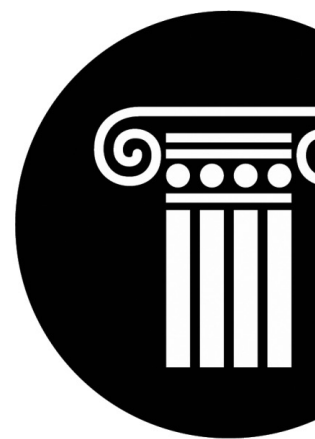


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The attorney for this advertisement is John W. Houghtaling, II,
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LAW

INTRODUCTION



Christian Moises
News Editor

Professionalism and standards.

These are areas the New Orleans CityBusiness Leadership in Law Class of 2013 know a lot about — and many times set the bar for their colleagues to meet.

In the ninth year of the program, which recognizes the area's leading legal professionals based on their career and community achievements, honorees discuss their most challenging cases and stories of how they ended up in the legal profession.

Many of this year's honorees say the constant introduction to new issues and the challenges they involve are the biggest motivators to seeing their clients to victory.

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

From energy litigation to pro bono work, employee benefits to medical lawsuits, the specialties of our 2013 honorees run the gamut. Many have argued cases that have paved the way for future rulings or fought for standards that have had a profound impact of the general practice of law. Several have set legal precedents and laid the framework for business to be conducted in the region.

Nine honorees are being recognized for a second time: Kay Baxter, Peter Butler, Mark Cunningham, Dana Douglas, John Galloway, Stephen Kreller, Harry Rosenberg, Stuart Smith and Peter Sperling.

Christopher Mora, Robert Kerrigan and Fredrick Preis join our Leadership in Law Hall of Fame for being honored

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three times.

All but seven of this year's honorees graduated from a Louisiana law school, with 20 earning their juris doctor from Tulane University Law School, 11 from Loyola University College of Law, 10 from Louisiana State University's Paul M. Hebert Law Center and two from Southern University Law Center.

Those are encouraging figures, showing our law community is committed to staying in the area and helping the region grow. Many honorees are not from south Louisiana, but say the city captivated them after attending law school here.

CityBusiness thanks each of them for their professional and civic efforts, and we hope reading their stories will convince you to nominate a colleague or colleagues who deserve to be recognized as a Leadership in Law honoree next year.

The nomination form for the 2014 event is already posted on our website, www.neworleanscitybusiness.com.

Congratulations to the Leadership in Law Class of 2013. •

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.

2013

Christopher Mora
Robert Kerrigan
Fredrick Preis

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.

Congratulations

Alden Kellogg

*Associate General Counsel
for Peoples Health*

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Jennifer Green
2012



James Klick
2011



Leonard Davis
2010



Steven Herman
2010



Brian Katz
2009



Steven Lane
2007, 2006, 2005



Russ Herman
2006, 2007



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Herman, Herman and Katz, L.L.C., has had many of our attorneys on the roster of *CityBusiness'* Leadership in Law Class for many years. We're proud of the hard-working and fresh-thinking attorneys that inspire us all with their eagerness to work toward justice for all.

Congratulations to all the inductees in the 2013 Leadership in Law Class.

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Ernestine Gray

Position: Orleans Parish Juvenile Court chief judge

Age: 67

Family: husband, James Gray; children, Cheryl, 44, James III, 42

Education: bachelor's degree in political science, Spelman College; juris doctor, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

If it takes a village to raise a child, then Judge Ernestine Gray would be the town architect.

As chief judge of Orleans Parish Juvenile Court, it's Gray's job to design the best possible family situation for a child to live in when one or both parents are unable to provide that care themselves.

"When we have an opportunity to reunite children with their families or get them adopted, those are the happy kinds of cases," Gray said.

Many of the cases that come to Gray involve families under stress, and she puts in 80-hour weeks advocating for these families' best interests. In her 27 years on the bench, Gray has worked to improve the laws and courts that serve children and families at the local, state and national level.

Her experiences compelled her to take on an advocacy role. She has been involved with nearly two dozen organizations and served as president of two national groups — the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association Board of Trustees. Being the spokeswoman for those organizations provided her with the opportunity to tour the country to see how courts in other communities deal

with the comparable issues.

"My hope is that I've been an unwavering advocate for kids and their well being, and a person who would go anywhere and everywhere to talk about that," she said.

Gray found her inspiration for pursuing the law in her hometown of Orangeburg, S.C., where she met a lawyer who was active in the civil rights movement.

"I saw the law as an opportunity to help people improve their lives," she said. "That was my motivation."

Nine years out of law school, she ran for and won the judgeship. She took the bench in 1984.

In working with juveniles, Gray sees cases involving children who have been taken from their families and placed in foster care. Her goal is to give parents the resources they need to get their children back. If she is convinced the parents can't do right by their children, she makes the decision to terminate their rights and seek out an adoptive family. Even in cases of abusive parents, the decision is never an easy one, Gray said.

"You realize you are severing what should be the natural bond," she said. "I try to remember that on every side, there's somebody losing."•

— *Autumn Cafiero Giusti*



Nancy Konrad

Position: Jefferson Parish Juvenile Court judge

Age: 71

Family: children, Courtney, 45, Gordon "Rob," 43, Shawn, 39; seven grandchildren

Education: bachelor's degree in elementary education, Loyola University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

The first female judge in Jefferson Parish almost didn't end up pursuing a legal career. Nancy Konrad's original plan was to be a teacher, but she ultimately decided to follow in her father's footsteps.

"My father was an attorney and since I did not like student teaching, he said, 'Why don't you try law school?'" Konrad said. "It was like I found my niche."

Konrad has served as the parish's Juvenile Court judge for 33 years.

"It is a great honor and a serious responsibility," she said. "Today it is totally insignificant. There are so many women judges now."

Konrad has presided over cases involving children who are neglected and abused, those with school-related problems and those who are not receiving the proper educational services.

"I think the most challenging cases we have are those involving children that are neglected and abused and trying to find the best balance between the rights of the parent and the best interest of the child."

Throughout her career, Konrad has been a part of numerous changes and initiatives where she has been influential in drafting legislation and helping navigate the lawmaking process. She served as chairwoman of the Children's Code Project, a committee to compile

and rewrite all substantive and procedural laws affecting juvenile court jurisdiction.

"The Children's Code Project was designed to bring together all of the laws affecting children in the state," she said. "It brought all of the laws together in one book."

She was also part of Louisiana's Juvenile Justice Reform Initiative, which brought the Missouri model for detention facilities to Louisiana.

"The Missouri model is a therapeutic model rather than a penal model," she said. "It is now a nationally recognized method for juvenile justice reform."

Konrad, who is retiring in 2014, said she hopes to leave a lasting mark on the legal community, "a real emphasis on juvenile justice as a way of changing communities through changing behavior so at-risk children can become productive members of society."

In addition to her duties as judge, Konrad is involved in numerous organizations including the Children's Trust Fund, the Children's Code Committee of the Louisiana State Law Institute, the Jefferson Parish Children and Youth Planning Board, the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and the Women's Leadership Council of the Greater New Orleans United Way. •

— *Jennifer Nall*



Leslie Shoebottom

Position: Loyola University College of Law associate professor
Family: husband, Jon Robinson; children, Connor, 19, Bryce, 16, Grant, 14
Education: bachelor's degree in nursing, University of Texas Medical Branch; juris doctor, University of Houston Law Center; master's degree in law, Tulane University Law School

Leslie Shoebottom loves dogs.

The Loyola University College of Law associate professor has earned national attention for her research regarding police German shepherds and whether their use as an investigatory tool is a violation of the Fourth Amendment. She has also written two briefs for cases pending before the U.S. Supreme Court related to that issue.

"My interest involves the K-9 sniffs, the investigative technique of using specially-trained dogs to detect contraband," said Shoebottom, who did insurance defense work at Phelps Dunbar before joining the Loyola faculty more than two decades ago. "I am primarily concerned with the intrusiveness of bringing drug detection dogs up to a person's home to smell around the front door without a permit."

Shoebottom adds that she has no objection to a K-9 search that is done with a warrant.

"It's when it is done without a warrant by a dog that is also trained for apprehension, that concerns me," she said, adding that when a Muslim suspect may be confronted, the moment takes on an unexpected cultural implication.

"Exposure to K-9 saliva for some Muslims is highly offensive," she said, "which means that there are a lot of considerations that no one is thinking about."

But Shoebottom's primary inspiration for her K-9 research comes from a love for the Fourth Amendment.

"In many respects, it is the most ignored amendment because people assume they will never need its protection, that is only pertains to criminals," she said. "But the Fourth Amendment is what makes us comfortable when we get home and close the door, not having to worry about an authority figure busting that door down."•

— Garry Boulard



IN-HOUSE COUNSEL

Alden Kellogg

Position: Peoples Health associate general counsel
Age: 40
Family: wife, Rachel Smith Kellogg; children, Anne Frances, 4, Carson, 3 months
Education: bachelor's degree in political science, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, Southern University Law Center

When Alden Kellogg joined Peoples Health in 2005, he was one of two employees in the company's legal department. The department's role was not fully developed, and Kellogg soon was the only person in it.

"I've been with (Peoples Health's) legal department from its infancy and set up the customs and procedures: What we do, what we don't do, what services we send outside for others to perform, what core competencies we keep on the inside to be the experts we need to be," Kellogg said. "A lot of our processes and interaction with other departments are based on what I put together back then and, now, in 2013."

With 11 years of experience in health care law, Kellogg serves as Peoples Health's corporate counsel, identifying and resolving legal issues affecting the company's business operations, including health care compliance and general commercial law, and managing outside counsel. He also handles judge cases relating to Medicare appeals.

Kellogg has been instrumental in negotiating high-value managed care contracts with large health systems, pharmaceutical management companies and

behavioral health companies, as well as having assisted the company in its shareholder buyout of Tenet Health Systems.

Since the inception of Peoples Health's legal department, Kellogg has overseen the day-to-day legal operations of a company that has grown from 325 employees to more than 800.

He recently guided Peoples Health's clinical line of business toward the "Medical Home" model of care, in which the company will become a medical provider and operate medical care clinics. Kellogg is handling the start up of the clinics, assisting executives in the organization of the business model.

Kellogg also helped in the acquisition of the Stanocola Medical Clinic in Baton Rouge and said clinics will soon open on the West Bank, North Shore and in Mid-City.

"We're going to be a resource out there just as any provider of health care services is, and we work alongside other health care providers as any other doctor, facility or clinic would," Kellogg said. "Literally, Peoples Health will be a medical provider"•

— Whitney Pierce Santora



Kathryn Lichtenberg

Position: Entergy Corp. vice president and deputy general counsel-regulatory law

Age: 59

Family: husband, Joseph

Education: bachelor's degree in romance languages and literature, Princeton University; master's degree in social work, Tulane University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Practicing utility law makes Entergy attorney Kathryn Lichtenberg feel as though she's sitting at the intersection of business, accounting, strategy, finance, law and public policy.

"Utility law is an expansive practice that is all encompassing and has very interesting dimensions," she said. "To be an effective advocate, you need a good command of the facts and law and work hard to understand what each case is really about. You also have to be able to explain clearly why your position is the right one, and that getting the right result will truly make a difference. Otherwise you've presented nothing but a collection of facts and rules."

Lichtenberg has been practicing utility law since 1987 when she was at Monroe and Lemann. She was the first woman in the firm's utility practice and represented Louisiana Power and Light Co. She joined Entergy's legal team in 1995 as a midlevel attorney and was promoted to her current position, vice president and deputy general counsel of the utility's regulatory division, in 2007.

She supervises 19 attorneys and 13 administrative staff members who focus on regulatory matters such as retail rates set by regulators at the city and state level

as well as those that oversee Entergy's subsidiaries in Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas. She also advises on matters such as special tariff filings, prudence and fuel reviews and cases pending in court.

In the past 10 years, she has handled regulatory cases before the New Orleans City Council, Louisiana Public Service Commission and the Public Utility Commission of Texas. She also argued a regulatory case for Entergy before the Louisiana Supreme Court.

She said her most memorable legal experience was being a member of the team that got Entergy New Orleans back on its feet after Hurricane Katrina.

"Hurricane Katrina was devastating to the company and its customers, so being part of that team was an incredible undertaking that involved regulatory proceedings and operational and financial plans," she said. "I worked with the city council and its advisers, state officials, financial people, bankruptcy lawyers, operational teams and the team that worked to get the Community Development Block Grant funding made available through the federal government and state of Louisiana."

Lichtenberg recently joined the Regional Anti-Defamation League's board of directors. •

— Kerry Duff



Christopher Mora

Position: Region Legal Service Office Southeast officer-in-charge, U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps

Age: 38

Family: wife, Filomena; children, Peter, 7, Sofia, 4, Francesco, 1

Education: bachelor's degree in political science, University of New Orleans; juris doctor, University of Pennsylvania Law School; master's degree in public administration, Harvard University; master's degree in national security and strategic studies, U.S. Naval War College

When tall ships from around the world dropped anchor in the Mississippi River during Fleet Week last spring, the riverfront spectacle placed a spotlight on New Orleans and gave crowds an excuse to get out. The ships visited New Orleans as part of the three-year national bicentennial commemoration of the War of 1812.

But for all of its fun, the event required a substantial amount of behind-the-scenes legal planning to make sure everything went off without a hitch. As the event's legal adviser, that's where Cmdr. Christopher Mora came in.

He was responsible for working with city officials, nonprofits and U.S. and foreign military bodies on matters ranging from ethics to maritime and criminal law. So when one of the Coast Guard ships bumped into a pier near the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, Mora handled it. If someone tripped and fell while touring one of the ships, he stepped in.

