a case like this, especially when you're constantly seeing the family and hearing their grief. I thought about this case day and night because two of my sisters were pregnant at the time, and this family lost both a child and grandchild at the same time."

Outside the courtroom, Chopin is involved in the local community. He recently taught a trial tactics class to law students at Loyola University.

"When you go to school to become a lawyer, they teach you the law and how to research it," he said. "But what you don't know is how to cross examine someone or argue in front of jury."

Chopin is also involved in the Young Lawyers Division of the Louisiana State Bar Association, where he has led the law school outreach and division committees, which are responsible for programs that facilitate open communication between law students and practicing lawyers throughout the state.

He also donates his time as an attorney to Ozanam Inn and the Wills for Heroes Foundation, a nonprofit that provides free legal documents such as wills and powers of attorney for first responders.

"There are so many people that need help," Chopin said. "I've been fortunate in my life to have family support, but not all people have these privileges. So the best way for me to help others is to donate my time as an attorney."•

— Kerry Duff

Two-time honoree

# Keith Colvin

**Position:** Jones, Walker, Poitevent, Carrere and Denegre special counsel

**Age:** 58

**Family:** wife, Karen; children, Charles 31, Billy, 30, Mary Elizabeth, 27; stepchildren, Christopher, 33, Katie, 29

**Education:** bachelor's degree in general studies, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law School

Keith Colvin's work and passion often revolves around the power of natural resources.

A decade ago, the real estate and commercial finance attorney represented the Occidental Chemical Corp. in the development of a \$30 million co-generational facility in Taft, issuing the title insurance policy that helped make the historic project a reality.

"It was one of the largest and most significant projects I have been involved with," Colvin said. "The power it produces could be used for their petrochemical plant, but at any time when they produced more electricity than they need, it could be sold to an operating power company — and the power company, by regulation, has to buy it."

Recently named president-elect of the American College of Mortgage Attorneys, Colvin is also dedicated to restoring the state's ever-threatened coast.

As chairman of the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana's board of directors for the past three years, Colvin has worked for the Trust for Coastal Stewardship — a partnership between the CRCL and the Nature Conservancy.

"It was formed to take title to wetlands and other lands along our coast, which are critical for coastal restoration and protection purposes and can be managed in the public trust," he said.

Colvin has worked on a state statute that allows donors to put their property into a land trust.

"We have mineral companies that own hundreds and hundreds of thousands of acres of coastal wetland areas, and they retain ownership of those properties primarily because under Louisiana law they cannot retain mineral rights for more than 10 years without production," he said.

The statute allows participating landowners to reserve the minerals and set a mineral boundary where the current shoreline is, which then protects them against future subsidence and erosion.

"I cannot tell you how much time I have devoted to this program as a lawyer," said Colvin, who has drafted regulations at the request of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources to implement the statute.

He also is founder and served as the first chairman of the Louisiana State Bar Association's Uniform Title Standards committee, where he co-wrote and edited the initial working draft of the Louisiana Uniform Title Standards. The LSBA eventually published the guidelines, which standardized title exam practices throughout the state, reduced the cost of title exams and promoted a practical risk-based approach to resolving title issues. •

— Garry Boulard



# Dalton Courson

**Position:** Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann partner

**Age:** 36

**Family:** single

**Education:** bachelor's degree in psychology, Harvard University; juris doctor, University of Virginia

At Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann, where he became a partner Jan. 1, Dalton Courson's legal practice focuses largely on bankruptcy, insurance cases and other types of litigation.

But some of his most interesting legal work takes place when he's off the clock.

For example, as co-chairman of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Litigator Committee of the American Bar Association's Section of Litigation, he's working to organize sessions on topics such as teen bullying for upcoming ABA conferences, including a panel at the 2012 annual meeting in Chicago.

"One of the interesting aspects to it is: When does the school have liability for the bullying that goes on within its walls?" Courson said.

He's a former board chairman of AIDS Law of Louisiana, a nonprofit that provides legal assistance to low-income HIV and AIDS patients. The list of legal challenges that population faces includes obtaining Social Security and medical benefits, confidentiality regarding HIV status, job discrimination, housing discrimination and finding housing that supports their medical needs, Courson said.

He volunteers for the New Orleans Pro Bono Project, recently helping the victim of a contractor who had stolen her Federal Emergency Management Agency funds for rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina.

In another pro bono case, he represented a contractor who was sued by a homeowner who claimed he did faulty repairs.

Before entering law school, Courson spent two years with Teach for America, teaching mathematics to special education students in sixth, seventh and eighth grades. He still supports the cause by volunteering on the Stone Pigman committee that spearheads the firm's partnership with the New Orleans College Preparatory School.

"We've painted classrooms, re-shelved the library and donated money for a new kitchen," he said.

Courson also is a member of the New Orleans Bar Association's Inn of Court, which he describes as an informal mentoring group with the goal of promoting professionalism in the practice of law.

"All too often, especially as a litigator, civility between lawyers is an issue — not as much in New Orleans, but in general," he said. "The Inn of Court allows you to have conversations with other lawyers in the community that you're going to see again and again while practicing."

Courson, who often represents insurance companies in his regular practice, said the aim is the same no matter what type of client he's representing.

"You want to make sure that everyone has his fair day in court, from the pro bono clients to the larger corporations that we represent," Courson said. •

— Sonya Stinson

# Mark Cunningham

**Position:** Jones Walker senior partner

**Age:** 44

**Family:** wife, Meredith; children, Alistair, 9, Virginia, 6, Pierce, 3

**Education:** bachelor's degree in political studies and philosophy, Pitzer College; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School; master's degree in law, New York University School of Law

Mark Cunningham joined Jones Walker as an associate 16 years ago and has been building on an anti-trust background he gained while clerking for two federal judges in law school. The firm was one of the few places in New Orleans that had a client base to support his area of practice, he said.

Cunningham is now a senior partner at Jones Walker and focuses on corporate compliance, intellectual property and commercial litigation. He recently served as lead counsel for a local software company that was accused of exporting software to Iran in violation of federal export laws.

To resolve the matter, Cunningham said he convinced the government not to charge the company, which employed about 40 employees, and the case was ended through a settlement.

He also recently stopped a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction for an international client involved in an unlawful boycott, obtained a preliminary injunction against a software licensee that was pirating software on behalf of a hacker in Eastern Europe and won a not-guilty verdict for a juvenile facing a life sentence.

One aspect of his career — representing nonprofits on a pro bono basis — is maintaining a personal and professional standard. He's representing the Capital Assistance Center, which provides legal aid for death row inmates, on a case the agency brought against a former Harvard University law clerk who published information she had gathered about clients for the Louisiana Innocence Project.

"It's a significant First Amendment case," he said. "It's a part of my work on a pro bono project. ... Playing a role in our community is something that I was always taught was a person's responsibility, so I always wish I could do more."

Cunningham also has held several leadership roles with the Louisiana State Bar Association, including secretary and treasurer, a position he has held for the past two years. As treasurer, he manages the organization's \$6 million budget.

"It's a real honor for me to take on a leadership role and those responsibilities," Cunningham said of his work with the LSBA.

He credits integrity, diligence, strong mentors and a supportive work environment for cultivating him into leader in the law field and the community.

"I think that I receive much more than I've given from both the community and the law firm," he said. •

— *Nayita Wilson*



# George Fagan

**Position:** Leake and Andersson founding partner and principal

**Age:** 52

**Family:** wife, Andrea; children, Connor, 17, Kathryn, 13

**Education:** bachelor's degree in European history, Washington and Lee University; juris doctor, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

For those who lost money in the Bernie Madoff Ponzi scheme many questions surfaced about who should share the blame with Madoff. Would it be the investors, the broker/dealers' representatives who advised them or the broker/dealers themselves?

Those are the types of questions George Fagan asks arbitrators as his firm's leader in financial lines and securities cases.

"It's always a question of whether the broker/dealer had information available to them to uncover the unauthorized activity," Fagan said.

In recent arbitration involving a dozen suits, Fagan represented a national broker/dealer in a case involving the loss of \$500 million in a real estate-related scheme based in Utah. While thousands of investors were affected, Fagan's client faced only a dozen lawsuits seeking to recoup losses.

Fagan's job was to convince arbitrators that his broker/dealer client, which has 1,600 registered representatives throughout the country, used reasonable diligence in offering the investment. With success measured by the degree of recovery, Fagan prevailed with plaintiffs recovering just some of their losses.

"The investors had some blame," Fagan said. "It's very common for investors to sue the broker/dealer."

Typically, he said, 55 percent of investors in Ponzi schemes recoup some of their losses. In his case, some investors recovered next to nothing, he said, while one investor got most of his money back. His client had to pay some money, but much less than the investors' losses, Fagan said.

In contrast to his work in the courtroom, Fagan plays lead guitar and sings in the rock and blues band the Levee Dawgs. His band includes U.S. Attorney Jim Letten on drums and First American Title Insurance Co. Executive Vice President John Casbon on harmonica. The group plays some paid engagements but enjoys performing for free at charity events. They've supported such groups as A Child's Wish, St. Andrews Home and the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation.

Fagan is active with ALFA International, formerly the American Law Firm Association, which is a global network of law firms that provides continuing education for its 140 member firms worldwide. He has served on the executive committee and board of directors of the group and was given the group's Nathan Fishbach Service Award in 2011, which recognizes one member of the roughly 10,000 worldwide for their work with ALFA. •

— Diana Chandler

# William Finn

**Position:** Carver, Darden, Koretzky, Tessier, Finn, Blossman and Areaux member

**Age:** 54

**Family:** wife, Patricia; children, Matthew, 27, Timothy, 25, Kendall, 21

**Education:** bachelor's degree in accounting, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

**B**ill Finn says the most rewarding part of being a lawyer is helping people reach their goals. He has completed about 30 sales transactions for companies but says one stands out among them all.

After Hurricane Katrina, a client wanted to sell his heating, venting and air conditioning business. Finn devised a package that helped the client share revenues with his employees and retire comfortably.

"That's what's enjoyable," Finn said, "helping someone achieve what they want to achieve."

Finn says he enjoys working with small to mid-sized companies because he can have an impact on the business and its transactions.

He also handles debt litigation and restructuring, usually on behalf of the lender.

He once worked on an estate dispute that he calls one of the toughest cases of his career.

Two elderly women had willed a large amount of money to a medical institution, but their nieces and nephews contested because they wanted the money. Finn said the case was long and contentious, but the family finally settled.

"We knew the money would do good," he said.

Finn has also served as counsel for local banks in financing several hotels, retail developments and apartment complexes throughout the New Orleans and Baton Rouge areas.

