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Baton Rouge Attorneys, Retired Judge Receive Louisiana State Bar Association Awards

NEW ORLEANS – Four Baton Rouge attorneys and a retired judge received awards during the Louisiana State Bar Association's 61st Annual Meeting in June.

T. Stephen Babcock received the Stephen T. Victory Award. Charles R. Davoli and Anderson O. Dotson III received President's Awards. David A. Hamilton received the Pro Bono Lifetime Achievement Award. Judge Melvin A. Shortess (Ret.) received the Pro Bono Publico Award.

T. Stephen Babcock

Babcock received the Stephen T. Victory Award for his article, "Experts at Summary Judgment: Examining the Effect of *Independent Fire Insurance Co. v. Sunbeam Corp.*"

Babcock received his BS degree in marketing from Louisiana Tech University and his JD degree from Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center. He recently joined the firm of McKay Williamson Lutgring & Cochran, L.L.C., in Baton Rouge, where he is primarily involved in trial work. He handles self-insured defense and general civil litigation. He also is a part-time faculty member of the University of Phoenix, where he teaches business law and business ethics.

Charles R. Davoli

Davoli has a BA degree in psychology, a MS degree in criminology/higher education and a JD degree from Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center. He practices primarily in the areas of workers' compensation, longshore claims, Social Security disability and personal injury law. He has been a member of the LSBA since 1991 and is a managing partner with Davoli, Sorrells & Bianca and of counsel with Moore, Walters, Thompson, Hoover, Thomas, Papillion & Cullens in Baton Rouge.

He serves as chair of the LSBA Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities Committee and is an ex-officio member of the Public Information Committee. In addition to his LSBA membership, he is the immediate past chair of the Louisiana Trial Lawyers Association's Workers' Compensation Section and was instrumental as first co-chair in establishing the Baton Rouge Bar Association's Committee on Workers' Compensation. He has served as chair of the Louisiana Disabled Workers Network (DAWN) since 1997 and has served as the plaintiff's representative on the Workers' Compensation Advisory Committee for the Louisiana Department of Labor since 1997.

Davoli is a frequent lecturer and author on labor/plaintiff-oriented issues in workers' compensation and testifies before the Louisiana Legislature on legislation and policy issues affecting workers' compensation.

Anderson O. Dotson III

Dotson received his BS degree in chemistry in 1996 from Louisiana State University and his JD degree, *magna cum laude*, from Southern University Law Center in 2000. He was admitted to practice in 2000 before all state and federal courts in Louisiana and the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals.

He is an associate with the law firm of Phelps Dunbar, L.L.P., in its Baton Rouge office. He practices in the areas of commercial litigation and corporate defense.

Dotson is a member of the American Bar Association and the Federal Bar Association. He also is a member of the Baton Rouge Bar Association, where he is co-chair of the Volunteer Committee and serves on the Uniforms for Kids and Bench/Bar Conference committees. He is a member of the American Inn of Court, Southern University Law Center Inn, and a junior honorary member of the Louisiana Law Institute.

His involvement with the LSBA includes membership on the Public Information Committee (chair of the subcommittee on the Statewide Lawyer Referral and Information Service), the Federal Bench/Bar Liaison Committee and the Minority Involvement Section.

David A. Hamilton

Hamilton earned a bachelor of arts degree in history from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge in 1968. After teaching in a public junior high school for three years, he enrolled in Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center and graduated with a JD degree in 1974 and began practicing law in April 1975. He is currently a sole practitioner in Baton Rouge.

He is active in local and state bar activities. He served two terms as chair of Capital Area Legal Services Corp.'s board of directors. He is an active member of the Baton Rouge Bar Pro Bono Panel, a regular participant in the Thirst for Justice Program, and served two terms as chair of the Pro Bono Committee. He has served as co-chair and is currently chair of the LSBA Access to Justice Committee. He is a member of the Baton Rouge Bar Foundation Pro Bono Triple Century Club and received the Baton Rouge Bar Association's President's Award in 1993. He is currently president-elect of the Baton Rouge Bar Association.

Judge Melvin A. Shortess (Ret.)

Judge Shortess was selected for this award because of his participation in helping create the Baton Rouge Bar Association's Thirst for Justice legal clinic.

He served 18 years on the 1st Circuit Court of Appeal. During his tenure on the bench, he was an active supporter of the activities of the Baton Rouge Bar Association. On Dec. 31, 2000, Judge Shortess retired from the bench after 33 years as a public servant. He continues to serve special appointments on the Louisiana Supreme Court and court of appeal.

In January 2001, Judge Shortess approached the leadership of the Baton Rouge Bar Association with the concept of a free legal clinic, Thirst for Justice. The Pro Bono Committee enthusiastically embraced the idea and, within five months, forms were developed, volunteers were recruited and Thirst for Justice opened its doors.

Judge Shortess is active in his church, the United Way, Capital Area Agency on Aging, Boy Scouts of America and the Food Bank of Greater Baton Rouge.

The LSBA, the largest professional organization in Louisiana, assists and serves its almost 19,000 members in the practice of law. The statewide organization assures access to and aids in the administration of justice, assists the Supreme Court in the regulation of the practice of law and upholds the honor of the courts and the profession. It also promotes the professional competence of attorneys, works to increase public understanding of and respect for the law and encourages collegiality among its members.

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