Handling such a broad scope of issues is nothing new to Mora, the officer-in-charge for the Region Legal Service Office Southeast of the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps.

Mora's practice spans more than a dozen areas, in-

cluding construction, criminal, disaster preparedness and response, real estate and environmental issues.

As far as rules and procedures go, practicing law in the armed forces is not much different from doing so in private practice, Mora said. However, military attorneys need to be prepared to make their skills available in a war zone.

"The main thing that is different is that it's not a business model, it's a government model," he said. "It's not driven by a profit so much as national security and defense."

In one of his most significant achievements, Mora served as on-site legal counsel in the transition efforts to close the Naval Support Activity New Orleans base in September 2011 and prepare for its redevelopment into the \$750 million Federal City complex.

Mora has also taken on a substantial amount of pro bono work. Because his father's family is part of the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, he has provided more than 1,600 hours of pro bono legal service to the group and spearheaded a major revision of its legal system to modernize its laws while preserving its culture. •

— Autumn Cafiero Giusti



Kay Baxter

Position: Swetman Baxter Massenburg partner

Family: single; children, Amy and Colby

Education: bachelor's degree in history, University of Arkansas at Little Rock; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

When Kay Baxter first started practicing law more than 15 years ago, people who saw her entering a courtroom often mistook her for the court reporter.

While she rarely runs into those kinds of gender-based assumptions anymore, Baxter says the stereotypes haven't disappeared altogether. Throughout her career, she has helped younger female attorneys navigate their way around the challenges to achieve success.

"The legal profession has been guided by certain principles that were established by male attorneys," said Baxter, a partner and founder of Swetman Baxter Massenburg, which has offices in New Orleans and Hattiesburg, Miss. "To help younger women come into their own and figure out how to fit into the practice of law has been exciting for me."

At the start of Baxter's career, local attorneys Lynn Luker and Janet McDonald were mentors from whom she learned the most, she said.

"I learned to be graceful under fire, to keep my composure, that maybe I had to work a little harder and be a little nicer than a male attorney," Baxter said, adding that she feels, even today, women in law are criticized more often than men for being aggressive.

A litigation specialist whose client roster includes Fortune 500 companies, Baxter is a recognized expert

in Chinese drywall cases. In the spring of 2012, she was one of just 100 people nationwide who participated in the inaugural certification program of the Litigation Management Institute. The event brought together all components of a business litigation team — corporate lawyers, in-house counsel and representatives of the insurance industry — to share information, Baxter said.

Among her most recent cases was one involving a client who contacted the firm only three months before a scheduled trial and "a well-known and well-respected plaintiff's firm on the other side," she said.

"Most people thought this was going to be a losing proposition and that the client was looking at an expensive trial," Baxter said.

Instead, she succeeded in getting the case dismissed on a motion for summary judgment.

A longtime member of the National Association of Women Lawyers, Baxter led the organization's National Night of Giving last fall to benefit the Crescent House Healing & Empowerment Center. She volunteers as head judge for Moot Court competitions at Tulane and Loyola law schools and is a frequent speaker at Loyola's Orientation on Professionalism program for incoming law students. •

— *Sonya Stinson*



Terrence Brennan

Position: Deutsch, Kerrigan & Stiles partner

Age: 59

Family: wife, Nancy; children, Sean, 25, Casey, 20

Education: bachelor's degree in architecture, Kansas State University; juris doctor, University of Kansas School of Law

As the head of Deutsch, Kerrigan & Stiles' construction department, Terrence Brennan prides himself on his knowledge of and familiarity with all aspects of the building industry.

But his need to understand everything about how a client does business became more important after the Jazzland Theme Park declared bankruptcy in 2002.

"The developer didn't have the money to pay my client, who was owed about \$7 or \$8 million," he said.

So Brennan dug in for his client, Broadmoor, to recover what the construction company was owed.

"It was such an intense case that I actually moved my office into the contractor's office for three months," Brennan said. His efforts resulted in a successful recovery for the company. "Essentially we set up a war room that allowed me to have access to all the documents and information that we needed to get the case ready. That, plus interviewing and preparing the employees, getting them ready for trial."

Representing owners, contractors, engineers, architects and other major players in the construction field, Brennan said he often goes to bat for clients in cases which they are being portrayed in a negative light in the media.

Early in his career Brennan helped to successfully de-

fend Modjeski and Masters after a driver who collided head-on with another car on the Crescent City Connection claimed the engineering firm had been negligent in failing to design a median to prevent crossover accidents.

Nearly 25 years later, Brennan found himself in the middle of another media-sensitive case when two workers fell to their deaths while working on the Huey P. Long Bridge expansion. Last year a Baton Rouge jury awarded \$13 million to the surviving family members of one of the workers, a verdict he is now appealing in Baton Rouge's First Circuit Court.

Brennan said that because of the big money involved and the incidence of injury, construction litigation has become almost commonplace.

"I can drive around town and point out the different buildings that have been involved in some kind of litigation," he said. "And sometimes it seems as though it is almost every building."

In his free hours, Brennan has served as a member of Ursuline Academy's board of trustees and chairman of the school's building and grounds committee, helping to reconstruct the campus that was significantly damaged when the levees failed during Hurricane Katrina. •

— *Garry Boulard*



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Terrel Broussard

Position: Montgomery Barnett partner

Age: 67

Family: wife, Hattie; sons, Jeremy, 32, Matthew, 31

Education: bachelor's degree in political science, University of Louisiana at Lafayette; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Throughout his 40-year career, Terrel Broussard has tried and won his fair share of cases. At its onset, Broussard, a partner at Montgomery Barnett, coordinated activities for the NAACP's school integration activities. Since then, he has represented clients in medical, personal injury, employment, insurance, business and construction cases.

Perhaps one of the most memorable problems he helped solve was on behalf of Dillard University. Broussard helped the university reclaim property that was improperly sold during a tax sale. The case spanned several years and eventually went before the Louisiana Supreme Court.

Today, he works with two associates on Montgomery Barnett's business side. He also teaches a course on the legal environment of business at Dillard University twice a week.

Broussard's experience in transit law landed him the chief counsel job for Transit Management of Southwestern Louisiana, a corporation that managed the daily operations of the Regional Transit Authority.

His employment law expertise led to his appointment as a mediator for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Alternative Dispute Resolution Commission, for which he mediated hundreds of cases.

After Hurricane Katrina, Broussard was appointed to the Louisiana Recovery Authority's Housing Task Force and the Community Support Organization of the Unified New Orleans Plan. He also led a Montgomery Barnett team representing the Louisiana Tax Commission in the management of more than 1,700 property tax reappraisal appeals after the storm.

More recently, he helped Orleans Parish Hospital Service District A acquire the Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital site in eastern New Orleans.

In addition to his professional commitments, Broussard serves on the board of directors for Catholic Charities, where he oversees the Social Ministries of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. He is also an ordained deacon within the Archdiocese of New Orleans and has served in this capacity for more than 20 years at St. Peter Claver Catholic Church, where he teaches, preaches and conducts online and weekly Bible studies.

"There's this prayer, the Lawyer's Prayer," he said. "Lord let me practice your law first that everyone shall see the kind of godly lawyer you want me to be," he said. "It's OK to win a case, but you shouldn't lose your soul in trying to win a case, and that to me is finding proper balance."•

— *Nayita Wilson*



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Tracey Bryan

Position: Gauthier, Houghtaling & Williams attorney

Age: 45

Family: children, Nathan, 11, Olivia, 9, Jack, 6, Stephen, 4

Education: bachelor's degree in political science, Newcomb College of Tulane University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Tracey Bryan has been representing severely injured adults, children and families for 14 years. Between 2009 and 2011, she recovered \$13.5 million for clients in settlements or judgments.

What drives her success, she said, is truly caring about her clients and their families.

Bryan's first significant brain injury case, *Cruze vs. Fleetline Inc.*, was in 1999. The case involved a father and son who were traveling in a small pickup on Interstate 10 that collided with an 18-wheeler. The son, who was driving, was uninjured. The father, however, was severely injured.

Before the accident, the father was the sole breadwinner for the family. Afterward, they had the challenge of caring for him without his income. He came home from the hospital in the back of a pickup because they had no insurance for an ambulance. His sons carried him from room to room and bathed him on a lawn chair in the bathtub.

Three years after the accident, Bryan proved through an accident reconstruction expert that the 18-wheeler was at fault and the case settled for an undisclosed large sum of money. As a result of the settlement, the family moved to a handicapped-accessible home

equipped with a lift and special shower. It also provided them with medical care and a handicap-accessible van.

"It was the first case where I truly understood that what I did could literally change the family's trajectory of life for the better," Bryan said.

Bryan's 6-year-old son Jack was born with hypoplastic left heart syndrome, a condition in which one of the heart's four chambers is missing. She said it has changed her perspective and allowed her to better identify with parents of chronically ill and injured children and the cost of lifetime care.

"Jack's had seven operations, three of which were open heart surgeries," she said. "It's had a profound effect on me and our whole family. It also makes you prioritize your life and recognize what's important."

In honor of Jack's first birthday, Bryan started the Jack of Hearts Foundation, an organization that raises money to fund scientific and clinical research to help increase the survival rate of children undergoing cardiac surgery and to extend the life expectancies of children born with hypoplastic syndromes.

Bryan is president of the foundation, which has raised \$75,000 for research.•

— *Kerry Duff*



Peter Butler

Position: Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson partner

Age: 50

Family: wife, Kendall; children, Peter, 21, Adair, 17

Education: bachelor's degree in management, Tulane University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Peter Butler Jr. has been a fixture in the field of commercial and financial litigation in southeast Louisiana since 1989.

Butler, 50, a partner at the New Orleans office of Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson LLP, says the firm's initials, BSW, are an acronym for the firm's philosophy.

"I like to think of it as, 'You know what walks LLP,'" he said.

Butler's no-nonsense approach has been a staple throughout his career, which at times has led him to unexpected success in the face of tough odds.

"I remember a case a number of years ago where a local employer allegedly promised jobs for its employees if they would help lobby the state to secure tax credits," Butler said.

The supposed agreement was that the employees would have guaranteed jobs for the duration of the tax breaks, but they were fired after the state granted the tax breaks despite what they believed was a prom-

ise by the employer. Butler took the case and argued that the employees' termination was a violation of that employment contract.

"Everyone said I was wrong," he said. "The other side said it, the people inside my firm and other lawyers."

But Butler won the seminal case on appeal while suffering with a 105-degree fever during oral arguments.

"In my line of work, everybody sues everybody," Butler said. "But losing sucks, and I refuse to lose. Leadership is not being afraid to challenge existing jurisprudence even when everyone is telling you that you're wrong."

Butler developed an interest in law at an early age.

"I was always fascinated with being able to discern issues using prohibitive laws and enabling laws," he says. "The law serves a critical need in our society, and I enjoy fighting the good fight."•

— *Mason Harrison*



Kaye Courington

Position: Courington, Kiefer & Sommers founding member

Age: 54

Family: children, Kathryn, 16, Read, 18

Education: bachelor's degree in English and communications, Sophie Newcomb Memorial College; master's degree in upper education administration, Tulane University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Although Kaye Courington has tried hundreds of notable cases in Louisiana, Texas and Mississippi over the past 25 years, the one she considers most memorable involved a death threat against her and the other defense attorneys involved in the case.

"I was defending a company being sued for an alleged mass asbestos exposure in 1998 in Fayette, Miss., when I was told that someone in town was going to kill all the defense attorneys involved in the case," Courington said. "It was extremely scary and hard to stay in that town, especially because I had a 1-year-old and 3-year-old at home at the time. I'll never forget it."

Courington's practice focuses on insurance defense and toxic torts. She is a founding member of Courington, Kiefer & Sommers, a majority woman-owned law firm started in 2011. The firm has 15 lawyers and offers services in litigation, mediation, national and regional coordination, and defense of personal injury cases including worker's compensation, the Jones Act, longshore and mass torts.

"We pride ourselves on being a diverse defense law firm," she said. "The last three people that became

members are minorities, which is unusual. Other attorneys we work with — whether plaintiffs, defense attorneys or even judges — are also diverse now, so it makes sense to have a law firm that reflects New Orleans and the reality of today."

When the firm was started, Courington initiated its Nonprofit of the Month program. Employees and clients of the firm suggest local charities once a month that need support, then the firm picks one and sends a donation.

"As a business, we have a little more consumer spending power than an individual," she said. "We buy our coffee from a Honduran orphanage, and the firm party is part of the Susan G. Koman Walk. We try to spend corporate money in ways that improve the world and we're proud of that."

Outside the firm, Courington serves as vice president of the Council for Litigation Management, a new organization for defense attorneys, in-house counsel and their clients.

"Members of the organization will work together to manage litigation better," she said. "It's fun to be in on the start of something new."•

— *Kerry Duff*



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Michelle Craig

Position: Adams and Reese partner

Age: 35

Family: single

Education: bachelor's degree in English, Louisiana Scholars College at Northwestern State University of Louisiana; juris doctor, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Take just about any workplace no-no — sexual harassment, badmouthing the boss, gossiping about a company sale that's still under wraps — and chances are, it's played out on social media, email or text.

That's why Michelle Craig is never bored at work. As a partner and labor and employment attorney with Adams and Reese, she helps companies resolve workplace issues and keep their policies and procedures in order, which can be a challenge in a society where technology puts everything on display.

The electronic world has made operations difficult for employers because they can't police everything that's shared through social media. Meanwhile, employees are doing and saying things they shouldn't in a public forum, Craig said. She has seen employees post information on Twitter that's in violation of Securities and Exchange Commission rules and employers engage in discriminatory practices online.

Craig's clients include schools, fast food companies, offshore firms, home improvement retailers, entrepreneurs and other small and medium-sized businesses. She provided legal counsel for the National Association of African-Americans in Human Resources and helped Adams and Reese land a corporate retail outlet client

for its labor and employment matters.