Finn has been with Carver, Darden, Koretzky, Tessier, Finn, Blossman and Areaux for 18 years and is one of the eight original partners, all of whom are still active with the firm.

Finn says his success is tied to the support of the veteran lawyers who have stayed with the firm.

"They were willing to spend time with a young attorney teach the practice the right way," said Finn, adding that he passes along that knowledge by working with the firm's newer attorneys.

Outside of the office, Finn is on the board of Edible Enterprise, a not-for-profit food incubator that helps local food entrepreneurs prepare their products for mass-market sales. He said he became involved in with organization to help give upcoming businesses a head start.

"I enjoy helping people reach their goal, and I enjoy problem solving," he said. "That's part of what a lawyer does."•

— *L. Kasimu Harris*



Two-time honoree

# George Fowler

**Position:** Fowler Rodriguez Valdes-Fauli founding partner

**Age:** 62

**Family:** wife, Cristian; children, George, 34, Cristi, 30

**Education:** bachelor's degree in business administration, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

George Fowler's legal career spans close to four decades and includes hundreds of high-profile cases, complex litigation and cases of national concern.

He is recognized internationally as a trial lawyer whose practice areas include international, maritime, energy, business litigation, construction, employment, insurance and general corporate law.

"I was born to be a trial attorney," said Fowler, who is fluent in Spanish, French and English.

In January, he proved fraud against Rolls Royce and obtained a \$24 million verdict for Carnival Cruise Lines. Rolls Royce marketed its Mermaid pod propulsion system to Carnival to use on the cruise line's largest ship, the Queen Mary II. The jury found that Rolls Royce knew the pod was defective and not fully developed when it was presented to Carnival.

"I had to prove fraud against Rolls Royce and I did," said Fowler, who was lead counsel for Carnival. "But it's hard to prove that someone deliberately lied for money."

He is the founding partner of the international law firm Fowler Rodriguez Valdes-Fauli, the largest maritime firm in the United States. He started the firm in 1988, which has grown to include 150 employees, 70 of whom are lawyers.

A number of the firm's representative clients are Carnival Corporation, Florida Crystals Corp., Halliburton, Royal Caribbean Cruises and various oil companies.

"The trademark of our firm, whether a lawyer or staff, is you have to be a confident person and be decent to others," he said. "To be a good trial lawyer you need to work really hard, be savvy and intelligent, be a risk taker and have guts, which many lawyers lack."

Fowler is on the advisory board of the World Trade Center and is working to improve relations with Latin American countries. He serves on the board of the New Orleans Hispanic Heritage Foundation, which he started 22 years ago to provide college scholarships to Hispanic children. He also works with the Metropolitan Crime Commission.

"We are all responsible for participating and making our community better," he said. "We have to get rid of the crime. If we do that, we'll have the best city in the United States."•

— Kerry Duff



# George Freeman III

**Position:** Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Freeman and Sarver member

**Age:** 58

**Family:** wife, Karen; daughters, Meredith, 23, Sarah, 21

**Education:** bachelor's degree in history, Emory University; bachelor's degree in philosophy and religion, Oxford University; master's degree in philosophy, University of Virginia; juris doctor, University of Virginia School of Law

Two national industry collapses have kept George Freeman busy in recent years.

"The first was handling cases for brokers and brokerage firms arising out of what is known as the 'tech-rec' — the collapse of the tech industries and markets between 2000 and 2002," said Freeman, who is one of the founding members of Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Freeman and Sarver. "In the financial crisis that started around 2008, I've been primarily involved in representing firms and others who created, bought and sold derivatives, mortgage-backed securities and other structured products."

In one case, Freeman successfully defended a broker against an investor who said he was disabled, lost tens of millions of dollars in a market slide and said his broker should have done a better job protecting him.

The attorney discovered the plaintiff was also "an active online investor" whose activities were "inconsistent with a person who was physically or mentally debilitated."

"It was a case of a gambler who lost his fortune in the market and now wanted to gamble again by getting lawyers to sue the brokerage firm," Freeman said.

The result was a minimal settlement far less than the amount the investor was suing for.

In industries where big money flows and the allure of more sometimes encourages inflated hopes and dreams, Freeman notes a dominant theme in much of his work.

"In a variety of instances, people who allegedly did something wrong ultimately didn't do anything wrong," he said. "It is often just a matter of things going south — markets dropping dramatically," Freeman said, adding that people who lose money often look for explanations or someone to blame.

"It is generally easy to see after the fact how things might have been done differently to prevent the problem," he said.

Freeman has served on the board of directors of the Langston Hughes Academy Charter School and Trinity Episcopal School as well as the Juvenile Regional Services development board, which works to provide legal representation for indigent youth throughout Louisiana.

He also has taught jurisprudence, constitutional theory, and securities litigation and arbitration for 25 years as a Tulane University Law School adjunct faculty member. •

— Garry Boulard





FIRM ASSOCIATED

Two-time honoree

# Monica Frois

**Position:** Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell and Berkowitz shareholder

**Age:** 46

**Education:** bachelor's degree in psychology, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Monica Frois is in her element in the courtroom, having argued cases before the Louisiana Supreme Court and almost every appellate circuit court in Louisiana.

Typical clients include health care systems, hospital service districts, doctors, medical groups and others involved in medical malpractice, class action and legal ethics.

Then there was the case of the 550-pound tiger.

Animal welfare activists have for years fought unsuccessfully for the relocation of Tony the Truck Stop Tiger, so known because he has lived in a cage at the Tiger Truck Stop off Interstate 10 in Grosse Tete for more than a decade.

The truck stop's owner claims Tony is a beloved pet and that activists' efforts are ill-informed and unfounded. But late last year, with Frois' help, a step was taken toward moving the tiger.

In November, a state district judge ordered the state Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to revoke the permit that allowed the truck stop owner to keep the tiger on the premises. Appeals are pending. As of January, the tiger remained at the truck stop after the owner filed suit against the LDFW in January, but momentum seemed to be building that favored Tony's imminent removal.

A flashing electronic sign at the truck stop visible from the highway declared "Activist (sic) taste like chicken."

Frois became involved with the case when her firm was asked to provide pro bono legal assistance for the Animal Legal Defense Fund. A self-described animal lover, Frois has two dogs, Wilhelm and Fielding, and is a founding member of the City Bark dog park. She said she jumped at the chance to get involved and counts the case among her proudest recent successes.

Frois knew she wanted to be a lawyer almost from the time she was born. Her father was a corporate lawyer for Exxon-Mobil for years, and her mother was a defense attorney. It was rare that legal topics weren't discussed at the dinner table.

"I thought it would be an exciting and dynamic career," Frois said of her interest, one that afforded her a chance to work directly with clients to achieve a specific goal. "I considered being a psychiatrist, and the more I thought about it, I realized that the things that attracted me to that particular profession could also play a significant role in being a lawyer." •

— Emilie Bahr

# Kirk Gasperecz

**Position:** Adams and Reese partner in charge

**Age:** 51

**Family:** wife, Mamie; son, Jackson, 13

**Education:** bachelor's degree in business and public administration, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

While he has many legal victories and accolades, Kirk Gasperecz, partner in charge of Adams and Reese's New Orleans office, says building client-attorney relationships are among his greatest accomplishments.

That was seen in a successful case that involved the dropping of a \$90 million deck module — a device that sits on top of oil producing platforms — in the Gulf of Mexico. That case lasted 13 years from 1998 to the concluding trial in 2010. The matter was “among the largest maritime products liability cases ever handled in the local federal courts,” Gasperecz said.

As one of two trial attorneys involved with the case, Gasperecz and colleagues provided defense counsel for a crane designer. The case was appealed in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals three times and was tried twice. The team prevailed in both instances.

“It was a privilege to represent a client like we did in this litigation and to have that client place that much of confidence in you as a lawyer,” he said. “Everybody who does this type of work will have to invest that kind of time of commitment.”

Gasperecz, who specializes in insurance law, environmental law, personal injury, defense and product liability, also has provided legal counsel to Consumer Testing Laboratories Inc. for the past 20 years. Because of the success Gasperecz has garnered for CTL, the company reaches out to him for counsel on legal issues outside of his areas of expertise, such as employment law and contracts.

“I've had an opportunity to understand the business side and to get to know my clients personally,” Gasperecz said. “This has been one of the most rewarding parts of my job.”

He finds fulfillment in organizations that advocate for more effective and transparent criminal justice practices in New Orleans.

“This is one area that I thought I could contribute my time,” said Gasperecz who recently finished a two-year term as chairman of Court Watch NOLA, which promotes transparency and efficiency in the local criminal justice system.

Under his leadership, the organization hired an executive director, improved fundraising and increased its volunteer base from 15 to 75 through a partnership with Tulane University. •

— *Nayita Wilson*



# Jerry Glas

**Position:** Deutsch, Kerrigan and Stiles partner in the civil litigation department

**Age:** 42

**Family:** wife, Claire d'Hemecourt Glas; daughters, Katie, 9, Molly, 6

**Education:** bachelor's degree in philosophy, College of the Holy Cross; masters degree in philosophy, University of Toronto; juris doctor, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Jerry Glas recalls his preparation when he was defending a Winnfield police officer who was accused of manslaughter after the suspect he used a Taser on died.

To learn just what the suspect experienced, he consented to being hit with a Taser and withstood its debilitating electrical charge for five seconds.

Glas describes the sensation as “a Charlie horse all over the body” but was convinced that the Taser didn’t cause the suspect’s death.

One of three pro-bono attorneys for the defense, such pursuit of the truth drives him in his practice. Many of his cases involve traumatic brain injury, which Glas said he finds challenging because there’s no objective evidence of impairment, “only a handful of anecdotal stories.”

In one recent traumatic brain injury case, a plaintiff had already settled with the primary insurer and was seeking compensation from the excess insurer. The question was not who caused the accident, but whether the accident caused the client’s traumatic brain injury.

The plaintiff was rear-ended in stop-and-go traffic on Interstate 10, Glas said.

“She was convinced that as a result of being rear-ended, she had traumatic brain damage. The best tests and the best doctors ... said no,” he said. “I didn’t think that she had a traumatic brain injury.”

Glas got to the truth of the matter, convincing even the plaintiff of the frivolity of her cause, as she dropped her claims against Glas’ client. The judge then dismissed the case.

“I think it’s always important to try to get to the truth,” he said.

Glas also worked from 2000-08 on a pro bono basis to represent an inmate on death row at Angola State Penitentiary, which ended with the court overturning the sentence with the consent of the state and the victim’s brother.

Glas has brought more than 70 jury trials to verdict and lectured nationally on brain injury cases. He serves as a local attorney for Taser and has represented law enforcement officers throughout the state in claims accusing them of improper use of the device.