Often, cultural differences can cause employers and employees to insult each other without realizing it. Craig encountered an example of that while talking to a business owner to get more information about an alleged sexual harassment claim.

"I was talking to him about the case, and he said, 'OK, no problem honey.' I told him, 'We can't go around saying 'honey.' So he said, 'No problem, darling.'"

The conversation demonstrated that even though it's more culturally acceptable to use terms of endearment in some parts of the country, those terms of endearment could be problematic in an employment setting matter because they can be taken out of context.

Craig co-founded and served as an executive member of the Urban League of New Orleans Young Professionals Chapter, which now has nearly 200 minority professionals as members. She also was one of the founding members of inNOLAvation, a group of professionals that works to help minorities turn their ideas into businesses, and co-founded DiversiTea, an organization that brings together college students and business owners of diverse backgrounds. •

— Autumn Cafiero Giusti



FIRM ASSOCIATED

TWO-TIME HONOREE

Mark Cunningham

Position: Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poitevent, Carrere & Denegre senior partner

Age: 45

Family: wife, Meredith; children, Alistair, 10, Virginia, 7, Pierre, 4

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

As a member of the white-collar criminal defense and litigation practice group at Jones Walker, Mark Cunningham handles many complex cases, mainly in the areas of anti-trust, export control and compliance, and commercial litigation.

One of the most unusual and fascinating legal matters he took on recently involved a former law clerk at a nonprofit law firm helping death penalty defendants. After Alexandria Marzano-Lesnevich, a Harvard University law student, decided to ditch her plans for a legal career and become a writer, she started penning articles about her work at the Louisiana Capital Assistance Center during a 2003 summer internship. She even wrote about her communications with clients and some of the legal strategies the LCAC used to defend them, Cunningham said.

"She was becoming a very accomplished author who was winning a lot of awards for her writing, but in doing that she was actually violating the confidences of the people that she promised to represent," Cunningham said.

Cunningham filed suit in federal court on behalf of the LCAC to obtain an injunction against Marzano-Lesnevich, who initially fought the case on

First Amendment grounds.

"At the end of the day, she agreed to the entry of a consent decree that resulted in her no longer being able to disclose client confidences," said Cunningham, noting that the case was resolved in 2012.

It also was the year Cunningham organized a pro bono criminal defense network among 17 local law firms when the Orleans Public Defenders Office, facing a well-publicized budget crisis, had to lay off a third of its attorneys.

Cunningham is president of the Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education, which promotes the teaching of civics, ethics and law-related subjects in elementary and secondary schools.

"We bring in lawyers and judges to the schools to work with classes, to teach different subjects and to provide real insight into how the legal system works and how it impacts the community and individual people's lives," he said.

The group also helps high schools throughout the state develop pre-law curriculum tracks and awards its Law Signature School recognition to those with outstanding performances. •

— Sonya Stinson



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Stevan Dittman

Position: Gainsburgh, Benjamin, David, Meunier & Warshauer partner

Age: 63

Family: wife, Nathalie Walker; son, Anderson, 27

Education: bachelor's degree in English, University of Wisconsin; master's degree in English, University of Michigan; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

The story of what happened after a Philippine passenger ferry collided with an oil tanker more than 25 years ago says a lot about Stevan Dittman's pertinacity.

"I have worked on this case since it was filed in 1988," Dittman said.

Regarded as the worst non-war maritime accident ever, the *Dona Paz* smashed into the *Vector*, which was carrying some 8,000 barrels of gasoline, causing an explosion that resulted in the death of more than 4,300 people.

"It had more than twice the fatalities than was on the *Titanic*," said Dittman, who served as plaintiff counsel on the case, representing the families of the dead, when he first joined Gainsburgh, Benjamin, David, Meunier & Warshauer.

"It has been something that has been with me since before I became a partner," he said, noting that through the years the case has subsequently been dismissed by several courts in Texas and at least twice in Louisiana. "We took appeals three times."

But now, a settlement is near.

That the *Dona Paz* case has been a lengthy one goes without saying. That it has been complicated makes it the kind of case upon which Dittman thrives.

"Maritime law is an exotic form of personal injury law," he said. "It has its own special rules and traditions, some of which go back hundreds of years to before the founding of our country."

And that attraction to the complexity of the law is rooted in Dittman's academic experience. He spent several years teaching English at the University of New Orleans before he decided to return to school and major in law.

He still teaches a course on maritime law at Tulane University Law School, has served as a former member of the Vestry for St. George's Episcopal Church in New Orleans and is president-elect of the Tulane University Law School American Inn of Court. •

— Garry Boulard



FIRM ASSOCIATED

TWO-TIME HONOREE

Dana Douglas

Position: Liskow & Lewis shareholder

Age: 37

Family: daughter, Charli, newborn

Education: bachelor's degree in social work, Miami University at Ohio; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

When Dana Douglas became a partner at Liskow & Lewis, she immediately counted it among her many successes. Having looked up to the lawyers and mentors at the firm, she was proud of her accomplishment.

"To be recognized as a partner among them has been very rewarding," Douglas said.

Douglas, who served as a clerk for U.S. District Court Judge Ivan Lemelle immediately after graduating from law school, has practiced at Liskow & Lewis for 12 years. She concentrates on commercial litigation, energy and intellectual property law. Her work with the energy industry has included representing clients in exploration and production disputes, land ownership and expropriation litigation, landowner/mineral lessee disputes, royalty-related litigation and marketing disputes.

"I like to think I've been successful in helping my clients find solutions to some of the issues that they've had in different areas of the energy industry," Douglas said.

Such successes include obtaining a dismissal in a redhibition action for a major oil and gas company, which would have held the business liable for a defective product. She also assisted another oil and gas

company in removing its brand from abandoned gasoline facilities throughout the state.

As co-chairwoman of the New Orleans Bar Association's Minorities in the Profession Committee, she hosted a legal clinic where lawyers donated an hour or two to answer questions one-on-one with residents of the Tremé community. Douglas and her fellow attorneys had the opportunity to guide residents toward resolutions of what they considered major concerns.

"We were able to resolve some of their issues within the 15 to 20 minutes we were there," Douglas said. "Sometimes that's all it takes."

If their problems were not resolved, clinic participants scheduled appointments for a more in-depth consultation.

"It (may be) small to an attorney, but it may look like a huge obstacle to the people it affects," she said.

Douglas also is on the board of Exodus Place New Orleans, which will sponsor a community center in Central City that will provide tutoring and extracurricular activities for students. •

— Whitney Pierce Santora



Dow Edwards

Position: Irwin Fritchie Urquhart & Moore member

Age: 51

Family: wife, Lisa; children, Daniel, 25, David, 22, Erica, 21, Jonathan, 20, Dow, 19

Education: bachelor's degree in business administration, Oklahoma Panhandle State University; juris doctor, Southern University Law Center

Dow Edwards typically avoids family cases because he has children of his own and knows it can be emotional. But he made an exception in 2004 when he took a pro bono case that involved a woman losing custody of her two young children. She didn't have visitation rights with the children, who were 3 and 4 at the time, Edwards said.

"This woman came to me desperate and I wanted to help her," Edwards said. "I asked the judge to reconsider his prior ruling, and at the end of the case, she was awarded custody of the children and her husband had visitation rights. Seeing the joy on her face when she got her kids back meant so much to me. ... I've tried many cases that impacted people and companies financially, but nothing has been more rewarding than this resolution."

Edwards' legal career is his third profession. He worked as a claims adjuster for Liberty Mutual Insurance Co. before becoming a paralegal. After that, he decided it was time to be the boss, so he went to law school, graduated in 2000 and spent a year serving as a judicial clerk for the Louisiana

Supreme Court.

He went to work for Lemle & Kelleher in 2001 and seven years later joined his current firm, Irwin Fritchie. He concentrates his practice on premises liability, railroad, insurance, casualty, complex litigation and products liability. His main focus is railroad litigation for Amtrak.

"My drive to be the best makes me work harder than other lawyers," he said. "Once I set my mind on something, I am uniquely focused on accomplishing that task."

Edwards has been chairman of the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board for the past two years and has served on the board for five years. He oversees administration of the board and makes sure the discipline system is functioning within the guidelines of Louisiana Supreme Court rules.

He is also chairman of the Langston Hughes Academy Charter School board of directors, where he ensures the school operates within its charter and oversees fundraising activities. •

— Kerry Duff



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John Galloway

Position: Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith director

Age: 65

Family: wife, Blanche; children, Trey, 46, Rob, 43

Education: bachelor's degree in arts and science, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Some of the most accomplished professionals often give credit to others who have aided their successful careers. John Galloway is among them.

"I just think that I've been blessed by having good, smart partners with a vision for growing our firm that was better than mine," Galloway says, referring to his organization's galloping expansion since its humble beginnings more than two decades ago.

Galloway joined six attorneys in 1987 to form Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith, which now has offices in seven states with more than 90 attorneys and a range of specialties, including insurance defense, professional liability defense, commercial litigation and maritime matters.

"Our clients kept asking us to open offices and expand in different areas," Galloway said. "We'd get a call from someone asking if we had an office here or there, and we'd say no. Then we'd be told that if we opened an office in a particular location, we'd receive business in that area."

Galloway said the relationship between his firm

and its clients is the result of his organization's philosophy.

"I believe in leading by example," he said. "People will follow you if your actions speak louder than words. I've been practicing law for more than 40 years doing litigation for businesses and insurance companies, and I believe you must be honest, work hard and be a positive thinker even in the face of adversity."

His outlook has led him to sponsor events for children with brain cancer. Hogs for the Cause is an annual pork roasting contest that raises money for pediatric oncology research.

Helping fellow attorneys and their clients as a volunteer arbitrator during fee disputes is also common for Galloway.

"Sometimes people have disagreements," he said, "and it's always better to see if we can resolve those issues before they end up heading to court. Sometimes that's possible and sometimes it's not, but it's worth taking a seat at the table."•

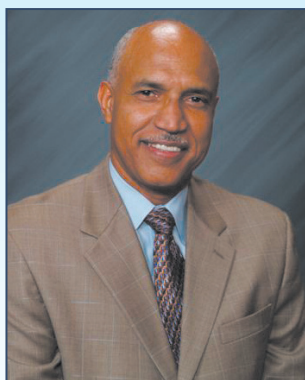
— *Mason Harrison*



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Charles Gay

Position: Adams and Reese partner

Age: 63

Family: wife, Chrissy; children, Kearney, 32, Eli, 24

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

Charles Gay successfully represented Michael Jackson in 2004 in *Joseph Thomas Bartucci Jr. v. Michael J. Jackson*, which involved the former pop star reportedly kidnapping and molesting a man during the World's Fair in New Orleans.

The story about Jackson was made up, Gay said, so the case was dismissed and a summary judgment was granted in favor of Jackson.

"It was nice to represent someone famous," he said. "One day I walked over to the courthouse for a motion, and there were TV cameras everywhere. And as soon as my name got listed as counsel for Jackson, I started receiving messages from people all over the world that idolized him. This really drew attention for a frivolous matter."

Gay has been an attorney for 37 years. He is experienced in general litigation, toxic torts, products liability and medical malpractice. He joined Adams and Reese in 1983 and serves as a member of the firm's pharmaceuticals and products liability team. His distinguished client roster includes tobacco giant Phillip Morris, Exxon Mobil, Ochsner and a number of public and privately held companies.

His considers his most challenging case *Gloria Scott v. The American Tobacco Co. Inc.*, a case

brought against multiple tobacco companies in 1994 on behalf of all Louisiana smokers seeking damages of \$15 billion for medical monitoring. The plaintiffs claimed the tobacco companies distorted public knowledge of the addictive qualities of nicotine.

Gay served as lead counsel for Phillip Morris. A jury trial was held in phases over three years, and the plaintiffs' claims for medical monitoring were denied.

In recent years, Gay has tried more than 15 major toxic torts, products liability and medical malpractice cases involving serious personal injury to successful defense verdicts before juries in Louisiana.

"I've learned over the years that while you have to be tough on behalf of clients, you always need to maintain humility," he said. "If you're too aggressive, you can appear arrogant and that's the last thing you want as a trial lawyer."

"You need to relate to people in a persuasive and trustworthy manner. People always talk about trial lawyers being aggressive and sharp, but that's a myth."

In the community, Gay supports the Ozanam Inn of New Orleans through donations of clothing, money and legal services to those in need. He also does pro bono work for his alma mater, De La Salle High School. •

— Kerry Duff




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Louis Gertler

Position: Gertler Law Firm partner

Age: 44

Family: wife, Debbie; sons, David, 16, Zachary, 13

Education: bachelor's degree in political science, Syracuse University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law school

Louis Gertler was just a few months out of law school when he found himself on the losing end of a personal injury case.

His client had tripped in a movie theater and injured her leg. When the case went to trial, the judge found Gertler's client 100 percent at fault for the accident. Gertler took the case to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, but lost in a 2-1 decision.

"I wanted to wave the white flag and tell my client the case wasn't worth taking to the Louisiana Supreme Court," Gertler said.

But his father, also an attorney and a partner in the family's law, convinced him otherwise.

"He told me you have an obligation to your client to fight it to the end," Gertler said.

He heeded his father's advice, and the Louisiana Supreme Court ended up unanimously reversing the trial court's decision, awarding Gertler's client full damages.

It may have been a small case, but it was a big accomplishment for a young lawyer to fight all the way to the state Supreme Court and win a reversal. And Gertler learned a lesson that continues to influence

the way he defends his clients today.

Today, he is a partner with the Gertler Law Firm in New Orleans, where he specializes in personal injury, plaintiff product liability and some labor law cases. He also continues to work alongside his father, continuing a long line of lawyers in the family.

One of the cases that would define Gertler's career came five years into his practice. As the leader of a group of Louisiana law firms, he helped obtain a judgment against the tobacco industry that required its companies to establish a \$241 million, 10-year smoking cessation program for state citizens. Gertler said he spent about 80 percent of his time working on the tobacco case for five years.

"It was the kind of learning experience most lawyers only dream about," Gertler said. "As a young lawyer, I got to see some of the best lawyering in America."

Gertler has put his negotiating skills to use outside the courtroom. For two years, he served as president of the Hurstville Neighborhood Association, where he played a key role in resolving development issues that cropped up in the Uptown neighborhood. •

— Autumn Cafiero Giusti



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FIRM ASSOCIATED

Steven Griffith Jr.

Position: Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz shareholder

Age: 37

Family: wife, Neely; daughters, Elise, 4, Joy, 2 months

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

One of Steve Griffith's most rewarding legal cases netted zero billable hours — at least for him.

Several years ago, he took on a pro bono case on behalf of a woman who had hit a brick wall trying to collect her final paycheck from a former employer.

"We were able to successfully obtain a judgment against (the employer) for not just the original amount of the wages that were owed, but also a penalty that was equivalent to almost six months of salary," said Griffith, a shareholder at Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell and Berkowitz. "It was really a lot of money for (the client) because she was struggling to make ends meet and had difficulty getting a new job."

A member of the business litigation group at Baker Donelson, Griffith has clients in the construction, marine and hospitality industries. He specializes in employment law, particularly cases involving unique wage and hour issues.

"I began to focus on my specialty following Hurricane Katrina because of the wage and hour issues that were prevalent in the New Orleans area at that time," Griffith said. "It's really blossomed into a nationwide practice at this point."

In one of his most prominent cases, Griffith represented

Belfor USA, a Birmingham, Mich., contractor providing property restoration and repair services. Some of Belfor's subcontractors had failed to pay their own workers properly, "so the workers looked to Belfor to help make it right," he said.

"The client could have fought and said, 'We're not responsible, so you need to go after the subcontractor instead,'" he said. "But the client wanted to step up and make sure some of these workers were taken care of, and then we pursued the subcontractors."

One of the top current issues in employment law, Griffith said, is the classification of workers: Whether they are independent contractors or employees and whether they are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime requirements of the Federal Labor Standards Act.

Along with his pro bono work, Griffith's community service also includes being involved with Habitat for Humanity. Each year, Baker Donelson sponsors a Habitat house, and Griffith has been a liaison between the law firm and the organization's local branch in the past.

"I don't go up on the roof... but I'll do just about anything else."•

— Sonya Stinson



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Edward Harold

Position: Fisher & Phillips partner

Age: 45

Family: wife, Ann; children, Chase, 15, Ben, 14, Megan, 12

Education: bachelor's degree in English literature, University of the South; juris doctor, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Edward Harold likes to fight for business.

When New Orleans voters approved an ordinance in 2002 to raise the minimum wage \$1 more than the national average, he saw trouble.

"We were representing the Louisiana Restaurant Association at the time, and they put together a coalition of businesses who were opposed to the increase in the minimum wage because they felt it would be incredibly economically damaging to the city both in reputation and the actuality of the costs," Harold said.

The result: Harold threw himself into the struggle to overturn the ordinance, suffering an initial defeat when the Orleans Civil District Court upheld the ordinance but eventually convincing the Louisiana Supreme Court to strike it down, noting that state law prohibits local wage standards.

Harold, who today leads Fisher & Phillips' retail industry practice group, is determined to understand and explain to his clients the many provisions of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act. Noting that FMLA requires employers to provide unpaid medical leave to their employees, he said the law's first pub-

lished regulations were "not easy to figure out and had a lot of provisions that were very unfriendly to employers."

"There was a great need for education and consulting and counseling on that law," he said.

For Harold, the minimum wage ordinance and the FMLA have a commonality: They are government regulations that could seriously harm business.

"A lot of what we're doing is just basically trying to navigate a regulatory scheme that has been placed on employers over the last decades, really going all the way back to minimum wage legislation of the 1930s," Harold said. "There are more new laws in this area all of the time and nothing ever seems to get repealed. They just keep adding to what is already there."

When he's not studying, explaining or writing about the ever-increasing multitude of government employee laws, Harold has served as the president of the St. Martin's Dad's Club. He currently teaches Sunday School for second- and third-graders at St. Martin's Episcopal Church. •

— Garry Boulard



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Lesli Harris

Position: Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann member

Age: 37

Family: single

Education: bachelor's degree in history, University of Virginia; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School; master's in intellectual property law, New York University School of Law

Lesli Harris joined Stone Pigman 10 years ago as an intellectual property and entertainment attorney. Since then, she has represented the National Football League and the New Orleans Saints in trademark litigation and enforcement matters, NBC in trademark enforcement and copyright litigation, a beverage company in trademark litigation and a nationally syndicated radio talk show host in copyright litigation.

Harris also defended actor Kevin Costner in a federal jury trial involving claims of securities law violation and fraud. Investors, including actor Stephen Baldwin, claimed Costner owed them \$18 million for oil spill cleanup equipment sold to BP after the 2010 Gulf of Mexico disaster. The case went to trial in June 2012, and the jury's verdict was in favor of Costner and his business partners.

"The Costner case was an intense and complex litigation," she said. "There were a lot of intricate issues over agreements and a number of personalities involved, so we had to manage all that on top of the legal issues. There were also spectators and media everywhere, which was a lot of pressure. ... I was 37 years old and I was able to represent Kevin Costner successfully."

Harris started her law career in insurance defense. But after working for an advertising agency for a year, she decided to go back to school, specialize in intellectual property and help artists and creative people with legal issues. She's currently working with Mardi Gras Indians on copyright protection for their costumes.

"The Mardi Gras Indians can't afford legal assistance, so I'm working with a group of people to help them get their suits copyrighted," Harris said. "I'm excited about it because it will benefit New Orleans and give the Indians more power over their images."

Outside the office, Harris teaches a class on negotiation at Tulane University Law School and writes a fashion and entertainment law guide blog at www.fashionentertainment.com, which she launched earlier this year.

She has been a member of the Martinet Legal Society for 10 years and serves as the correspondence secretary. She also joined the Tennessee Williams Festival board of directors this year, where she plans to help with fundraising events and provide legal assistance. •

— Kerry Duff



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Peck Hayne

Position: Gordon Arata McCollam Duplantis & Eagan attorney

Age: 50

Family: wife, Vivienne; daughters, Heidi, 15, Anna, 7

Education: bachelor's degree in music, Yale University; juris doctor, New York University School of Law

Peck Hayne says he knew long before college that he wanted to be a lawyer.

"For me, the law was like trying to put together a puzzle, a legal puzzle, and the challenge is in finding out how all of the parts work together to achieve what you want to accomplish," said Hayne, an oil and gas attorney at Gordon Arata McCollam Duplantis & Eagan.

Accomplishments in his 25-year-plus legal career include a successful effort in 2007 to convince a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals panel to set aside a judgment that would have bankrupted the Orleans Levee District.

Hayne is well respected in the industry, something he attributes to "putting out a product that's superior," and believes building a strong reputation is predicated on "staying focused, keeping your head down and leading by example." That mantra leads caused him to take up various leadership roles outside of the office, including years of volunteer work with The Pro Bono Project.

"I enjoy the work because it helps members of our community who aren't otherwise able to afford legal services."

Hayne devotes more than 100 hours a year to providing cost-free legal services for low-income New Orleans residents and is a five-time Pro Bono Project and the Louisiana State Bar Association honoree.

Before graduating from law school at New York University in 1987, Hayne studied music at Yale University where he graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor of arts degree in 1984. By the early 1990s, Hayne was well ensconced in his present-day profession after clerking for two federal New Orleans judges.

He takes all of success and professional accolades in stride.

"You know, it's nice to be honored," he said, "but I don't get too caught up in all of that stuff. My parents are the ones who care the most. If ever my name makes it in the paper, they'll be calling me to tell how proud they are and cutting out the article." •

— Mason Harrison



Dominick Impastato

Position: Frischhertz, Poulliard, Frischhertz & Impastato partner

Age: 33

Family: wife, Shannon; children, Dominick IV, 6, Mia, 4, Joseph, 2

Education: bachelor's degree in finance, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Dominick Impastato loves every minute he spends in the courtroom, and he thrives on competition and the motivation to win.

"I have to win to put food on my family's table, so I go to sleep every night thinking I have to work twice as hard the next day to survive," he said. "I'm also willing to work while others are sleeping. I leave no stones unturned and I squeeze the juice out of every lemon for every case. I also bring passion into everything I do. It's easy to fight for something and make a convincing closing argument to a jury when you believe in the client and what you're saying."

Impastato has been practicing law since 2004 and specializes in civil trial work in a variety of liability, malpractice and litigation areas. His most impactful and longest-running case was Montalbano v. St. Rita's Nursing Home, which took seven years to resolve.

Impastato represented the families of the 34 nursing home residents who drowned during Hurricane Katrina and served as liaison counsel for all plaintiffs in 58 lawsuits filed after the hurricane for residents of

the nursing home.

"The owners of St. Rita's didn't heed the warnings of evacuation and were prosecuted for the deaths of the residents," he said. "The families represented divided a couple million dollars, and their emotions were as strong from the day the case started until the very end..."

"It's the kind of case that makes you go home and think about how people should be treated and what kind of care you should give another person during the most difficult times of their lives."

Outside of work, Impastato coaches youth baseball and football for Kenner's recreation department. He has also been a member of the Kenner Economic Development Committee since 2011 and manages the political climate subcommittee that ensures the city council and administration work together in a cohesive manner.

He's also a member and past president of the Archbishop Rummel Alumni Association Board. •

— Kerry Duff



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Craig Isenberg

Position: Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Freeman & Sarver partner

Age: 42

Family: wife, Kristin; children, Zoe, 12, Cali, 10, Jake, 5

Education: bachelor's degree in political science, Amherst College; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

When Citgo Petroleum Corp. was facing potential high-dollar civil penalties in 2011 for reportedly violating the Clean Water Act, company officials turned to Barrasso Usdin and its high-stakes commercial litigator Craig Isenberg, an expert in handling large, complicated cases.

"Citgo came to our firm because they needed counsel that had expertise in environmental matters and could go to trial against the Department of Justice, which is extremely challenging," Isenberg said. "We obtained a favorable outcome after a two-week trial in federal court, but it was very challenging and had many complicated issues that necessitated scientific experts such as an environmental scientist and economist."

After graduating from Tulane University Law School in 1996, Isenberg clerked for a judge in Shreveport for a year. He then moved to London and worked as a transaction attorney before moving to Washington, D.C., where he shifted his practice to commercial litigation.

He joined Barrasso Usdin in 2004 and concentrates his practice on product liability, toxic torts and commercial matters.

"I tend to focus on large complicated cases for major corporations," he said. "I like analyzing complex problems and I really enjoy going to trial. I'm a competitive person and I'm stimulated in a competitive arena where there's a clear winner, loser and a referee."

"A good litigator has to be persistent, hardworking, embrace challenges and not be afraid to lose and take chances."

Isenberg also performs a substantial amount of pro bono services. In the past, he represented a death row inmate in a brief to the U.S. Supreme Court. Ten years ago, he represented a research institute in Washington that achieved the public release of transcripts from former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's telephone conversations.

"Pro bono work is important to me," he said. "I enjoy it and I hope to do more."

Outside the office, Isenberg spends time with his family and has coached his children's soccer teams through the Recreational Soccer League and Carrollton Boosters for the past six years. •

— Kerry Duff




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FIRM ASSOCIATED

Gladstone Jones

Position: Jones, Swanson, Huddell & Garrison partner

Age: 48

Family: wife, Amanda; daughter, Charlotte, 13

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

As indictments continue to come down for former New Orleans officials, Gladstone "Glad" Jones has been able to sit back and watch the events unfold, knowing his work likely played a role in uncovering public corruption.

In 2009, he represented two local crime camera companies in a civil case against computer giant Dell Inc., former New Orleans Chief Technology Officer Greg Meffert and businessman Mark St. Pierre. Jones claimed Dell, city employees and St. Pierre, whose company held the city crime camera contract, stole technology from two companies he represented. The jury issued a verdict in favor of Jones' clients and forced the defendants to pay \$16.3 million.

"It was a classic case of private corporations assisting in public corruption," Jones said. "Most importantly, through the case a lot of facts were uncovered that led to the indictment of public officials."

Handling specialized, complex cases is Jones' calling card as a partner at Jones, Swanson, Huddell & Garrison. He divides his practice concentration between commercial business disputes and environmental pollution matters, representing some of the region's most active property owners in the oil and gas industry as well as entrepreneurs.

Jones became a founding member of Smith, Jones & Fawer in 1995 and went on to start what is now Jones Swanson in 2000.

One of his career-defining cases resulted in the cleanup of a large tract of land in Cameron Parish following the civil lawsuit his firm filed on behalf of Doré Energy Corp. Doré sought remediation of its property, which included about 18,000 acres of wetlands, to address pollution from decades of oilfield operations that had taken place there.

In another one of Jones' cases, he represented 1,100 lobster fishermen from New York and Connecticut who suffered damages after pesticides decimated their harvest. The case resulted in a settlement for the fishermen.

"When we're successful, we're obviously proud that we have achieved a good result for our client," Jones said. "But we're very proud we're doing our part in making our community and our state a better place to live."