Before law school, Glas taught theology for a year at Jesuit High School, his alma mater, and currently volunteers as an adjunct professor at Loyola University College of Law.

“I think some of the best lawyers right now in New Orleans are high school teachers,” he said. •

— Diana Chandler

# Jennifer Greene

**Position:** Herman Herman Katz and Cotlar attorney

**Age:** 36

**Family:** single

**Education:** bachelor's degrees in history and political science, Rhodes College; juris doctor, University of Arkansas at Little Rock Law School

It's common to hear about a lawyer who selected their profession in childhood, which Jennifer Greene said she did at the age of 4.

But it's rare to hear lawyer say passing the bar exam was anticlimactic.

"My father was a lawyer, and it's all I ever wanted to be," Greene said. "So after passing the bar, I saw my name on the Supreme Court website and was so excited."

Then, Greene said, she remembers thinking, "What now?"

Greene, who passed the bar in Arkansas in 2004 and has practiced in Louisiana since 2007, found the necessary direction and has embarked upon an accomplished law career. Her practice at Herman Herman Katz and Cotlar focuses on family law, civil litigation and multi-district litigation.

Greene said she approaches every case as an opportunity to work on her skills as a litigator.

"I try to advocate a position that I believe in. Because if you don't believe in what you're doing, you are going to end up miserable."

Greene said seeing families and what they go through after a divorce, she tries not to internalize their problems and take them home.

"But it's hard after seeing kids put in the middle and almost used as a pawn because the parents get hurt and lose sight of what's important," she said.

Greene said she didn't intend to pursue family law or even study it in school, but after Hurricane Katrina she relocated to Houston where her boss suggested she pursue the field because of the experience she would gain.

People remain at the root of her professional efforts, such as her representation of clients who took the prescription drugs Vioxx and Propulsid, both of which had serious unforeseen side effects.

"Families take these drugs thinking that everything will be better, and it gets worse and change one's quality of life," she said.

Greene started backing causes at a young age. She has been involved with the Susan G. Komen Foundation since she was 19 and is now the youngest member of its New Orleans board.

Green gives back to her industry in several ways, most recently as an appointee to the American Association for Justice's special projects committee. She also is a member of the Louisiana Association for Justice Women's Caucus, which provides continuing legal education programs and other professional services to women in the industry. •

— L. Kasimu Harris



# Stephen Hanemann

**Position:** Kean Miller partner

**Age:** 34

**Education:** bachelor's degree in French, University of Texas; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Stephen Hanemann of Kean Miller is a full-service attorney taking care of everything for clients, both commercial and recreational, who are buying vessels.

And those purchases range from multimillion dollar freight and tank barges, tow boats and offshore vessels, to personal sailing craft and mega-yachts around the globe.

His knowledge of U.S. Coast Guard procedures and vessel documentation allows him to help clients beyond the traditional lending process.

"It takes a lot of legwork to buy, sell or finance a vessel or marine asset, and my clients appreciate that I can provide the whole gambit of services," he said. "It also assists me in getting new clients."

Hanemann knew from a young age that he wanted to be involved in the marine industry. He grew up watching his mom's family build boats in southern Louisiana, and he recognized that oil, gas and marine operators were the backbone of the state's economy.

For the past 10 years, the bulk of his practice has involved maritime law and vessel finance, but he also assists oil and gas companies with joint ventures, and operating and exploration agreements.

He considers the most exciting case of his career to be El Paso Production GOM Inc. et al v. M/V RHE, where he represented an oil and gas company that owned a platform in the Gulf of Mexico.

A large tugboat hit the platform and knocked the helipad into the Gulf. Unlike a car accident where people pull over and exchange information, the tugboat continued on its way. Hanemann worked with the Coast Guard and U.S. Marshall Service to locate the boat, which was heading to Brazil.

"The U.S. Marshall seized the boat inside of nine miles offshore from Florida and took custody of it," he said. "It was very exciting and I had to wear a bulletproof vest during the pursuit. In the end, we worked out a settlement. But if the boat had made it to Brazil, my client would have had to wait for it to return to U.S. waters, which may never have happened, so time was critical."

Outside of the office, Hanemann spends three or four nights a week at Boys Hope Girls Hope of New Orleans, an organization that provides children between the ages of 10 and 18 with a stable home, parenting and high quality education. He tutors children in French, English and history and also assists with Race Judicata, an annual fun run to raise money for the charity. •

— Kerry Duff

# Christopher Kane

**Position:** Adams and Reese partner

**Age:** 33

**Family:** wife, Kerri; daughter, Emery, 1

**Education:** bachelor's degree in science and business administration and master's degree in business administration, Christian Brothers University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Christopher Kane expected to spend most of his time as a litigator when he joined Adams and Reese in 2004.

Instead, he has become an agent for economic change in the city.

"It started with Desire NOLA," Kane said of the not-for-profit corporation he co-founded after Hurricane Katrina to help small businesses recover by providing grants of \$2,500 to \$10,000. "While that was going on, I got to meet a lot of the players in local economic development. All of a sudden I found myself utilizing my MBA background."

That dip into the world of economic development has since seen Kane assisting clients in port infrastructure, industrial, retail, restaurant and residential projects totaling more than \$250 million.

He provided legal services for Traffic Consultants Inc. in its \$10 million move to the Industrial Canal.

"They brought in about 160 jobs to work on a 27-acre site that we developed by purchasing the property from the Port of New Orleans," Kane said. "That, in turn, created an opportunity for the France Road Corridor to be redeveloped."

Kane has also served as a team leader for the \$70 million mixed-use 1031 Canal Street Development at the site of a former Woolworth's, as well as a Value Place Hotel on General de Gaulle Drive.

Kane's role with each project is multi-faceted.

"I evaluate the client's site first and help them identify whether or not it is advantageous to maximize financing or capital layering from a standpoint of whether it is a subsidy or incentive," he said.

"From there, I help with the management of any of the zoning, land use and lease issues," he said. "At the end of the day, I think the people I work with really appreciate having someone manage those issues for them and getting these projects off to a good start."

Off hours, Kane has offered his legal experience to build a \$1.8 million playing and practice field with stadium seating at George Washington Carver High School.

"All of the kids from all of the schools in the 9th Ward will be able to use this facility, which is something we feel very good about," he said. •

— Garry Boulard



# Kenneth Klemm

**Position:** Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell and Berkowitz shareholder

**Age:** 48

**Family:** wife, Leslie; children, Nicholas, 13, Lauren, 13

**Education:** bachelor's degree in government, Dartmouth College; juris doctor, Fordham University Law School

About \$9 million was at stake in a oil well blowout case, the kind that often doesn't make it to the courtroom because it's difficult to prove.

That's the case where Kenneth Klemm, the 48-year-old shareholder with Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell and Berkowitz, faced in Rapides Parish when he had to prove gross negligence and the defendant was forcing it into the courtroom.

"We had a very tough contract in that case, since the contractor's contract essentially protected him in case of a blowout," Klemm said.

There had been an oil well blowout, which Chesapeake Louisiana LTD claimed was the fault of a contractor, Wood Group Pressure Control. An employee of Wood Group reportedly hadn't fully tightened a bolt on the wellhead, which is a safety violation

If Chesapeake Louisiana and Klemm were correct, then they had the case. If they were incorrect, they'd lose between \$8 million and \$9 million in damages.

Because of the contract between the two companies, Klemm had to prove that Wood Group Pressure Control violated Louisiana public policy.

"We tried it for two weeks, and ultimately the judge had decided that not only the employee but the company he worked for had committed gross negligence," Klemm said.

He said he was happy to win the case because he felt his client did the right thing, including going beyond its basic financial duties to reach out to those who helped during the blowout.

"The client took care of the residents, evacuated them, settled up with them after and donated to the Red Cross for providing help during the blowout," he said, while the contractor wanted to pay nothing. "My client was vindicated, plus the party who was really responsible ended up having to pay."

From 1988-92, he served in the military, rising from a lieutenant in the Army to a captain with the Louisiana Army National Guard and served in Operation Desert Storm.

He also volunteers as a scoutmaster at St. Pius School.

"There's so much (kids) get out of scouts that they don't get out of other activities," he said. "These inner city kids, they get this look on their face when we're camping that you can tell this is something special." •

— Travis Andrews



# Harvey Koch Jr.

**Position:** Montgomery Barnett partner

**Age:** 77

**Family:** wife, Lynne; daughters, Allison Brook, 46, Caroline Shanti, 44, Melanie Holmes, 38

**Education:** bachelor's degree in pre-law law and language, Tulane University; certificate in international studies, Harvard University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

In his 52 years of being an attorney, Harvey Koch has helped manage major contracts and negotiations for international and national companies. He says there were times when some would question how an attorney from New Orleans could gain such prominent cases.

"When I was an undergraduate, I took business courses and at that point I knew I wanted to go to law school," said Koch, who adds that his desire from that point has been to use his abilities in a creative and constructive way to help clients.

Koch launched his own private law practice, Koch and Rouse, in 1965, at which time he landed some of his most memorable cases.

Following Hurricane Betsy that same year, Koch represented Pipelines International in removing damaged drilling rigs and other equipment from the Gulf of Mexico.

Pipelines later asked him to negotiate a contracts in Egypt, which resulted in Pipelines securing a deal to remove oil tankers that sunk in the Suez Canal during the Yom Kippur War in 1973.

The opportunity led to other work from the client in Egypt and more negotiations for Koch. The work centered on the removal of sunken rigs in the Red Sea and the laying of pipeline from the center of Egypt to its coast near Alexandria.

"It was all because that client was doing work in the Gulf of Mexico. At that point, we had become a team," he said.

Today, as a partner with Montgomery Barnett, Koch represents clients in the construction industry while helping associates and partners grow professionally. His work may have changed over the years, but his objective remains the same.

"My goal going forward is to serve my clients and community to the best of my ability and to never stop," Koch said. "You never stop. You look for opportunities."

His volunteer efforts in the areas of national and international trade have included negotiating agreements for the International Trade Market and International House merger, which led to the creation of the World Trade Center of New Orleans.

A dramatic tenor, Koch has been singing since the age of 8 and now gives private concerts to benefit charitable organizations.

In 2000, Koch and New Orleans musician Ronnie Kole recorded "At the Canteen," a compilation of popular World War II-era songs. All proceeds from the CD benefit the National World War II Museum. •

— *Nayita Wilson*



# Stephen Kreller

**Position:** The Kreller Law Firm managing member

**Age:** 37

**Family:** single

**Education:** bachelor's degree in marketing, University of South Alabama; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Stephen Kreller is the lead attorney in Louisiana representing more than 1,000 commercial fishermen who are suing BP, Halliburton and other companies involved in the April 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion that led to the largest oil spill in U.S. history.