Jones has facilitated a good deal of community involvement outside of his legal work. His firm is active in St. Andrew's Village, a facility for handicapped adults. He also recently joined the Xavier University Board of Trustees. •

— Autumn Cafiero Giusti



FIRM ASSOCIATED

David Kelly

Position: Bradley Murchison Kelly & Shea founding member

Age: 63

Family: wife, Cyndi Collier; daughters, Sara, 29, Emily 25

Education: bachelor's degree in philosophy, Mississippi College; juris doctor, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

David Kelly likes trains. Unlike the many enthusiasts who study, photograph and write about trains, Kelly likes them because he has handled the Louisiana-related legal work for one of the largest railroad companies in the world, the Illinois Central Railroad Co., for most of his career.

"It's a fascinating industry with clients that tend to be loyal over time," Kelly said. "They treat their lawyers well."

In return, Kelly, who also specializes in mass torts, insurance issues and products liability, has gone to bat for his client — most notably after a mile-long train derailed in Livingston Parish in 1982, resulting in a large spill of hazardous chemicals.

"It ended up becoming a major piece of litigation producing hundreds of lawsuits and ultimately a state class action," he said. "There were probably 56 independently filed lawsuits in the district in Baton Rouge."

Kelly, working with lead counsel John Reynolds, was not only able to lead his client through the mass of litigation, but also managed to forge a settlement that satisfied the financial expectations of the thousands of people who were a part of the class action.

"There wasn't a template for this kind of thing anywhere," Kelly said. "We wrote out the agreements with our opponents, and they have stood the test of time."

That agreement resulted in the creation of a parish intergovernmental commission that took ownership of the contaminated property and assumed responsibility for its ongoing monitoring through the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.

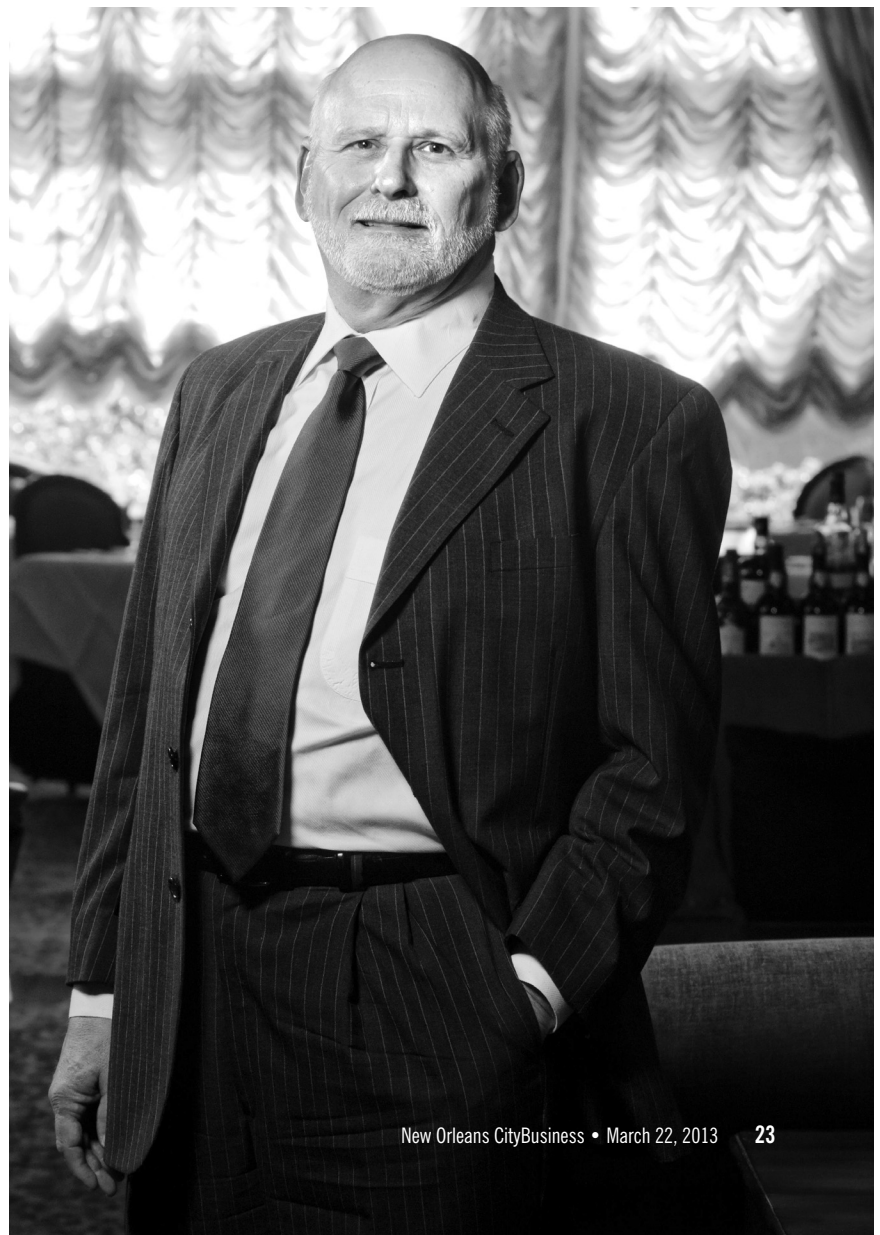
The experience greatly helped Kelly in an equally significant derailment in Amite in 2002, which was tried in federal court.

"The economic issues were of a different magnitude," he said. "Amite involved fewer cars and much less persistent chemicals and was much easier to clean up."

But because of the Livingston experience, he said there was a precedent to reference.

In his spare time Kelly, whose wife, Cyndi, has multiple sclerosis, has been actively involved in fundraising for MS research and is a member of the Louisiana State Bar Association and National Association of Railroad Trial Counsel. •

— Garry Boulard



Robert Kerrigan Jr.

Position: Deutsch, Kerrigan & Stiles partner

Age: 71

Family: wife, Colleen; sons Tyler, 39, Duke, 36

Education: bachelor's degree in history, Spring Hill College; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Litigation is risky business for parties on both sides of a lawsuit, and Robert Kerrigan, who leads the civil litigation department at Deutsch, Kerrigan & Stiles, has seen the level of risk increase since he started practicing law.

Along with the financial risks comes the risk of losing work time diverted to re-examining whatever past event triggered the claim. Kerrigan calls the task of managing those risks "a very interesting and demanding job."

"You have to explain the demands of the litigation process early on," Kerrigan said, "and you have to make decisions early as to whether this is a case that can be successful or not, given the options of going to litigation or arbitration and filing the necessary motions to narrow the scope of the case."

The scope can become too wide when one side or the other raises issues that don't properly belong in the suit, he said.

Kerrigan has defended lawsuits related to industrial explosions, toxic exposure claims, product defect claims, professional liability and a host of other matters. His case file includes many that involve the transportation industry, such as the one in which he obtained a defense verdict in a jury trial for a trucking company client facing a \$40 million lawsuit alleging

the release of chemicals.

He was the lead trial counsel for Pan American Airlines and the U.S. government in the case surrounding the 1982 crash at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, and he has been a lecturer for various legal education programs, including one on forensic psychiatry at the Georgetown University School of Medicine.

Kerrigan said being able to communicate well with all types of people, from company presidents to line mechanics, is essential for success in his line of work.

"You've got to be able to communicate with them and gain their confidence, to speak in a language they understand, so that they buy into the challenges that a lawsuit visits on them and their company," he said.

Kerrigan, who served in the U.S. Army after earning his undergraduate degree, once aspired to be a doctor. But he discovered that he possessed skills and traits that were especially suited to a career in law.

"I've always been very competitive — in the military, in sports, in most of the things that I do," Kerrigan said. "My father taught me early on that whatever you do, do it as well as you can. That kind of took seed."•

— Sonya Stinson



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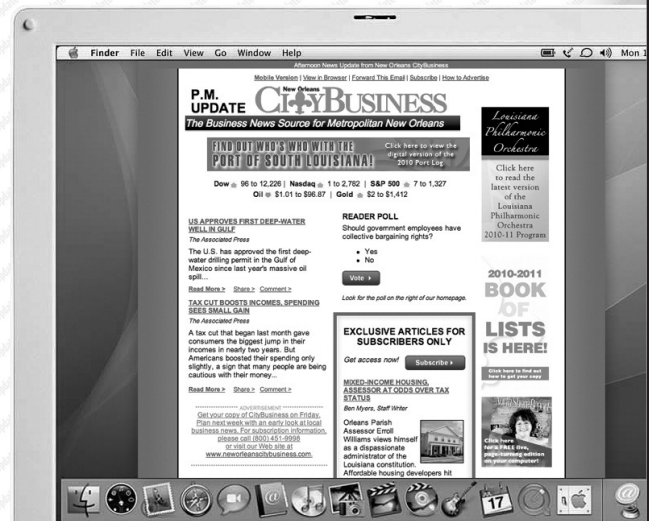
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FIRM ASSOCIATED

Patricia Krebs

Position: King, Krebs & Jurgens member

Age: 62

Family: children, Charlie, 45, Brandy, 42

Education: bachelor's degree in history and English, East Texas State University; master's degree in history and Ph.D., Tulane University; juris doctor, Tulane Law School

Patricia Krebs says she's in her element when she's trying a case for the defense in a courtroom. She is drawn to the intensity, excitement, required focus, and above all, the people.

"It doesn't matter what type of case ... it is because it's all about the people," she said. "We have good judges here, but I like jury trials most because, by and large, juries have very good gut feelings collectively when it comes to truthfulness of witnesses. They get messed up on numbers sometimes, like \$5 million versus \$15 million, but they generally get the verdict correct on liability and that's what matters."

Krebs has been practicing law since 1983 with a focus on admiralty, product liability, construction and business litigation.

Four years ago, she represented two companies and two individuals in *Ostrowiecki v. Aggressor Fleet*. The case involved two scuba divers who disappeared off the coast of Costa Rica during a diving trip. Krebs represented the defendants — the franchise and marketing companies, manager and dive master — who were said to be at fault for negligence and breach of contract after the divers disappeared. The case was tried before a jury in the Eastern District of Louisiana,

and the jury found the defendants not at fault.

"This was one of the most interesting, exciting and hardest cases I've ever had and won," Krebs said. "It was tremendously intriguing because no one really knows what happened. The attorneys opposite me on this case were excellent lawyers, and it was a very hard fought case."

Krebs' commitment to the community runs as deep as her 30-year legal practice. She leads the board of Covenant House New Orleans, a safe haven for homeless, runaway and at-risk youth age 16 to 21. She has been president of the organization for more than two years and has served on the board for three years.

"I want to help in a different way than legal services when I have free time," she said. "Over 100 kids a night sleep at Covenant House, and most have been violently abused."

Krebs is president of the Louisiana Bar Foundation. She has also been a member of the Fulbright Association, an organization that supports and promotes the Fulbright Program of international education and cultural exchange since 1978, and she finished her second term as president in December. •

— Kerry Duff



FIRM ASSOCIATED

TWO-TIME HONOREE

Stephen Kreller

Position: The Kreller Law Firm managing member

Age: 38

Family: single

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

Nearly three years after the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, 95 percent of Stephen Kreller's caseload is comprised of settlement claims for commercial fisherman, many of them Vietnamese, and cleanup workers.

To date, he has filed more than 3,000 claims on behalf of 1,600 clients — most of whom he says have opted to enter into settlement agreements with BP.

"This case is so time consuming and involved that it requires 100 percent of my time," said Kreller, adding that he meets with about 100 clients per week.

He foresees his firm and those it has partnered with working on the claims for another two to three years. Their specific role is to work with a court-appointed steering committee, which is litigating the claims in federal court.

"We provide them (the steering committee) with expert reports, and we're actively participating in the settlement negotiations as it relates to the commercial fisherman and their claims," he said.

In the past, Kreller helped negotiate claims through the Gulf Coast Claims Facility. It was a more challenging

time that Keller said he's pleased to have behind him.

"With any settlement, you have to compromise, but you also have to understand your client's risk moving forward," he said, adding that he enjoys working cases of this magnitude because they present him with opportunities to learn his clients' businesses, gain their trust and help them rebuild their lives.

"I think the best part of this case is handing a check to a client because that's when you start realizing the benefits of all of your hard work," Kreller said. "I enjoy the larger cases like this because it enables me to help people. But also, you get to meet so many people."

Kreller also finds time to network with colleagues and volunteer in the community. He serves as president of the Academy of New Orleans Trial Lawyers, a group of attorneys who meet monthly to discuss civil trial practices. He also mentors about 12 Loyola University students, assisting them with networking and professional guidance.

"It's part of giving back to the community," he said.

— Nayita Wilson



Leslie Lanusse

Position: Adams and Reese partner

Age: 58

Family: son, David, 40

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

Leslie Lanusse was a high school teacher for eight years before she became an attorney. She taught business law, accounting, typing, short hand and economics at Warren Easton, Lutheran and Brother Martin high schools in addition to night classes at Philips College until she graduated from law school in 1984.

"I enjoyed being a school teacher, but I thought I needed a change," she said. "I was also influenced a great deal by my sister, Elizabeth 'Betty' Clinton, a maritime lawyer at Peuler Law Firm."

Lanusse joined Adams and Reese in 1985 when the firm had 60 attorneys. In the beginning, she worked casualty products liability matters for crane manufacturers. In the early 1990s, the firm sent her to a seminar in San Francisco on the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"After I attended the seminar, my practice gradually shifted to labor and employment," she said. "Our firm represented a large number of marine clients, and when the ADA was adopted by the government they needed to know the rules for compliance and things like what they could ask on an application, what they could ask during an interview and when they could and could not do a medical exam."

Although Lanusse has been practicing labor and employment law for more than two decades, the case she considers most important has nothing to do with that area.

She was part of a team that represented her friends, Robert Fresh Markets owners Marc and Darlene Robert, in a case that involved damages at five of their stores during Hurricane Katrina. Robert Fresh Market v. United Fire got under way in 2005, after the Roberts' insurance company refused to cover damages.

"In our view, the insurance company was not fair with the Roberts because they couldn't get back into business without the money," Lanusse said.

The jury agreed and rendered in the Roberts' favor for \$26 million. The couple received the payout in 2010.

"Marc and Darlene always thought they'd get the money after six to nine months and be back in business, but the money didn't come," she said. "They ended up borrowing money to reopen two stores, but it shouldn't have been like that. This was a long, hard fight with a good result, but I watched my friends go through agony?"

— Kerry Duff



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FIRM ASSOCIATED

David Melancon

Position: Irwin Fritchie Urquhart & Moore partner

Age: 44

Family: wife, Laura; children, Madeline, 12, Michael, 10, Justin, 3

Education: bachelor's degree in English literature and political science, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Not many lawyers would sit through a 27-day arbitration and consider a judgment against their client a win.

David Melancon feels otherwise.

After participating in the nearly monthlong property damage case, which included a three-arbitrator panel, judgment was rendered against Melancon's client, but the opposing party did not succeed in obtaining the damages they wanted.

"As defense lawyers, we consider that a win," Melancon said. "That's a great win, and the stamina of (completing) 27 days of arbitration is impressive."

Melancon, a partner with Irwin Fritchie Urquhart & Moore, focuses on pharmaceutical and medical device litigation for companies such as Pfizer Inc., as well as the defense of premises liability and property damage claims. His practice also includes defense of environmental and toxic tort claims.

Having represented defendants in several land contamination cases, Melancon considers one particular win an outcome of great lawyering.

Tried in the Eastern District of Louisiana in 2006, the federal case involved a chemical company that was required, under an agreement for the prop-

erty they leased, to clean up chemicals such as chlor-dane and other pesticides. The property owners claimed the cleanup was insufficient and filed suit, but a jury disagreed and determined Melancon's client was not in breach of its contract.

He said his clients showed their efforts were not driven by fear of a lawsuit because they hired an experienced cleanup team before litigation began.

"They took nothing. They got zero dollars. We won," Melancon said, adding that the jury understood the standard of cleaning up chemicals is in parts-per-million. "That doesn't mean clean to zero. There are standards that need to be met, and (my client) met them."

Despite a litigation-intensive practice where he has practiced at the federal level and spent countless hours in arbitration, Melancon is able to volunteer with organizations close to his heart, including Habitat for Humanity, and looks forward to the monthly Masses and yearly events he takes part in with God's Special Children, an organization for families with special needs children. •

— Whitney Pierce Santora



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Conrad Meyer

Position: Chehardy Sherman partner

Age: 41

Family: wife, Vanessa

Education: bachelor's degree in microbiology and Latin, University of Mississippi; master's degree in health administration, Tulane University School of Public Health; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

If life had taken Conrad Meyer down the first path he pursued, M.D. would follow his name instead of J.D. But health care continues to be an area of interest for Meyer, who is using his knowledge of the industry to advise doctors and hospitals on the law.

As a partner in the law firm of Chehardy Sherman, Meyer assists his clients with regulatory, compliance, transactional and litigation matters involving health care.

Meyer started out as a pre-med student, specializing in microbiology. He became an emergency medical technician after graduation while applying to medical schools. But after landing on waiting lists, he shifted gears and started studying public health at Tulane University.

After learning about the regulatory and financial side of the health care industry, Meyer decided law school would be a better fit. After working as a resident administrator during grad school, Meyer combined his two passions.

Health care law on the regulatory and compliance side changes constantly, and clients look to Meyer for guidance.

One such case involved a small group practice of

doctors in a rural community. The practice promoted its office secretary to the position of office manager and three years later learned that she had been improperly billing Medicare patients.

One of the biggest sources of regulatory issues Meyer has been dealing with stems from the Affordable Care and Patient Protection Act. The legislation is creating several new rules for physicians, hospitals and insurance companies.

"Every month, every quarter, every year, there are new regulations and new compliance directives that you, as a health care director, need to be aware of so you can better advise your physician or your hospital clients," he said.

Community work is important to Meyer, who is a native New Orleanian. As a member of the Allstate Sugar Bowl Committee for the past five years, he has worked on various events and helped the Sugar Bowl carry out its mission to attract tourism and promote the city and state.

Meyer is also chairman of the New Orleans Bar Association's Health Law Committee, a group he helped revive after it had been dormant for several years. •

— Autumn Cafiero Giusti



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Kerry Miller

Position: Frilot partner

Age: 42

Family: wife, Khristina; twin sons, Max and Nicky, 12

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

Kerry Miller likes to compare the practice of mass tort law to a playing chess.

"The cases usually involve multiple parties and multiple issues, so every move that you make could impact six other things in the case," he said. "You're always thinking, 'If I file this motion or I take this action in court, how is it going to affect all these other (pieces)?"

Miller, who doesn't actually play chess, is co-leader of the mass tort and class actions practice area at Frilot LLC. As of late, he is a prominent player in two of the nation's biggest legal issues. He's the defense liaison counsel in the Chinese drywall class action and a defense steering committee member in the Gulf of Mexico oil spill case.

"I've got to tell you that working on those cases at the same time for the last two and a half years has been an incredible challenge," said Miller, adding that the effort also has brought tremendous reward. "I've met great lawyers from all over the world, so it's been gratifying and a great experience."

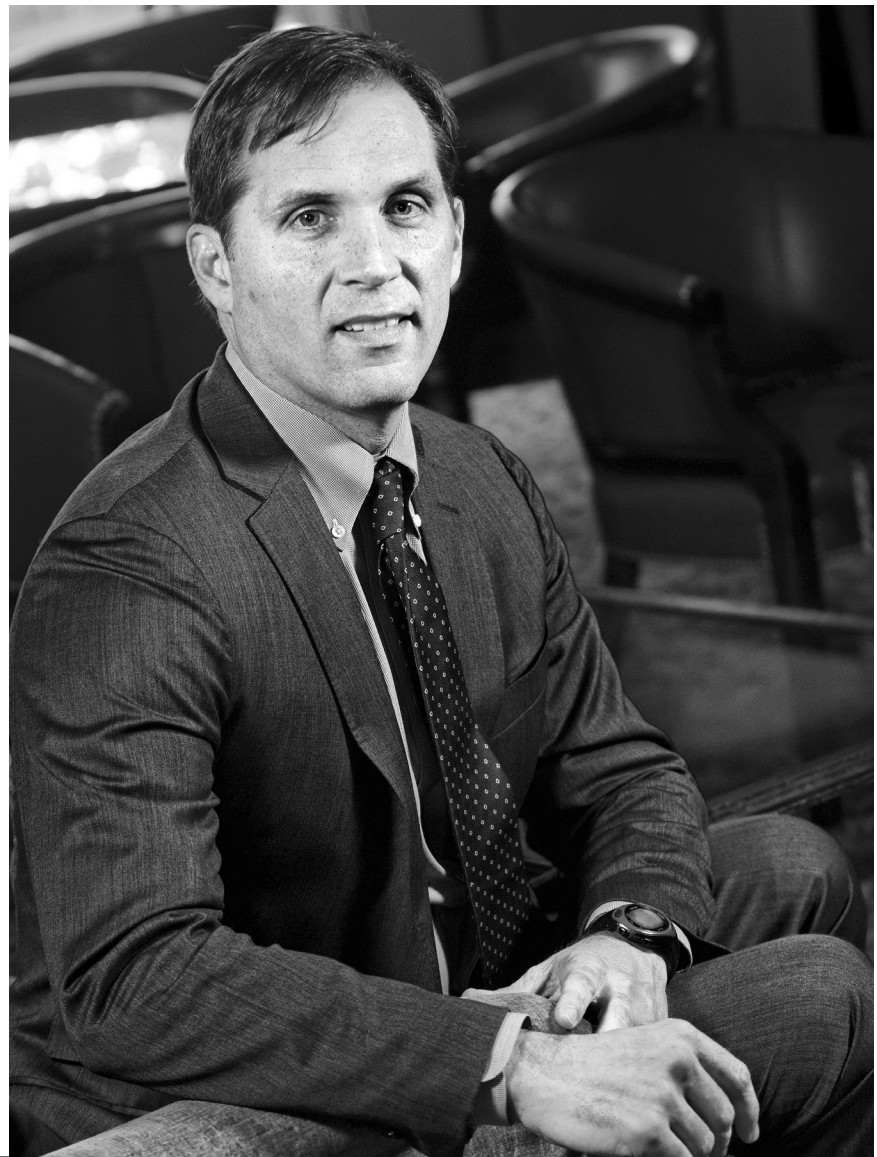
Miller has lectured on the topic of domestic litigation involving foreign products, such as Chinese drywall, and he says such cases can be especially complex when there are no international statutes to govern them.

"The plaintiffs' bar is pushing for regulation in U.S. relations with China to try and come up with a fair way for those in the U.S. who get damaged by those products to be able to have recourse," he said. "It's going to be an interesting area of law as it develops."

Miller was recently invited to join a law delegation to China of the People to People Citizen Ambassador Programs but was unable to make the trip because of work commitments.

At home, he is a volunteer basketball and baseball coach for the New Orleans Recreation Department. As the father of an autistic child, he's an active supporter of Autism Speaks and that organization's efforts to increase awareness of autism spectrum disorders. •

— Sonya Stinson



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Alysson Mills

Position: Fishman Haygood, Phelps, Walmsley, Willis & Swanson associate

Age: 32

Family: partner, Nathan Prescott

Education: bachelor's degree in French, University of Mississippi; master's of philosophy in sociology, Trinity College Dublin; juris doctor, University of Mississippi School of Law

When a Mississippi high school prohibited a lesbian student from taking her same-sex date to prom in 2010, she sued the school district with the assistance of the American Civil Liberties Union. New Orleans attorney Alysson Mills read about it and called the lawyers working the case to volunteer her help.

Although she had only been in practice a year, she felt strongly about the case and the young woman's First Amendment rights.

"I played a very small role in the case *McMillen v. Itawamba County School District*, but I also felt very lucky to have had the opportunity to be a part of it," she said. "Now there is a law in Mississippi — my home state — that holds that gay and lesbian students have a First Amendment right to attend school proms with a same-sex date, and I'm proud of that and very excited."

A year later, Mills worked with the ACLU on a similar case in Mississippi, *Sturgis v. Copiah County School District*. In that case, the school removed a lesbian student from its yearbook because she wore a tuxedo in her senior portrait. After a federal judge refused to dismiss the student's complaint, the school

settled the case in 2011, Mills said.

Mills is an associate in the litigation section of Fishman Haygood, Phelps, Walmsley, Willis & Swanson, which she joined in 2009 after clerking for a year for the Hon. Grady Jolly of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in New Orleans.

In addition to serving as co-counsel with the ACLU, she has represented multiple indigent federal criminal defendants in their appeals to the Fifth Circuit. She has also represented plaintiffs and investors in securities fraud lawsuits.

Mills is on the board of Choice Public Charter Schools, which runs three open-enrollment public elementary schools in New Orleans. A board member for two years, she meets monthly with other members to review everything from school operations to finances. She attends school events such as the winter concert, basketball and volleyball games and also has a small collection of art from students.

"I went to public schools, and I consider it an honor to serve on a board that promotes public education," she said. "I also enjoy being part of the schools' day-to-day goings-on." •

— Kerry Duff



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Randy Opotowsky

Position: Steeg Law partner

Age: 59

Family: wife, Kathleen; children, Henry, 20, David, 18, Mathew 11

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

Randy Opotowsky has been a vital part of Steeg Law Firm's growth and development for close to four decades, so much so that he's now handling legal matters for many of his clients' children.

"For the most part today, nobody with a \$10 million project is Googling for a lawyer," he said. "But the younger generation is definitely different than their parents' generation. You have to know how to reach them because they network quicker and more impersonally. But some of the new methods like social media are still not as effective in this type of practice as one-on-one, face-to-face meetings."

Opotowsky's practice areas include residential and commercial closings, condominium, multi-family and subdivision development, representation of condominium homeowner associations, title insurance, general business and corporate law. In a typical month, he handles a dozen or more real estate transactions. Most of the commercial transactions range between \$1 million and \$10 million.

The most challenging transaction in his career, he said, was developing One River Place on the Riverwalk in New Orleans in the early 1990s.

"In most cases, buildings are either built or going

to be built on dirt, and then it's... simple ownership," he said. "One River Place is built on top of the Riverwalk and the river, so we had to deal with the levee board, the city and different agencies to get rights to develop the air space between where the condo begins in the air and ends.

"We also had to work with the Corps of Engineers because we were driving piles in the river," he said. "Ultimately it became a 91-unit condominium, but there's been no development on the river since then."

He's also done a lot of divorce work, but he stopped in early 2000 because he didn't want to try cases in court anymore.

"It's difficult to maintain skill level on transactional and trial work at the same time," he said. "I prefer transactional work because it's rewarding and also exciting, especially if the client is a new homeowner."

Opotowsky has been involved with the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans for 20 years and leads the group's property advisory committee and helps its staff on acquisitions and rehabilitation of historic buildings. He has also served as the organization's treasurer for the past four years. •

— Kerry Duff



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Laura Plunkett

Position: Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann member

Age: 40

Family: husband, William "Bill" Plunkett Jr.; son, Ryan, 3

Education: bachelor's degree in political science and philosophy, Emory University; juris doctor, Emory University School of Law; master of laws, New York University School of Law

Trusts and estates, not tax law, were the frontrunner when Laura Plunkett began law school.

"(It) was a class that wasn't simply theoretical to me in law school," Plunkett said. "I found it really interesting and included practical things that everyone should know."

She eventually enrolled in a tax class and said, to her surprise, she found it "easy."