"We're seeking economic compensation for our clients for all of the risks BP is asking them to assume in exchange for a release," Kreller said, referring to biological and environmental harm, as well as damage to the seafood market extending far beyond Louisiana.

"There was a time before the oil spill people listed on the menu fresh Gulf seafood with pride," he said. "That's not happening now."

Kreller has teamed with Gerard Nolting, a Minnesota attorney who prevailed in winning more than \$5 billion for fishermen after the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill in Alaska. The two are leading a group of 15 to 20 attorneys in the case involving 240 federally permitted fisherman, 20,000 acres of leases and more than 650 fishermen who participated in the BP response but were never paid, Kreller said.

The trial to determine damages is expected this summer.

Kreller entered private practice a few years after Hurricane Katrina, focusing on product liability, personal injury, insurance fraud and bad faith, among other areas. He is licensed in Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia and New York, and previously worked with Murphy, Rogers, Sloss and Gambel.

"I didn't want to become a partner at that firm and the only alternative was to open a private firm," Kreller said. "Having my own practice allows me the freedom to pick and choose cases."

After Katrina, Kreller said he enjoyed being able to help those affected by the storm and failed levees.

"I felt that a large number of insurance companies were taking advantage of people. My job was to hold them accountable," he said. "That translated to the BP oil spill. ... What interested me (with BP) was the ability to help people. Most of my clients were already devastated by Katrina. They were just getting back on their feet."

Kreller contributes to the community as an executive mentor at Loyola University, his alma mater. He works with a handful of incoming freshmen each month, teaching them networking skills to help them make connections throughout their careers.

"I kind of view my profession as a service to the community," Kreller said. •

— Diana Chandler

# Martin Landrieu

**Position:** Gordon Arata member

**Age:** 48

**Family:** wife, Laurie Tucker; children, Holley, 22, Sadie, 21, Jacob, 17, Claire, 15

**Education:** bachelor's degree in petroleum and land management, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

**M**artin Landrieu works in corporate litigation. On a bottom shelf in his office are 10 large binders unrelated to his practice.

The binders, he said, are among the most important documents in his life and office. They contain documents related to the eight committees and 72 subcommittees created after Hurricane Katrina to help the Lakeview community recover from the catastrophic flooding after levees failed during the storm.

Landrieu, a member at Gordon Arata law firm, helped lead the charge, as he was responsible for rezoning during the recovery period.

"When this entire area was destroyed and groups from the outside said every neighborhood had to prove its viability, I didn't like that," said Landrieu, who served on the Lakeview Civic Improvement Association's executive board for more than 15 years, including a term as president.

"I look out here and think what if other decisions were made," he said.

Landrieu's practice consists of complex corporate litigation, class action defense, telecommunications, zoning, construction, real estate, property rights, insurance and general litigation. About 75 percent of his cases involve litigation and 25 percent is focused on transactions.

He has worked with a plethora of companies and organizations, including the state agencies that drafted disaster recovery programs based on federal Community Development Block Grants after hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

He also coordinates as Gordon Arata's associate development and works on educational programs to help younger attorneys grow professionally.

Spending time with loved ones and continuing the Landrieu family's commitment to public service is important him.

Landrieu co-sponsors an annual fundraiser that raises \$25,000 to \$30,000 for Boy's Hope Girl's Hope. He also volunteers as an ad hoc judge on the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court and has participated as a speaker in the Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education's high school program. •

— *L. Kasimu Harris*



Two-time honoree

# Ted Le Clercq

**Position:** Deutsch, Kerrigan and Stiles labor and employment department partner and co-chairman

**Age:** 48

**Family:** wife, Courtney; children, Douglas, 13, Price, 11, Susan, 7

**Education:** bachelor's degree in philosophy, Washington and Lee University; juris doctor, University of Tennessee at Knoxville

**T**ed Le Clercq considers being a good listener and understanding how complex employment laws work together as keys to being a good labor and employment attorney.

Le Clercq has been an attorney for 22 years, 18 of which have been in New Orleans, where he focuses on labor and employment law, professional liability defense, civil rights litigation and constitutional law at Deutsch, Kerrigan and Stiles.

"The most complicated and challenging cases in my area of law involve sharp disagreements on the facts of what happened," Le Clercq said. "We frequently have one version of a story and company witnesses who have a very different, if not opposite, view of the same events. To win these cases requires careful navigation and the use of the essential facts combined with law."

Between 2006 and 2009, Le Clercq represented the Vieux Carré Property Owners, Residents and Associates in the defamation lawsuit *Sidney Smith v. VCPORA*. The group supported an ordinance that was about to pass regulating tour guides in the French Quarter. As part of the public debate leading up to the passage of the ordinance by the New Orleans City Council, the plaintiff took offense at some of the debate about what should be passed and why.

"We ultimately won the case, but it went to the Louisiana Supreme Court twice," he said. "This victory preserves important rights of free speech on issues of public concern in our community."

Outside the firm, Le Clercq is involved in a number of community organizations. After Hurricane Katrina, he collaborated with the St. Charles Avenue Association, which planted 291 live oaks along the avenue over five years.

"When I came here 18 years ago, I found this street amazing," he said. "Now there are 1,000 live oaks on the avenue."

Le Clercq serves as an officer of the Preservation Resource Center and is chairman of the board for Rebuilding Together, a subsidiary of PRC that has helped rebuild more than 1,000 homes throughout New Orleans.

He also serves on the board of the Louisiana Children's Medical Center and the Audubon Nature Institute.

"I believe in getting involved and helping make the city better," he said. "My inspiration comes from Drew Brees. ... He inserted himself at once into our community and that sends the message to get involved and not sit on the sidelines. We need to think big and get it done."•

— Kerry Duff

# Brian Lenard

**Position:** Southeast Louisiana Legal Services executive director of program operations

**Age:** 57

**Education:** bachelor's degree in social sciences, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Brian Lenard was in high school when he discovered a knack for debating that got him thinking about a career in law. But by the time he finished college and entered law school, he wondered if he'd made the right choice.

He felt out of place among peers intent on finding high-income careers in corporate positions and frustrated by scant offerings at LSU for public interest law.

For a time, he considered dropping out. After graduation, when many of his law school classmates were heading to lucrative careers defending big corporations, Lenard took what was at the time a less popular course and headed down a path influenced by his keen interest in helping people.

"I've worked for legal services since the day after I took the bar exam," he said.

Today, Lenard is co-executive director of Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, the largest public interest law firm in the state. His firm provides legal assistance at no charge to a mostly poor, largely female clientele in need of assistance on matters including domestic abuse, child custody, evictions and foreclosures, homelessness and income tax problems.

In recent years the firm has seen a surge in demand for its services, especially in regard to housing.

Lenard counts among his proudest achievements his firm's work after Hurricane Katrina in helping to clear titles on hundreds of properties that, for various reasons, had never been updated to reflect current owners' names. Those unclear titles threatened eligibility for Road Home money that was critical to their ability to return home and rebuild.

More recently, the firm's focus has shifted to trying to keep clients in their homes in the face of foreclosure.

Lenard counts his agency's perseverance through the challenges of the past year as another source of pride. The firm saw its territory expanded by two-thirds last year to encompass Baton Rouge and Houma. It hired 14 new lawyers to account for the new service area and now employs 60 lawyers working out of offices in New Orleans, Marrero, Hammond, Covington, Baton Rouge and Houma.

Meantime, federal funding that is the primary source of the firm's operating budget was slashed by 15 percent last year, and further cuts are looming. Lenard said the firm has to turn away half of the prospective clients who come in seeking help. He worries additional cuts could mean it soon has to turn away substantially more.

"We had money saved up so that we don't have to make a lot of hard decisions this year," he said, "and we've proven to be quite successful in fundraising, so we're taking it one year at a time."•

— *Emilie Bahr*



# Frank Liantonio

**Position:** Adams and Reese partner

**Age:** 51

**Family:** wife, Kim; children, Marissa, 20, Gianna, 17

**Education:** bachelor's degree in marine transportation, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Following a heated contract negotiation involving ship construction, Frank Liantonio was hired by the very company he was working against. He describes the experience as humbling and exciting.

“A few years ago, I managed a team of our lawyers in a complicated ship construction project involving numerous vendor contracts that needed to be negotiated,” he said. “Many of the negotiations were heated and involved extremely able adversaries.”

The work involved the negotiation and drafting of a variety of construction, fabrication, design and procurement contracts, in addition to vessel financing. When an agreement was finally reached, the in-house counsel for one of the adversaries hired Liantonio, “which was the ultimate compliment,” he said.

“This reinforced my belief that people, even lawyers, can disagree without being disagreeable, which goes a long way in my experience toward getting results,” he said.

Liantonio has worked his way up from being a law clerk at Adams and Reese in 1988 to a partner in the firm's litigation department. Before entering the law field, he gained experience in the maritime industry as a marine surveyor.

He has also handled a number of energy and marine-related claims involving collisions, towage, oil pollution, salvage, personal injury, pipeline casualties, oilfield environmental contamination and drilling issues.

Liantonio finished a two-year stint as president of the Susan B. Komen Foundation's local chapter in March. He co-chaired its Race for the Cure in 2007.

“I kinda got thrown into the deep end of the pool, but it was really an interesting experience,” he said. “It's amazing how much goes into producing a race that has grown from 5,000 participants or so to 15,000.”

He's also the founder and coordinator for Adams and Reese's Donate a Phone program that provides used cell phones to people with special needs. •

— *Travis Andrews*

# Timothy Madden

**Position:** King Krebs and Jurgens attorney

**Age:** 46

**Family:** wife, Ethel; children, Patrick, 16, Jennifer, 13, Caroline, 9

**Education:** bachelor's degree in business administration, Loyola University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

In the mid-1990s, petroleum giant ConocoPhillips hired truckers to remove about 400,000 cubic yards of dirt from company property in Westlake. The debris was supposed to wind up in a landfill, but instead the trucks dumped asbestos-riddled soil in residential yards along the way.

The homeowners filed a class action suit against ConocoPhillips, which lost in district and appellate courts before taking their case to King Krebs and Jurgens in 2002.

"We had to convince the state supreme court to hear the case," said Tim Madden, a complex commercial litigator who led the firm's team. "We had to reverse what could have been a substantial exposure for Conoco."

First, he persuaded the higher court that the case would "present unique issues of law" that hadn't been decided before, namely the scope of a company's responsibility for a subcontractor's work.

Madden, a certified public accountant, who is accustomed to reading nuances in contracts and laws, then analyzed the existing law adopted by the Louisiana legislature to discern its intent. He argued that ConocoPhillips couldn't be held liable for its subcontractors' bad behavior.