"It turns out I have a logical mind that works well with any code-based class; I can follow rules," Plunkett said.

After graduating from Emory University and a yearlong stint clerking for the Alabama attorney general, Plunkett found herself explaining the city of Birmingham's accounting to her superiors.

"I decided I needed to play to my strengths," she said.

Having earned her master of laws degree, Plunkett primarily focuses on trusts and estates for private business owners and refers to her work as a "kind of holistic practice for high net-worth individuals."

Her welcome to the world of trusts and estate planning came about 12 years ago when she was rep-

resenting an elderly couple whose children were trying to have them declared legally incompetent so they could control the couple's assets. Because the couple had been frugal throughout their lives and had recently become more generous and philanthropic, their heirs were concerned about the sudden disbursement of wealth.

"We ended up not just settling this, but the parents were able to (retain) enough money and independence to live out their lives and not have someone criticize every \$25 check they wrote to the Boy Scouts," Plunkett said.

The settlement was a personal victory for Plunkett, as she helped the elderly couple, with a net worth of nearly \$6 million, in finding an estate planning solution that met everyone's concerns. While the patriarch has since passed away, his 92-year-old widow is "still in her house and is being well taken care of."

"Here we are, 12 years later, holding a meeting with everyone in one room, and everyone's getting along," Plunkett said. "It was more (about) fixing them than the value that made this case so important to me." •

— Whitney Pierce Santora



Fredrick Preis

Position: Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson senior partner

Age: 63

Family: wife, Sue; sons, Spencer, 36, Kevin, 34, Matt, 32

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

Fredrick Preis was 6 when he started working for his father on Saturdays, cleaning used stoves and refrigerators for resale. Years later he sold shirts and drove an 18-wheeler, and he worked in human resources at a bank during college.

"All these jobs guided me toward the type of law I practice," said Preis, a labor and employment attorney at Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson. "I like people, and this type of law helps people."

Preis started practicing labor and employment law 39 years ago. His clients range from very large companies to small businesses with 10 to 15 employees. They include Lowe's Home Improvement, the Greater New Orleans Hotel and Lodging Association and the Louisiana Bankers Association.

As a labor and employment attorney, he advises clients on critical decisions and handles matters such as work force reductions and severance packages. He also conducts supervisor training, revises employee handbooks, conducts government investigations and works on matters involving unions.

About 18 months ago, he worked with the steel manufacturer Namasco Corp. on a union organization attempt at its Portland, Ore., facility. The Iron

Workers Union filed a petition for an election at the facility but ended up withdrawing it because employees learned some facts about the union beforehand and decided they didn't want it anymore.

"We guided the company through the legal quagmire and in the end, the union withdrew its petition to organize employees," he said. "It was interesting because the union already represents Namasco employees at other facilities in California."

Outside of his legal practice, Preis is active in business and civic endeavors. He is the newly elected president of the Louisiana Liaison Group of Federal Government Contractors and chairman of the Louisiana Right to Work Committee, a post he has held for seven years.

He has also been a member of the American Red Cross Southeast chapter executive board for 10 years.

For the past 15 years, he has served on the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry's executive committee where he helps run the organization and provides technical information on labor and employment issues.

Preis also sits on the boards of the New Orleans and Jefferson chambers of commerce. •

— Kerry Duff



Robert Rooth

Position: Chaffe McCall partner

Age: 63

Family: wife, Carroll; children, Liv, 32, Schuyler, 24

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

Robert Rooth has been at Chaffe McCall nearly four decades. He started as a clerk in 1974 during his first year of law school and had such a good time that he never left.

Rooth leads the firm's commercial and complex litigation section. His areas of focus are securities, anti-trust, banking, deceptive trade practices, health care, and oil and gas. He also conducts business transactions, mergers and acquisitions, and private security offerings.

Rooth said his most challenging transaction involved \$100 million in auction rate preferred stock in the late 1980s. This type of stock goes up for a Dutch auction every seven weeks, and investors bid competitively on the amount of securities they wish to buy, bidding the lowest interest rate they are willing to accept. The lowest bidder owns the stock until the next auction.

"I agreed to serve on the board of a U.S.-based company that was affiliated with Ferruzzi Finanziaria SpA, Italy's second-largest private industrial conglomerate," Rooth said. "The parent company got embroiled in a huge political scandal in Italy, and its CEO committed suicide when the Italian carabinieri (police) knocked on his door."

No one would bid to buy the U.S. securities and auction after auction failed, he said. For almost a year,

26 institutional investors were frozen into their positions as news spread about the mounting financial woes of the Italian parent company. Rooth received phone calls for almost a year from investors demanding their money back.

"Eventually, by working with lenders in France, Italy and the U.S., we were able to redeem the stock at par and pay everyone back," he said.

Rooth said auction rate securities came into the limelight again in 2008, but on a more massive scale. By then the auction rate market had ballooned to more than \$200 billion. Based on his prior experience, he advised his clients to avoid them at all costs.

"Unfortunately, many people got frozen into auction rate securities on an even bigger scale than our \$100 million issue," he said. "Many of them lost millions. Memories are short and investors had forgotten the risks that these securities can pose."

Rooth sits on the board of Southern Rep, which he joined three years ago, and advises the theater on legal matters. He also serves on the board of Resources First Foundation, an organization that addresses the conservation needs of private land owners. •

— Kerry Duff



Harry Rosenberg

Position: Phelps Dunbar partner

Age: 64

Family: wife, Kimberly, sons, Jonathan, 35, Walker, 25

Education: bachelor's degree in history and secondary education, Case Western Reserve University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Harry Rosenberg is a successful litigator, a partner in one of the city's largest law firms and a former U.S. attorney.

It just took a little coaxing to get him there.

Rosenberg originally wanted to teach high school students, but his father convinced him otherwise.

"He kept telling me I'll never survive on a teacher's income," Rosenberg said. "He suggested I go to law school and if I didn't like it, I could always go back to teaching."

Thirty-five years later, Rosenberg is a partner at Phelps Dunbar and head of the firm's commercial litigation practice.

His father wasn't the only person to steer Rosenberg's career. He got a little nudge in the early 1990s from FBI Director Robert Muller, who at the time was an assistant to the U.S. attorney general.

Rosenberg, who had been working at Phelps Dunbar since the start of his career, got a call from Muller asking if he would travel to Washington, D.C., to be considered to serve as U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

"I told him I had no interest, but as a courtesy I would go up there," Rosenberg. "He in large measure convinced me that if I was given the opportunity, I

should take it."

He served as U.S. attorney from 1990-93 after spending the first half of his career focusing primarily on business litigation. After leaving the federal post, he went back to Phelps Dunbar and added white-collar and criminal defense work to his dossier.

In one of his landmark cases, Rosenberg represented the Louisiana Supreme Court in a lawsuit from a few law school graduates who were challenging the court's rule that prevented non-resident aliens from being admitted to the state bar. The case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, and Rosenberg ended up on the winning end.

"That case was rewarding in that I had the privilege of representing the Louisiana Supreme Court and its members — and winning," he said. "It certainly made me feel humbled."

He has served as board member and president of the Pro Bono Project, which connects private attorneys with individuals who can't afford civil legal services. He has also been president of Court Appointed Special Advocates, which provides representation for children in court-related matters. •

— Autumn Cafiero Giusti



Stuart Smith

Position: Smith Stag founding partner

Age: 52

Family: significant other, Barry Cooper

Education: bachelor's degree in general studies, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Stuart Smith has successfully prosecuted the biggest, most powerful oil, gas and chemical corporations in the world for polluting the environment, and he has also helped find remedies for victims of environmental contamination.

He has been lead counsel on more than 100 oil pollution cases that focused on damages from wastewater and sludge that energy companies discharge into the environment.

In 2001, Smith was lead counsel on the Grefer case, an oilfield radiation case that resulted in a \$1.056 billion verdict against ExxonMobil for contaminating land it leased from a Harvey family and attempted to cover up. The company knew the radioactive material posed a direct danger to the physical health of workers and did nothing to alert its contractor or the family. The court ordered ExxonMobil to pay \$1 billion in punitive damages and \$56 million to clean the land.

"I was a pioneer and the first person to make a career out of suing gas companies for pollution in the United States and I'm very proud of that," Smith said. "Environmental litigation is one of the most complicated and challenging areas of law. You have to be prepared to work as many hours as it takes to prosecute these cases and be able to understand complex legal

and science issues such as toxicology and geology."

Smith was born and raised in New Orleans. He dropped out of school at age 15 and earned his GED years later. He graduated from law school in 1986 and, a few years, later teamed with Andrew Sacks to form Sacks & Smith, a plaintiff law firm.

Smith and attorney Michael Stag started working together in 1997 and formed Smith Stag five years later. The firm's practice areas include cases involving technologically enhanced radioactive materials, naturally occurring radioactive materials, environmental and toxic tort, personal injury, mass torts and class actions, products liability, maritime law and mineral royalties.

Since the firm's inception, its seven attorneys have recovered more than \$100 million in settlements and in excess of \$1 billion in jury verdicts for clients.

Since the late 1990s, Smith has been involved in historic preservation work in the French Quarter through the Vieux Carre Property Owners, Residents and Associates and French Quarter Citizens. He also does pro bono work for both organizations and the Louisiana Environmental Action Network, an organization that works to improve the environment. •

— Kerry Duff



Peter Sperling

Position: Frilot partner

Age: 54

Family: wife, Vicky; children, Andrew, 20, Elliot, 16, Frances, 13, Olivia, 11

Education: bachelor's degree in political science and French, Vanderbilt University; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

For Peter Sperling, who leads the medical malpractice and health care section at Frilot, the passion for representing his clients is personal.

"My father is a retired surgeon, so I had a great reverence for physicians growing up, from watching my father and how hard he worked," said Sperling, whose clientele includes physicians, nurses, dentists, hospitals, medical schools, long-term care facilities and other health care providers.

One of the top legal issues in health care these days is defensive medicine, which Sperling said involves doctors ordering tests and procedures they don't really think are necessary as a precaution against being sued.

He said some of his most challenging cases were lawsuits related to hospital deaths that occurred during Hurricane Katrina.

"It was very interesting to find out about health care providers working under circumstances that really were probably the closest thing you could get to combat medicine," Sperling said. "I think that they were very proud of the work they had done under very difficult circumstances. The idea that they would be sued for the work they did post-Katrina was difficult for them to handle — sort of added insult to injury, if you will."

Sperling is one of the fewer than 1 percent of U.S.

attorneys to be named a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

"For me, probably the most rewarding aspect of practicing law is trying cases," he said. "It sounds kind of corny, but a trial really is a search for justice and truth. That's part of our Constitution, and that's where litigants really find out about the judicial system. I get goose bumps every time I start a trial in front of a jury."

Sperling is on the board of the New Orleans chapter of Heart Gift, an Austin, Texas-based nonprofit that brings children from throughout the world to U.S. hospitals to receive free heart surgery. Children's Hospital is the local partner for the organization.

"It is just remarkable to see the impact on these people's lives," Sperling said. "It literally saves children's lives."

He also is active with the Jewish Community Center, currently serving as board vice president, and he's a volunteer and board member at Isidore Newman School, which all of his children have attended.

"As challenging as it is to juggle your time with four kids and a busy law practice and being on the management committee of the law firm, I still feel it's important to do community service," Sperling said. •

— Sonya Stinson



P.J. Stakelum

Position: Chehardy, Sherman, Ellis, Murray, Recile, Griffith, Stakelum & Hayes partner

Age: 65

Family: wife, Lisa; sons, Piercy IV, 41, Chistopher, 37, Andrew 32

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

P.J. Stakelum III epitomizes preparation.

As a child, his grandfather, the late Civil District Judge Rene Viosca, inspired his career through exposure. Viosca helped open Stakelum's eyes to the possibility of exploring law as a career.

"Through him, I got to meet a lot of lawyers," Stakelum said. "It's what got me thinking about law."

Each step of Stakelum's career has added a skill set or presented an opportunity that has given him an advantage in the next big case. He joined Chehardy, Sherman, Ellis, Murray, Recile, Griffith, Stakelum & Hayes in 1992, and about one year later he took on what would be one of his most committed clients, the Fair Grounds.

In 1993, the Fair Grounds contacted the firm to collect insurance after a fire in 1993. After reviewing and analyzing the company's policies, three lawsuits were filed against the security system manufacturer, ADT. The lawsuit found gross negligence in excess of \$60 million on ADT's end, Stakelum said.

From this case, Stakelum and his colleagues developed a long-term relationship with the Fair Grounds and began providing counsel to the race-

track on other matters such as defense, bankruptcy, negotiations and contracts.

One particular case involved a complicated business interruption loss, Stakelum said. The commercial insurance coverage reimburses a business if it shuts down as a result of a casualty.

It prepared Stakelum to handle insurance litigation claims, which became the bulk of his work after Hurricane Katrina.

"The work I did for the Fair Grounds was the same type of work only different circumstances," he said.

Stakelum's practice primarily focuses on business litigation, which has equipped him to serve plaintiffs and defendants. He also specializes in transactions and uses his trial experience to gain leverage in such cases, as some transaction attorneys haven't spent much time in the courtroom, he said.

A resident of St. Tammany Parish, he helped found Tammany Together, a community organization that educates citizens on political matters. He also participates in the Flowers Estates Association, which is working to foster development in the Covington area neighborhood.

— Nayita Wilson



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Sarah Stogner

Position: Carver, Darden, Koretzky, Tessier, Finn, Blossman & Areaux associate

Age: 28

Family: husband, Jeremy

Education: bachelor's degree in international trade and finance, Louisiana State University; juris doctor and bachelor's degree in civil law, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Sarah Stogner always assumed she would be an engineer because she comes from a family of engineers. But after working for a law firm as an undergraduate, she changed her career path and became a lawyer.