The Louisiana Supreme Court agreed and overturned the lower courts' decisions.

Madden also helped keep Chisesi Brothers meatpacking company viable after Hurricane Katrina. Besides losing a facility and thousands of pounds of product to levee failures that resulted in widespread flooding, Chisesi Brothers stood to permanently lose customers, as grocery stores closed and residents left for good.

Madden advised the company to rebuild as a U.S. Department of Agriculture-inspected facility, allowing them to sell their sausage, ham and roast beef outside Louisiana. He guided their building renovation, which needed federal approval at every turn and was opened by the fall of 2006.

Sometimes a legal matter becomes complex when it's spread over several states and dozens of lawyers, as was the case of a wealthy Greek businessman who had sued his business partner for millions over real estate and mishandled funds. Madden followed documents and bank accounts all over the world, but also spent time with his client, who was being countersued. The Greek businessman settled out of court.

Madden is involved in another case of estranged business partners — Hollywood actors Stephen Baldwin and Kevin Costner, who are disputing the profits earned on Costner's oil extractor machine created after the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill. That case will be tried in New Orleans in mid-May.

"When all parties leave somewhat disappointed, you know you have a fair and just settlement," Madden said. •

— Anne Berry



# Richard McCormack

**Position:** Irwin Fritchie Urquhart and Moore member

**Age:** 59

**Family:** wife, Terri; daughters, Maggie, 16, Lili, 14

**Education:** bachelor's degree in anthropology, Tulane University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Richard McCormack describes himself as deeply cynical and deeply idealistic.

“The cases you get in the employment litigation arena are hilarious. You’d be amazed how many people can’t look themselves in the mirror and say, ‘You blew it. You got fired,’” McCormack said. “Life is just horribly, horribly absurd. You have to just roll with the punches.”

In the case of *Perio v. Bourgeois*, a fired sheriff’s deputy claimed Terrebonne Parish Sheriff Vernon Bourgeois demoted him in violation of First Amendment rights and dismissed him based on his race. Perio is black.

“What we showed was that the sheriff had legitimate reason for demoting him, which was his poor performance over the last several years,” McCormack said. “He (Bourgeois) promoted a whole bunch of people, including a number of African-American officers.”

The deputy’s appeal was scheduled to be heard in March in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, McCormack said.

The 28-year veteran attorney has always been attracted to employment cases.

“We do it for the stories we can tell,” said McCormack, evoking Jimmy Buffett lyrics. “I like to deal with people and I think humor makes that a little bit easier.”

“I actually asked a guy once, ‘Weren’t you black when they hired you?’” McCormack said of a case that drew laughter from the jury. “I said, ‘Well, why do you think? Do you think they hired you because you were black?’ Something crazy always happens when you try cases.”

McCormack, a Massachusetts native, served three years in the U.S. Army and studied for a year in Mexico before enrolling at Tulane University. He fell in love with New Orleans, he said, calling the city a “visual and sensual feast.”

He supports the city by volunteering with the United Way, which he’s been involved with for the past 20 years. He currently serves on the operations and administration committee, donating his legal expertise as an employment lawyer and offering financial advice.

McCormack also has provided pro bono legal services for the New Orleans Mission, St. Joseph’s Center and the Salvation Army.

He’s provided his expertise to District Court Judge Jay Zainey’s Homeless Experience Legal Program, or HELP, which relies on attorneys, law students and law firm secretaries and paralegals to provide pro bono legal assistance for homeless people. •

— Diana Chandler



# Jackie McCreary

**Position:** Stone Pigman Walter Wittmann member

**Age:** 33

**Family:** husband, John Copponex; twins, Halle and Harper, 2

**Education:** bachelor's degrees in psychology and political science, Louisiana State University; juris doctor and bachelor's degree in civil law, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Jackie McCreary knew she wanted to be a lawyer from the moment she was assigned a social studies project in the fifth grade on the separation of church and state.

"I just became fascinated with how the law works," said McCreary, who joined Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann in 2004 after spending a year as a law clerk for U.S. District Court Judge Frank Polozola.

That fascination grew into a career focused on commercial and oil and gas litigation, defending major and independent oil and gas companies in legacy oilfield lawsuits.

"These are cases in which the property owner has alleged that the property has been contaminated by oil and gas operations that have taken place on the property," McCreary said.

Such cases are rooted in agreements between property owners who allow oil and gas companies to look for the resources on their property. Years later, McCreary said, "An individual whose ancestors were the leasers for the property might now say it has been contaminated from the historical or ongoing operation and sue for damages."

That's where McCreary, who has also represented various energy companies accused of coastal marsh damage, steps in.

"These are cases that require a lot of research," McCreary said. "Some of the leases go way back. We've seen one that was about 100 years old. The oldest lease we saw was essentially the first oilfield in Louisiana, which turned out to be a real history lesson."

McCreary, the first lawyer in her family, said she sometimes can't believe she is working on a daily basis with some of the largest and most prominent oil and gas companies. Despite the gravity of her work and the time it consumes, she said she's committed to giving back to the community.

McCreary offers free assistance as a part of the Lawyers Helping Homeless Project, teaches in the Lawyers in the Classroom program and volunteers with the Girl Scouts.

"I just feel that it's right to give back," McCreary said. "And no matter how busy I may be, I still try to find time for that kind of thing." •

— Garry Boulard



# Robert McNeal

**Position:** Liskow and Lewis partner

**Age:** 52

**Family:** wife, Laura Lane; children, Charles (Beattie), 20, Will, 17

**Education:** bachelor's degrees in economics and fine arts, Vanderbilt University; juris doctor and master's degree in energy/environmental law, Tulane University Law School

Robert McNeal, a 28-year veteran of the legal field, says understanding the client's business is critical to being a good litigator.

"I have a strong background in the oil and gas industry, so I understand my client's business issues and I come up with solutions to meet their business needs," said McNeal, who is a partner with Liskow and Lewis.

McNeal started his legal career representing a number of local banks. After five years, Exxon hired him to lead its oil, gas and environmental litigation team.

"I didn't have any real experience in that area, and I needed it fast, so I went back to school and got a master's degree in oil, gas and environmental law," he said. "Louisiana is a state based on natural beauty and the outdoors. The environmental work I do is all part of that, and I find it very interesting."

After Hurricane Katrina, Exxon moved some of its operations to Houston. McNeal wanted to stay in New Orleans, so in 2007 he joined Liskow and Lewis. Since then, he has worked on a number of oilfield contamination and environmental cases.

The most complicated cases, he said, are legacy cases, which are historic oilfield contamination cases. Most of those cases involve oil operations that started before oil and gas laws were established, he said.

"They also involve a fair number of defendants and complainants, which have different kinds of contractual relationships that have to be examined to determine if liability exists," he said. "These cases are very complex as far as legal relationships between parties and the appropriate remedy and some of them last many years."

In 2008, McNeal was involved in *MJ Farms v. Exxon Mobil Corp.*, a case he described as significant to the state's oil and gas industry. He represented one of the lead defendants in litigation over the constitutionality of oilfield cleanup legislation through the Louisiana Supreme Court.

The ruling was that the legislation was constitutional and required awards for oilfield contamination to be used to clean up property, instead of allowing such awards to be paid to landowners and used for whatever they wanted.

McNeal is a member of the Environmental Law Institute and contributes articles to their publications. He also develops programs for the Federation of Defense and Corporate Counsel and is a frequent speaker for the organization. •

— Kerry Duff

# Mark Moreau

**Position:** Southeast Louisiana Legal Services co-executive director

**Age:** 63

**Family:** wife, Chin-Chin; children, Andre, 28, Janine, 26

**Education:** bachelor's degree in English literature, Brown University; juris doctor, State University of New York at Buffalo; master's degree in taxation, New York University

One of the most satisfying legal victories for Mark Moreau came during a court battle against “sewer service” evictions.

Those are the cases in which tenants are evicted with little or no notice — and no chance to defend themselves.

The nickname refers to the idea that the legal notices are figuratively tossed into the sewer rather than properly served.

“That was a problem that we struggled with for years, and we finally were able to get a federal court to say that tacking a notice on somebody’s door is insufficient as matter of constitutional law,” said Moreau, co-executive director of Southeast Louisiana Legal services, referring to the decision in the 1985 case *Sylvester v. Detweiler*.

A few years later, the plaintiff in that case returned to the legal aid agency seeking help with an exorbitant water bill. It turned out that Sylvester and other tenants enrolled in the Section 8 housing assistance program were receiving utility allowances that were too low to cover their bills.

“So she stood up for herself, her kids and the whole tenant community and filed a lawsuit,” Moreau said. “She got a federal court settlement that the utility allowances be raised for Section 8 tenants.”

Back then, Moreau was working with the agency called the New Orleans Legal Assistance Corp., which in 2003 merged with Southeast Louisiana Legal Services. The resulting agency now has about 60 attorneys who handle a range of cases, including domestic violence, evictions, homes being sold for tax delinquency and title clearances needed for disaster aid.

In 2010, Moreau helped set up a new, more efficient legal aid system for abused children in Louisiana. Previously, a network of several hundred lawyers handled such cases, each billing the state directly.

“As I understand it, it was very difficult for the state to administer the program that way, and it cost a lot,” Moreau said. “So they wanted to go to a single vendor, so to speak.”

Moreau came to New Orleans in the mid-1970s after graduating from law school as a lawyer with Volunteers in Service to America. He was involved in starting a VISTA prison law project that did groundbreaking work on issues such as reducing overcrowding.

Currently, he is active on two Louisiana Supreme Court committees of the Louisiana Bar Association, one focusing on making the court system more user friendly to petitioners representing themselves and the other working to create uniform rules for the state’s family courts.

“The one that I’m personally working on the most is trying to amend a court rule that would encourage more participation by pro bono attorneys in family court work,” he said. •

— Sonya Stinson



# Dwight Paulsen

**Position:** Bradley, Murchison, Kelly and Shea partner

**Age:** 47

**Family:** wife, Leslie; children, Andrew, 18, Brandon, 16, Michael, 14, Meghan, 13

**Education:** bachelor's degree in business administration, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Dwight Paulsen, one of the founding partners of Bradley, Murchison, Kelly and Shea, learned firsthand that winning isn't always everything when he became involved in the controversial case that pitted the St. Joseph Society of the Sacred Heart against the board of directors of a school it founded — St. Augustine High School.

The case came from a dispute between the Josephites and the board over the use of corporal punishment in the school.

"The only Catholic high school in the United States that was still using corporal punishments was St. Augustine High School," Paulsen said.

The Josephites declared the practice to be against Catholic values and wanted the school to stop the punishments, which led to a power struggle with "certain members of the board of directors."

"Both sides were very angry and upset with each other," he said. "Do you win at the end of the day (if you win)?"

So instead of walking into a courtroom and attempting to achieve outright victory for the Josephites, his clients, Paulsen, along with others, helped mediate the case and work toward a mutual agreement.

"It was very interesting working with the Josephites and working toward a compromise ... which allowed both sides to save face and come out on the other side," Paulsen said. "It's a good accomplishment in that the best thing in the case wasn't to forge ahead and win the suit but instead to work to resolve it."

That proved to be best, Paulsen said, since the school's new board is working with the Josephites, rather than against them.

Balance and compromise are not new to Paulsen.

"I try to focus more on the family right now, because the kids are going to be out of the house soon," he said.

But that hasn't stopped him from being the co-author of the Louisiana chapter for the Defense Research Institute's publication titled "Product Liability Defenses: A State by State Compendium."

To him, it's all about balancing everything before it's all over.

"When you're a kid, it seems like you're always waiting to get older. ... When you get older, life suddenly moves very fast."•

— Travis Andrews

# Darleene Peters

**Position:** Irwin Fritchie Urquhart and Moore associate

**Family:** husband, Gary; children, Gary Peters Jr., 13, Dillon, 12, Alexis, 8

**Education:** bachelor's degree in business administration, Xavier University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Darleene Peters did not plan to make her mark on the legal industry through pharmaceutical litigation.

Peters said she avoided science classes at Xavier University as much as possible. She majored in business administration because she planned to specialize in business or insurance litigation after graduating from Loyola University College of Law.

"It was just something I thought I wasn't cut out for. It wasn't something that interested me," Peters said of working with pharmaceutical drugs and medical devices, which is now her specialty.

Peters was hired by Irwin Fritchie Urquhart and Moore in 2001 to handle document reviews. Shortly after she arrived, the still-growing firm realized the need for a full-time associate who needed to embrace product liability.

Peters took the job, as well as an unfamiliar challenge.

"The science is what really excites me about this particular practice area," she said. "I don't think I've mastered everything there is to know because there is so much to learn, which is a good thing."

She's had to work in two worlds: one that involves scientific jargon from experts and another in which she transforms her research into everyday language that she says she hopes a judge and jury will grasp.

"I feel like I'm constantly learning," she said. "Each matter is different, each drug is different. Each product is different as you learn its impact on the human body."

She has also defended railroad companies in grade crossing accidents, derailments and trespasser claims, and has experience in insurance defense, toxic torts and mass tort litigation. She also serves as the firm's diversity committee co-chairwoman.

Outside the office, she serves as a board member for the House of Ruth, a United Way agency that provides housing assistance to the elderly and families in need. She's also served as a volunteer attorney for the New Orleans Bar Association's Open Doors to Federal Court program, which teaches students about the role, structure and operations of the federal court through a mock trial, and as a volunteer judge for the Greater New Orleans Teen Court program.

Past involvement includes serving as president of the parent advisory board for The First Tee of Greater New Orleans, which creates affordable and accessible golf facilities for youth who have not been exposed to the game to foster character development and life values. •

— Gary Estwick



# Minor Pipes III

**Position:** Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Freeman and Sarver member

**Age:** 42

**Family:** wife, Jill; sons, Henry, 9, Charlie, 7, George, 5

**Education:** bachelor's degree in history, Pennsylvania State University; juris doctor, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

The onslaught of Hurricane Katrina brought a significant amount of insurance claims for Minor Pipes, who said he handled more than 2,500 claims and litigations related to levee failures after the storm.

"You're going to get a lot of claims when you're dealing with that type of litigation on top of a huge catastrophe like that," he said.

But with the resolution of those claims, he said, many people were able to move on.

"I think that everyone played a part, a role in the rebuilding of New Orleans after Katrina, and insurance claims and the settling of claims and litigation helped a lot of people and businesses," he said. "When you have a lawsuit and someone is happy with the resolution, I think that is a helpful way to get closure on something that was so traumatic and experience and event that happened to them."

Pipes, who specializes in construction and insurance claims litigation as a member at Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Freeman and Sarver, has worked his way up through the industry.

"I started out as a general counsel litigator," Pipes said. "I didn't set out to do this for all these years."

His focus on insurance and construction litigation led to him being selected to serve on the insurance committee in the multi-jurisdictional Chinese drywall litigation.

"As a lawyer, we always hope that we set a good example both in the legal community and beyond," he said. "In my case, I like to think I bring honesty, integrity and advocacy to the process."

Pipes said his main goal is to resolve claims as fast and as equitable as possible.

"It's challenging because there are a lot of different issues to resolve usually," he said. "You try and understand the issues for the other side and work with them to resolve their issues. It's a delicate balance to figure out how to handle it all properly."

The legal community is just one area that benefits from Pipes' passion and involvement. He also contributes to the Teach for America organization and to KidSmart, aside from coaching his sons' baseball team. •

— Kyle Jackson

Hall of Fame

# Christopher Ralston

**Position:** Phelps Dunbar partner

**Age:** 42

**Family:** single

**Education:** bachelor's degree in international relations, College of William and Mary in Virginia; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Chris Ralston considers communication one of the most important aspects of being an attorney.

"One of the most important things we do as lawyers is communicate — to people, clients, judges, the jury and opposing counsel," he said. "It's hard to think of anything more important. I really believe its key every day."

Ralston's primary focus is commercial litigation, where he specializes in antitrust law, business torts, contract disputes, securities litigation, arbitration and intellectual property litigation. He serves as part of Phelps Dunbar's appellate practice and acts as the firm's pro bono coordinator. He also represents international clients that have a presence in Louisiana.

In the case *U.S. ex rel Kessler v. Sigma Coatings*, he defended a large international client against federal charges that it had defrauded the U.S. government for millions of dollars.

"We tried the case in federal court and I obtained a judgment in our client's favor," Ralston said. "The judgment of no liability was upheld by the federal appeals court, which assessed costs against the party charging the fraud. Obviously, my client took the allegation of wrongdoing, like the potential financial exposure, very seriously."

Ralston makes volunteer casework a priority, serving on The Pro Bono Project's board of directors. He received the group's 2011 Distinguished Service Award for completing more than 100 hours of pro bono work.

He has been involved in numerous succession cases in state courts after Hurricane Katrina. The work involved obtaining public service grants from the American Bar Association to help the New Orleans Bar Association's Young Lawyers Section handle the influx in cases and hold free legal fairs in the community.

Ralston also ties his pro bono work to his volunteer efforts with Ozanam Inn and with the Homeless Experience Legal Protection program. He recruits attorneys to provide referral and notary services at Ozanam Inn and the Harry Tompson Center.

Outside of work, Ralston is involved in a number community and public service organizations. He is a member of the New Orleans Community Leadership Board of the American Diabetes Association. In 2011, he promoted the group's cause by walking 300 miles across Louisiana in 10 days. He received the Chairman's Citation from the American Diabetes Association, an award given to just six individuals or organizations.

"In New Orleans alone, 11.2 percent of the population has diabetes," he said. "It's a true epidemic and that's why I walked across the state."

— Kerry Duff



# Kermit Roux III

**Position:** Deutsch, Kerrigan and Stiles partner

**Age:** 42

**Family:** wife, Margaret; son, Louis, 3

**Education:** bachelor's degree in business administration, Southern Methodist University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

A defense attorney with a clientele that includes insurance companies, hotels, medical clinics and bars, Kermit Roux III thinks people sometimes rush into litigation.

"They don't realize that when you go to court, any issue may be brought up," said Roux, who joined Deutsch, Kerrigan and Stiles in 2002 as a member of the firm's civil litigation department. "They don't think about what litigation may ultimately do to them, to their families and even their financial condition, let alone what it may do to the other side, which is going through the same turmoil."

Roux is familiar with the ups and downs of litigation, in particular how a good defense can quickly demolish what appears to be a plaintiff's strong case.

"I represent the underdog," he says. "That doesn't always mean the little guy, although I do represent the little guy, too. It could also be a big company."

Either way, Roux said, someone is behind the eight ball when the case comes to him.

He represented Kenny's Key West Inc. when a customer sued the Metairie nightclub for injuries he allegedly suffered after slipping and falling. Roux presented evidence that the bar had stationed employees to check for dangerous conditions and that there were no spills or puddles on the night in question. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals later affirmed the trial court's judgment in favor of the defendant.

In co-defending an insurance company in a Hurricane Katrina damage claim that involved a plaintiff demanding \$500,000 during mediation, Roux presented evidence showing the company had not acted in bad faith, prompting that plaintiff to instead accept a \$2,000 settlement.

Also specializing in divorce work and debtor-creditor relations, Roux makes it a point to maintain friendly relations with opposing counsel.

At the beginning of his first case with Deutsch, Kerrigan and Stiles, his boss, Bob Kerrigan, suggested he have a cup of coffee with the plaintiff's attorney.

"I couldn't believe it," Roux said.

But he has since made it a point to limit confrontations to the inside of a courtroom.

"This is a small legal community," Roux said. "When I cross paths again with an attorney from the other side, I hope they will say that I am a gentleman, a good lawyer and can be trusted."

In his free time, Roux has served as a volunteer coach for Jesuit High School's lacrosse and swimming teams, helping both win a state and regional championship. •

— Garry Boulard



# Richard Stanley

**Position:** Stanley, Reuter, Ross, Thornton and Alford managing member

**Age:** 53

**Family:** wife, Patricia; children, Christine Stanley Campo, 25, Spencer, 16, Everett, 14, Helena, 12

**Education:** bachelor's degree in political science, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, Harvard University Law School

**R**ick Stanley specializes in complex commercial litigation involving products liability and securities. In recent years, his firm has defended clients including pharmaceutical powerhouse Merck on litigation related to the drug Vioxx and Tyson Gypsum on litigation related to toxic drywall.

Lawyers and law firms seeking representation on cases involving professional ethics and liability are also regular clients, as are utility companies Entergy and Cleco.

Stanley says cases related to big corporations are exciting, involving tens, if not hundreds of thousands of documents, a slew of witnesses and experts, and lots of money. But he counts some of his smaller cases among the most satisfying.

"There have been times when I've been able to do cases on either a complete pro bono basis or almost pro bono basis for clients that have had problems," he said. "The big ones are rewarding, but the little ones remind you of why you went to law school."

One recent case involved the family of the founder of the Dukes of Dixieland jazz group. The family could not afford the legal costs necessary to protect their rights to more than a dozen popular albums produced by the band. After years of litigation involving multiple parties and music distributors, a settlement was finally reached with the help of Stanley's firm that he said protected not only the family's financial rights but also their heritage.

"I like to help people solve problems," he said of his interest in the law. Although lawyers have a reputation for stoking dissent, "really most of what we do is resolve conflicts," he said.