"My dad told me throughout my entire life that I needed to be a barracuda litigator because I'm a Type A personality and a people person," she said. "It turns out he was right because I love what I do."

Stogner is an associate at Carver Darden, which she joined in 2012, and focuses her commercial litigation practice on representing policyholders in an assortment of insurance coverage disputes in the oil and gas industry.

Although Stogner spends most of her time handling insurance coverage disputes, she also takes on pro bono cases. One she considers unforgettable is criminal case *Stuart Price v. State of Louisiana*.

In this case, Stogner represented a New Orleans man, who, along with a co-conspirator, reportedly robbed a convenience store at gunpoint. According to a witness, the armed perpetrator put a cigarette out on the ground. Police reportedly retrieved the cigarette as evidence during the investigation but did not introduce it during Price's trial.

After Price was convicted, the Louisiana Legislature

granted prisoners the right to request DNA testing of evidence. Price filed a motion for post-conviction relief to test the cigarette. The trial court ordered the test, but the state claimed it did not have the evidence.

Stogner assisted with Price's writ for post-conviction relief to the Louisiana Supreme Court, which was denied.

"The Fourth Circuit here in New Orleans reversed the trial court's order for a new trial, but I thought he should have another chance," Stogner said. "Maybe the evidence would have proved him innocent or incriminated him, but we will never know so he will likely sit in jail the rest of his life."

Stogner is involved in the United Way Women's Leadership Council, for which she has served on the governance committee since 2010 and helps the organization raise money for programs such as the nurse partnership program that links young mothers with nurses to help them in early stages of pregnancy and child development.

She also has served on the Federal Bar Association's young lawyer's board and has been a member since 2010. •

— Kerry Duff



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Brent Talbot

Position: Chaffe McCall partner

Age: 49

Family: wife, Melanie; children, Brent Jr., 18, Mackie, 16, Lanie 10

Education: bachelor's degree in corporate finance and investment management, University of Alabama; juris doctor, Tulane University Law School

Early in his career, Brent Talbot litigated a case that would stay with him forever. Appearing in six different courts, he represented a railroad company in a crossing accident case that worked through a district court, state court, federal court, the appellate courts and, finally, the Louisiana Supreme Court.

Talbot said the case was tried, mistried, appealed and sent back to trial. The judge granted his client's motion for relief and was granted a judgment not withstanding the verdict. A hard-fought victory, Talbot's win was granted after the judge threw out the jury's verdict.

Talbot, who heads Chaffe McCall's civil litigation section and serves on the firm's management committee, works with a variety of clients and cases, from car accidents and commercial claims to labor and employment disputes.

His concentration is largely Class 1 railroads, those that transport large freight quantities. He also represents passenger lines, such as Amtrak, and short-line railroads, such as the Louisiana & Delta Railroad Co. and the Louisiana Southern Railroad. Talbot represents eight different railroads from Texas to Mississippi, and he has worked on cases in Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and New York. He also is active in the

National Association of Railroad Trial Counsel.

Talbot was appointed railroad liaison counsel for the Katrina levee breaches Litigation in federal court and won summary judgments on motions to dismiss thousands of flood claims against his clients.

"We were able to (have these dismissed based) on a novel ground of preemption and on a basic state law, no-duty ground," Talbot explained. "The basis for pre-emption was the application of the Interstate Commerce Termination Act. We had a good judge who issued some excellent rulings in the case."

Talbot said he has experienced other "terrific" verdicts, including one he obtained as a directed verdict in a Federal Employers Liability Act Claim in a "hotly contested" Orleans Civil District Court case. After the plaintiff admitted in open court that her claim was falsified, to the surprise of the court and all counsel present, "the court dismissed the claim without (Talbot and his associates) having to put on a case." The dismissal was appealed, but Talbot's client was successful in all of the appeals, all the way to the Louisiana Supreme Court.

"That was a great and exciting result," Talbot said. •

— Whitney Pierce Santora



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Robert Thibeaux

Position: Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert member

Age: 50

Family: wife, Kelly; daughter, Marguerite, 5

Education: bachelor's degree in economics and English literature, Louisiana State University; juris doctor, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Robert Thibeaux knew from an early age that becoming a lawyer was in his future.

"Law was something I always perceived as an acceptable career path," he said.

Now, as a member of Sher Garner Cahill Richter Klein & Hilbert, Thibeaux practices commercial finance and real estate.

"The nature of business practice is that you are not adversarial," he said. "You are there to achieve a mutually satisfactory goal and playing a part of that process of bringing people together in a mutually satisfactory manner is what I do for a living."

His most challenging closing involved the refinancing of an entire fleet of vessels owned by Settoon Towing, an inland marine transportation company based in Pierre Part. Thibeaux worked on the closing for more than three years and said the amount of money at stake, the time constraints and the number of lenders involved made the deal a challenging one.

"I've been practicing for 25 years, so I've had a lot of interesting closings, but that was one that was memorable because of the success achieved and the time pressures employed," he said.

While business law might not be as flashy as other practice areas, Thibeaux hopes to leave a lasting mark

on the legal community. One way is through his work with the Council of the Louisiana State Law Institute, to which he was elected in 2010.

"The council considers all matters that require careful and scholarly thought that the legislature charges the Law Institute to assist and to prepare legislation," he said. "It is a unique body, nationally, in terms of providing ongoing assistance to the legislature to enhance and to improve state laws. We may be a small state, but we have a very sophisticated civil law which is studied and emulated around the world."

In addition to serving as a council member, he also devotes time to five of the institute's committees.

"The Council of the Louisiana State Law Institute is important to me, not only because of its historical importance in preserving the ... tradition of law in Louisiana but also its continuing efforts to keep Louisiana law both current and just. It is a great honor to be a part of its activities today."

Thibeaux also serves as president of the New Orleans Regional Council of Business Economics, is a member of the New Orleans Bar Association's board of directors and serves as chairman of its real estate section. •

— Jennifer Nall



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Peter Thomson

Position: Fowler Rodriguez Valdes-Fauli partner

Age: 56

Family: wife, Patricia; daughter, Kaylin, 9

Education: bachelor's degree in philosophy, Tulane University; juris doctor, Tulane Law School

A lawyer's reputation for competence and integrity mean everything, says Peter Thomson, a partner at Fowler Rodriguez Valdes-Fauli.

He joined the firm in 2011 and is responsible for leading its white-collar criminal defense, government investigations and maritime criminal defense practices. He also represents corporate and individual clients under investigation for state or federal crimes such as those covered in Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, banking and financial offenses, wire fraud and other violations. He assists corporations with internal investigations and compliance programs and defends owners, operators and officers of motor vessels accused of environmental crimes.

Before joining Fowler Rodriguez, Thomson spent 23 years as the assistant U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana. He served with the organized crime strike force and with the federal drug enforcement task force. He investigated and prosecuted emerging organized crime groups as well as violent interstate and international drug trafficking organizations.

"The most exciting and challenging time in my career was between 1988 and 1992 while I was assistant U.S. attorney," he said. "During that time, I prosecuted a series of cases and took down the Metz Gang, one of the largest

and most violent gangs ever to exist in New Orleans. In the first phase of the operation, we arrested the entire Metz Gang and seized millions of dollars in cash and assets." Thomson also helped solve numerous murders and was part of the team that seized 1,000 pounds of cocaine being held for local distribution, adding that it was the largest cocaine seizure in New Orleans history.

"We also turned the lights out on two major cocaine suppliers and their organizations," he said. "All this took about four years and was very challenging because we had no evidence at the start. We had to put together wiretaps and tie in cases from other states and countries. Overall, it had a tremendous impact on our community because we removed hundreds of people responsible for killings here."

Thomson has been a member of the Federalist Society for 10 years, for which he serves on the executive committee of the criminal law practice group and helps develop criminal law topics and locate speakers for its annual convention. He also writes articles on topics such as crime control and collecting foreign intelligence information, and he arranges speakers and debates four times a year for attorneys and judges on a variety of legal topics. •

— Kerry Duff



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Mercedes-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. They are not only Louisiana's largest Mercedes-Benz franchise, but one of the largest and state-of-the-art dealerships in the nation.

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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.

Mercedes-Benz of New Orleans, 3727 Veterans Memorial Boulevard Metairie, LA 70002. 504-456-3727.

1792 RIDGEMONT RESERVE

On 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'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 1864 VODKA

Perfect 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 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.

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

FIRM ASSOCIATED

Todd Wallace

Position: Liskow & Lewis shareholder, commercial litigation section

Age: 41

Family: wife, Monica; children, Jack, 9, Grace, 6

Education: bachelor's degree in political science and speech, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill; juris doctor, Loyola University College of Law

Todd Wallace takes every case he handles seriously.

But when the Terrebonne Parish tax assessor filed what became a Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act suit against some 20 oil and gas companies, he was particularly concerned.

"RICO has a lot of teeth in its statute," said Wallace, who ended up representing more than a dozen of the 20 or so defendants in the case. "Any time you have a statute that has a criminal element in it, any and all allegations have to be taken seriously."

The assessor claimed oil and gas subsidiaries had filed fraudulent tax forms for a decade and, as a result, owed Terrebonne Parish millions in property taxes, including interest and penalties.

"A RICO case requires multiple actors," Wallace said. "So in each of these cases they were targeting a CEO, CFO or upper level manager within each oil and gas company — and they were named individually as well."

Arguing that the suits were, as he described it, "a substantial overreach of the RICO statutes, which is designed to go after racketeering," Wallace led the defense team in what would prove to be a successful ef-

fort to dismiss the charges against the companies.

He was well armed for the battle, not just because of his past RICO defense experience but also because of his background in tax litigation. Wallace has successfully tried dozens of cases before the Louisiana Board of Tax Appeals.

"Louisiana allows for taxpayers, instead of going through the formal litigation procedures of going into the courts . . . a quicker means of resolving disputes through the tax appeals board," he said. "But when you go before that tribunal you may be agreeing with, say, 80 percent of the issues. It's the other 20 percent that you're fighting for."

Wallace is a shareholder at Liskow & Lewis also specializes in the prosecution and defense of antitrust and unfair practices claims, contractual disputes and professional liability matters.

In his private time, he has served as president of the Lakeview Civic Improvement Association, board president of Via Link, a United Way agency, and is chairman-elect of the Defense Research Institute. •

— Garry Boulard



FIRM ASSOCIATED

Anthony Williams

Position: Kean Miller partner

Age: 38

Family: single

Education: bachelor's degree in political science, Tulane University; juris doctor, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

When Jesuit High School discovered it wouldn't receive enough insurance money to pay for damages from Hurricane Katrina and the levee failures, Anthony Williams stepped in to help his alma mater. He donated more than 800 hours of time and energy in what turned out to be a two-year litigation and helped resolve the case involving Jesuit and underwriters at Lloyd's of London.

The case settled for an undisclosed amount in 2008.

"Helping Jesuit was my way of saying 'thank you' for the education I received and the many opportunities Jesuit has provided and continues to provide to me," Williams said. "The case took a lot of time and energy, but not once did it feel like work. It was rewarding and satisfying to help my alma mater."

Williams is a partner at Kean Miller. He joined the firm in 2006, and his practice includes toxic torts, admiralty and maritime, and products and premise liability for the oil and gas industry. His clients include Georgia Pacific and U-Haul.

He started his legal career in 1999 at Porteous,

Hainkel & Johnson, where he was the first African American to practice at the firm and was named a partner in only four years.

"I didn't just write briefs and memos or carry someone else's briefcase," he said. "I took depositions, argued motions and hearings and tried cases."

Williams also received a criminal jury summons for Orleans Parish while he was at the firm.

"As a young attorney, it was an incredible experience to serve as juror for an entire week," Williams said. "I learned a lot about handling a jury, what they pay attention to and what they're confused by. I also learned that word choice matters and is extremely important. It was a memorable and satisfying experience and one I will never forget."

Williams devotes his time outside the firm to the community. For the past 10 years, he has served on the board of Jesuit's President Advisory Council, where he advises the school's administration on legal matters. He also is a member of the Friends of Cabildo. •

— Kerry Duff



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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, Bardstow, KY. 46.85% alc/vol (93.7 proof) Please Drink Responsibly

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John Glas
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Ted Le Clercq
Brian Lenard
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Timothy Madden
Richard McCormack
Jackie McCreary
Robert McNeal
Mark Moreau
Dwight Paulsen
Darleene Peters
Minor Pipes
Christopher Ralston
Kermit Roux
Richard Stanley
Molly Steele
David Strauss
Max Swetman
Daniel Tadros
Benjamin Varadi
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2011

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Oliver Houck

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Michael Riess
Antonio Rodriguez
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Michael Schneider
Tim Scott
Phillip Shuler
Karen Shipman
Robert Stefani
Charles Stern
Margaret Sunkel
Max Swetman
Jack Truitt
Jason Waguespack
William Wright

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Christopher Beary
Walter Becker
Marcus Brown

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Richard Chopin
Celeste Coco-Ewing
Stephen Conroy
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Bradley Schlotterer
Seth Schmeackle
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
J. Kelly Duncan
Ernest Edwards
Gene Fendler
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Pauline Hardin
A.J. Herbert
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John Houghtaling
Ralph Hubbard
Robert Johnston
Howard Kaplan
Brian Katz
Bob Kerrigan
Roselyn Koretzky
Gerald Meunier
Lt. Cmdr. Christopher Mora
William Patrick
Sharon Perlis
Kenneth Pickering
Loulan 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
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Joseph Peiffer
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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

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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
David Lukinovich
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.

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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 Frilot 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

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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
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William Grace Jr.
Mat Gray III
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Russ Herman
Bill Hines
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Richard Ieyoub
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