"It really appeals to me to take a person who has a very bad situation personally or business-wise and help them get to a place where conflict is behind them."

Stanley has never strayed far from academia.

He has worked as an adjunct professor at Tulane University Law School since 1985 as a professor honing in on certain traits that make for a good lawyer, such as an analytic mind and the ability to see the various sides of a problem.

"To me," he said, "an impressive young lawyer is one that doesn't look to the answer that favors the client, but looks for the answer." •

— *Emilie Bahr*



# Molly Steele

**Position:** Curry and Friend partner

**Age:** 63

**Family:** husband, Tom Blackman; children, David, 27, Sally, 16

**Education:** bachelor's degree in political science, Stanford University; juris doctor, University of Texas School of Law

Though Molly Steele worked on *Texas Federal v. Texas Federal*, in which a company used an existing company's name, then wouldn't change it because "God told them not to" and hired someone to pray for eight hours a day, her most fulfilling case involved a Texas prisoner.

"He was a wheelchair patient and he needed a special stool to shower on, and the showers he used were hardly cleaned up the way they were supposed to be," Steele said.

As a result, the man contracted a sepsis-based disease called MARS, a "horribly contagious illness," she said, that left him with disfiguring scars. The disease could have been prevented with proper sanitation in the showers, and the scarring could have been prevented by taking the man to a doctor sooner.

"There was the question as to whether the state officials had taken him to the hospital soon enough and whether they had recognized the seriousness of the problem," Steele said.

The prisoner won the case and received financial compensation for the damages, but the biggest victory for Steele and her team was the changes in the prison after the ruling, including better medical and sanitation procedures.

"It helped him, but it also helped everyone in the prison," she said.

Steele, who is one of only two international arbitrators in New Orleans recognized by the American Arbitration Association's International Center for Dispute Resolution, said she became a lawyer because she "saw that people who were getting things done were lawyers."

Being able to speak Spanish also helps her in a port city such as New Orleans by being able to communicate with shipping and cruise line officials, oil and gas companies, and international hotel chains.

"This is the most interesting job anyone could have. I get to learn about the cement business. I get to learn about the movie-making business. I get to learn about the oil and gas business," she said. "I get to learn medicine; I get to learn science. We are so lucky to have such a variety of things to work on. I think that is what keeps me going. If you are at all intellectually curious, you will never get bored."

She also has adopted two children — David from Chili and Sally from Guatemala — and volunteers with Habitat for Humanity.

"I do things through our church," Steele said. "When you're married to a minister, you sort of do a lot things through the church community."•

— Travis Andrews

# David Strauss

**Position:** King, Krebs and Jurgens management committee member

**Age:** 42

**Family:** wife, Jenifer; children, Sebastian, 7, Zoe, 1

**Education:** bachelor's degree in history, University of Illinois; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

David Strauss is preparing to handle a third wave of Hurricane Katrina claims on behalf of a client that wrote homeowner insurance policies in the four-parish area impacted by the storm.

It's a challenge the 42-year-old Chicago native and Uptown resident is qualified to handle. Several years ago he led a group of lawyers from various firms in creating the operating framework to approach mass litigation that involved more than 700 cases, each with its own values and issues.

"It was expensive and hard ... and emotional," said Strauss, now a member of the management committee at King, Krebs and Jurgens.

His concept, which is said to be the first settlement of its kind in Louisiana, is now a model used by other insurer defendants facing a large number of Katrina-related claims.

Now, Strauss said he can laugh about the workload, which led to undisclosed financial settlements. The 14-hour days, long weekends in the office and all-nighters preparing briefs took him back to his time in law school.

"At my age, I'm not really interested in working all night, but we had to," Straus said. "If we hadn't come up with the framework, obviously many cases would still be pending and working through the courts. Because there were so many of them, it would be a physical impossibility to have had 800 trials in one courthouse over a short period of time. So yes, you would have a lot of folks, at least for the client I worked with, that would (still) be waiting for their day to get their dispute resolved."

Strauss said there was one positive to Katrina litigation: law firms that were accustomed to competing against each other were required by some insurers to work together for the greater good of the client.

He said that fostered relationships with lawyers outside his firm that normally would not exist.

"You put your guard down a little bit," Strauss said. "I got to meet a lot of lawyers that I think are really smart. It renewed my faith in the (Louisiana) bar."•

— Gary Estwick



Two-time honoree

# Max Swetman

**Position:** Swetman, Baxter, Massenburg attorney and co-founder

**Age:** 44

**Family:** wife, Margaret

**Education:** bachelor's degree in English Literature, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center; master's degree in epidemiology, Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine; pursuing master's degree in environmental science, Johns Hopkins University

Max Swetman recalled a land deal he was working on early in his career involving a development company that wanted to build a casino on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Before construction began, environmental hazards were found in the ground.

"The casino was still willing to buy the land and clean it up and spend whatever it had to do it," Swetman said. "I found the environmental aspect of the deal more interesting than the land deal itself."

From there, he found himself inching more into environmental work and issues involving the law.

Swetman has become known throughout the country regarding environmental issues because of his cases involving mold, air quality issues, dioxins and asbestos.

"I just kind of fell into this work," Swetman said. "A young vice president from a large corporation approached me because ... he wanted to be sure the operations of the company worldwide were being responsible environmentally more than they had to be."

The difficulty, Swetman said, was that the vice president was young, so it took Swetman and his team two years to secure a meeting with the board of directors.

"We were asking this company to spend a whole lot of money to protect its employees. And the CEO heard and said, 'Let's do it,' because it was a no-brainer."

Swetman said that sometimes it's the simple assistance offered to someone that can make the biggest difference.

He represented an elderly woman who wanted to sell her home after her husband died. A machine shop on the property presented a possible environmental hazard standing in the way of a sale.

Swetman obtained assistance from a few environmental experts who were able to help resolve the issue.

"It's not a big case or a giant win, but it made a difference for someone," he said. "It's the smaller things that can mean a lot more than the big things."

Swetman's experience has kept him busy as a speaker at events, including the Urban Storm Water Management Conference and the Green Legal Symposium, both held in New Orleans in 2010.

He also was the only litigator invited to speak at the Dioxin Conference in Tokyo in 2007, where he discussed the hazardous environmental toxins and the associated hazards. •

— Kyle Jackson

# Daniel Tadros

**Position:** Chaffee McCall partner

**Age:** 45

**Family:** wife, Katherine; children, Nicholas, 16, Alexia, 15, Chris, 11

**Education:** bachelor's degree in political science, University of Florida; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Dan Tadros is passionate about his Greek heritage, working with Greek ship owners and dealing with their problems, big or small.

"I'm passionate about my work because I love what I do," he said. "I spend a lot of time out on ships when there's an incident or problem, and I'm there to help the captain and crew."

Tadros grew up in Athens and can read, write and speak Greek fluently. He also claims to be the only defense attorney in New Orleans who can do so for Greek ship owners.

He has been a trial attorney for 20 years, concentrating on maritime defense and indemnity-type claims from personal injuries to environmental criminal matters. His other practice areas include cargo claims, collisions and defense against ship arrests.

About 90 percent of his clients are Greek ship owners and their insurers.

"I became a lawyer to help protect Greek ship owners, like my father and uncles who were principals in a Greek ship company while I was growing up," he said. "But I didn't want to be a ship owner after seeing what they went through, so law was the best option for me."

Although Tadros has tried many cases throughout his career, one he considers noteworthy involved Linda Jacobs as temporary administrator of the estate of Patrick Daniel Jacobs v. Northern King Shipping Co. and Sun Enterprises Ltd.

In that case, a U.S.-based surveyor died onboard the vessel Marina while it was in Colombia. The deceased surveyor's wife hired an attorney to sue the Greek ship operator.

Her lawyer claimed the ship's crewmembers, who were all Greek nationals, murdered her husband. Tadros represented the Greek ship operator Sun Enterprises and the case went to trial.

"The judge found us at fault, but not for the millions his wife was after," he said. "It was a minor finding of around \$200,000 for the crew's negligence in not stopping the surveyor from hurting himself. So the whole theory he was murdered was thrown out."

Outside the legal industry, Tadros plays soccer once a week in a co-ed league and serves as the assistant soccer coach for Country Day High School in Metairie. He is a member of the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Community of New Orleans, the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association and the American Hellenic Chamber of Commerce.

Last year, Tadros served as president of the Loyola University College of Law Alumni Association during which time he helped select the school's new dean. •

— Kerry Duff



## APRIL

<b>6</b>	<b>Health Care</b> List: Acute Care Hospitals
<b>13</b>	<b>Real Estate</b> List: Business Parks List: Architectural Firms
<b>20</b>	<b>Law Firms - In House Counsel</b> List: Law Firms
<b>27</b>	<b>Small Business</b> List: SBA Lenders <b>Jefferson Parish Business Report</b>

**Home Buyers Guide April 6**

## MAY

<b>4</b>	<b>Construction</b> List: Landscape Contractors <b>Fastest Growing Companies</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Banking/Financial Services</b> List: Banks/S & L Directors
<b>18</b>	<b>Insurance/Investments</b> List: Life Insurance Agencies
<b>25</b>	<b>Accounting/Small Business</b> List: Highest Paid Public Company Executives

## JUNE

<b>1</b>	<b>Health Care</b> List: HMOs/PPOs & Point of Service Plans
<b>8</b>	<b>Real Estate</b> List: Largest Office Buildings
<b>15</b>	<b>Public Companies</b> List: Public Companies
<b>22</b>	<b>Law Firms</b> List: Independent Caterers
<b>29</b>	<b>Dining &amp; Catering</b> List: French Quarter Hotels <b>Construction</b>

## JULY

<b>6</b>	<b>Education</b> List: Four-Year Colleges
<b>13</b>	<b>Banking/Financial Services</b> List: Credit Unions
<b>20</b>	<b>Energy</b> List: Engineering Firms
<b>27</b>	<b>Real Estate</b> List: Commercial Leasing Companies <b>Green Growth</b>

## AUGUST

<b>3</b>	<b>Health Care</b> List: Diagnostic Imaging Centers
<b>10</b>	<b>Technology</b> List: Computer Hardware Retailers
<b>17</b>	<b>Law Firms</b> List: Highest Paid Executives in State Government
<b>24</b>	<b>Insurance/Investments</b> List: Best Restaurants
<b>31</b>	<b>Ports &amp; Transportation</b> List: Deep-Draft Ports

## SEPTEMBER

<b>7</b>	<b>Holiday Party Planning</b> List: Largest Hotels
<b>14</b>	<b>Construction</b> List: General Contractors
<b>21</b>	<b>Education</b> List: Private Secondary Schools
<b>28</b>	<b>Banking/Financial Services</b> List: Savings & Loans

**Health Care Trends Sept. 28**

## Book of Lists

## OCTOBER

<b>5</b>	<b>Real Estate</b> List: Commercial Property Managers
<b>12</b>	<b>Health Care</b> List: Women Owned Businesses <b>Jefferson Parish Business Report</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>Law Firms</b> List: Law Firms
<b>26</b>	<b>Dining &amp; Catering</b> List: Louisiana & Gulf Coast Casinos <b>Accounting</b>

## NOVEMBER

<b>2</b>	<b>Insurance/Investments</b> List: Title Companies
<b>9</b>	<b>Energy</b> List: Oil & Gas Production Companies
<b>16</b>	<b>Technology</b> List: Printers <b>Tourism</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>Banking/Financial Services</b> List: Banks
<b>30</b>	<b>Ports/Transportation</b> List: Steamship Agencies

**Real Estate Trends November 30**

## DECEMBER

<b>7</b>	<b>Real Estate</b> List: Warehouse Space <b>Corporate Gift Guide Advertising Section</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Health Care</b> List: Employment Agencies
<b>21</b>	<b>Law Firms</b> List: Shopping Centers
<b>28</b>	<b>Year In Review</b> List: Seafood Supplies

Liz Baldini  
293-9213  
liz.baldini@nopg.com

Cassie Foreman  
293-9222  
cassie.foreman@nopg.com

Jeanne Farrell  
293-9731  
jeanne.farrell@nopg.com

Coco Evans Judd  
293-9288  
coco.judd@nopg.com

Jaclyn Meith  
293-9229  
jaclyn.meith@nopg.com

# Benjamin Varadi

**Position:** Common Ground Relief Legal Clinic managing partner; Varadi, Hair and Checki partner

**Age:** 33

**Family:** single

**Education:** bachelor's degree in social technology, Burlington College; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Benjamin Varadi's plan when he moved to New Orleans to attend Tulane University Law School was to stay in the city long enough to earn his degree and then leave.

While working as a volunteer for the Common Ground Relief Legal Clinic, which provides legal information to residents of the Lower 9th Ward, Varadi found himself committed to the city's recovery and decided to stay.

"One of the many things keeping me here is watching the city come back," Varadi said. "Every day I walk outside and see something improving."

Varadi's contribution to that recovery has included spearheading the clinic's expansion from a twice-weekly, information-only resource to a full-time legal service.

"It's all free," he said. "We try to supply representation to anyone in the community, which means that we are often a little bit of a legal emergency room."

Even after more than six years, Varadi said the clinic's primary focus continues to be related to Hurricane Katrina and the levee failures, working with people who are still trying to return home and dealing with issues such as contractor and family law.

"Most of the people that we deal with are people who are just trying to get back to their daily lives," Varadi said, "which means we help people with personal individual empowerment, helping folks leverage all of the opportunities that are here in the city."

Since Varadi became the managing attorney at Common Ground, the organization has served more than 120 people. The group started offering court representation in September.

At the same time, he has also started his own firm, Varadi, Hair and Checki, a general civil practice focused on small business, arts and entertainment.

Varadi has also volunteered with Dogs of the 9th Ward, an animal rescue operation, and devoted his free time to the J-Grad Graduate Student Retention Program with the Jewish Federation of New Greater New Orleans, a program that encourages graduate students in New Orleans to remain in the area after they earn their degree. •

— Garry Boulard



# FIND YOUR NEXT CONSTRUCTION PROJECT



## Act now and you'll receive:

- FREE online tour to identify products ideal for you
- 10 FREE Issues of the *Daily Journal of Commerce* newspaper



## BONUS

Subscribe to DJC and get a \$50 Lowe's Gift Card\*—FREE

## Get your FREE 10 day trial.

Phone: 504.293.9216

Online: <http://neworleanscitybusiness.com/tour>

## There is no risk and no obligation. Call today!

\*\$50 gift card is only for new one-year Daily Journal of Commerce paid subscribers. "LOWE'S" and the GABLE MANSARD DESIGN are registered trademarks and service marks of LF, LLC." Lowe's is not affiliated with The Dolan Company.



H2ZTOL



# Deborah Villio

**Position:** Leblanc Butler staff attorney

**Age:** 50

**Education:** bachelor's degree in general studies, University of New Orleans; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Deborah Villio walked out of law school in 1989 and almost immediately into a job prosecuting murder cases in then-New Orleans District Attorney Harry Connick's office. It was among the most violent periods in New Orleans' history and, for a young lawyer interested in criminal justice, among the most exciting places in the country to work.

In the 1990s, when Villio was just starting out, the city held the inauspicious title of the nation's homicide capital. The position was trial by fire for the young lawyer, then in her mid-20s, who likens the experience to that gotten by young doctors working at Charity Hospital.

Villio said she considers the job among the most intense, yet rewarding, of her career. It also served as a springboard to a 20-year career in the public sector.

After seven years in New Orleans, Villio moved on to the St. Tammany Parish District Attorney's office before moving to the same office in Jefferson Parish. In 1999, the Jefferson Parish Council tapped her to serve as the parish's first criminal justice director, a post where she was responsible for ensuring that the criminal justice system worked efficiently and effectively.

Among Villio's areas of focus was preventing teenagers from turning into career criminals. She helped launch a truancy center and programs targeting siblings of problem juveniles.

During that time, Villio became convinced of the correlation between blight and crime. Amid a post-Hurricane Katrina landscape of abandoned and otherwise derelict properties, the parish, with Villio's help, began regular code-enforcement sweeps. Villio took over as code-enforcement director in 2008, resigning in 2010 to stage a bid for a judgeship on the 24th Judicial District Court.

Following an unsuccessful run, Villio transitioned to the private sector, where she has worked on civil and business litigation cases, defended municipalities and police departments and worked on matters involving zoning and other land-use issues, an area of the law for which she developed expertise during her tenure in code-enforcement.

She says she's enjoying her work in the private sector, which she sees in many ways as an extension of the work she began decades ago.

"It's about making sure the system works and justice is served," she says. •

— *Emilie Bahr*



# Irving Warshauer

**Position:** Gainsburg, Benjamin, David, Meunier and Warshauer partner

**Age:** 61

**Family:** wife, Lynda; daughters, Jordan, 23, Taylor, 20

**Education:** bachelor's degree in economics, University of North Carolina; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Winning for Irving Warshauer can be an emotionally taxing event. One of the more difficult cases he said he ever worked on involved a sophomore in high school.

"He was just a terrific kid, a great student, just had recently gotten to be an Eagle Scout," Warshauer said.

When following his parents on a family trip, he swerved to avoid a piece of retread tire, saw another car and attempted to swerve back when he lost control of the car.

"He was ejected, and he was just catastrophically brain damaged," he said.

What led to the lawsuit was the car company had ignored its mechanic's advice that the shock absorbers on the car had to be replaced.

"There was pretty strong evidence that they were negligent of not warning the family of this young guy," he said.

The case became an issue of causation: how much did the shock absorbers factor into wreck and what were the chances the accident would have happened anyway?

Warshauer said his team bought an identical vehicle and videotaped a professional driver re-creating the accident with good shock absorbers.

He won the case.

"They settled on the eve of trial, and it was satisfying in that we were able to recover, in this case, the money that the parents would need to make sure he was properly taken care of," Warshauer said.

But that didn't make it any easier.

"It was an extremely challenging case from a professional standpoint," he said. "But it was really a difficult emotional case, because this young kid was just an outstanding young man and his life had been so tragically altered by this."

He also was the lead trial attorney in a class action lawsuit involving a refinery's discharge of untreated and contaminated wastewater into the Mississippi River that was drawn into the St. Bernard Parish water system and was recently appointed as the co-lead trial counsel for plaintiffs in federal litigation related to a recent discharge of liquid waste material into the Pearl River.

"(My career is) helping people who need help and the only place they can get the type of help they need is through the legal system," he said. "It's not a perfect system, but it's the only system we have, and some people really truly need legal representation."

He also helps in the community by serving on the board of directors for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Louisiana, where he served as president from 2005-06, and as president of the Audubon Area Zoning Association. •

— Travis Andrews

New Orleans  
**CITY BUSINESS**

2 0 1 2

LEADERSHIP

in  
**LAW**

s p o n s o r e d   b y :

*1792: The year Kentucky became a state, and the namesake of our handcrafted, small batch 8 year-old bourbon. With a taste as rich as the heritage of bourbon's birthplace, 1792 consistently receives high praise from the most prestigious whiskey reviewers and publications.*

1792

# A BOURBON OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

## 92.5 Rating

"In a herd of any 30 random bourbons, this one would stand out by nose alone. A delightful and by no means understated degree of charm. Fabulously different and wholly adorable."

— Jim Murray's Whisky Bible 2010

## Score 89

**Silver Medal: Highly Recommended**

"Deep amber color. Aromas of honeyed fruit cake and chocolate covered cherries follow through on a soft entry to a dryish medium-to-full body with caramelized nuts and exotic peppercorn notes. Finishes with a nice ginger and spice accented fade with noticeable heat. Serve with a splash."

— Beverage Tasting Institute



Distilled and Bottled by Barton Distilling Company, Bardstown, KY. 46.85% alc/vol (93.7 proof) Please Drink Responsibly

New Orleans  
**CITY BUSINESS**

2012

LEADERSHIP

in  
**LAW**

sponsored by:

Protector of the young  
and innocent.

Introducing the all-new 2012 M-Class.



**THE 2012 M-CLASS**  
AN IIHS TOP SAFETY PICK  
STARTING AT  
**\$48,990\***

They're not passengers, they're your family. The M-Class helps look after them. In a fraction of a second, it can check blind spots, scan the road for trouble ahead and alert you if it detects that you're drowsy.\*\* In the time it takes to read this ad, it will have performed more active safety measures than some cars will in their entire lifetime. See your authorized Mercedes-Benz dealer for a test drive today. [MBUSA.com/M-Class](http://MBUSA.com/M-Class)



**Mercedes-Benz**  
The best or nothing.

**Mercedes-Benz of New Orleans**

**3727 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Metairie, LA (504) 456-3727**

\*MSRP for a 2012 ML 350 4MATIC excludes all options, taxes, title, registration, transportation charge and dealer prep. Options, model availability and actual dealer price may vary. 2012 ML 350 4MATIC shown at \$49,710 with optional Iridium Silver metallic paint. \*\*Optional equipment described. No system, regardless of how advanced, can overcome the laws of physics or correct careless driving. Please always wear your seat belt. ©2012 Authorized Mercedes-Benz Dealers For more information, call 1-800-FOR-MERCEDES, or visit [MBUSA.com](http://MBUSA.com).