2016

Presented by The Chief Justice
The Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award
Distinguished Judicial Service Award
Distinguished Federal Judicial Service Award
Voluntary Bar Association Pro Bono Service Award
Law Firm Commendation

Presented by The Florida Bar President
The Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Service Awards

Presented by The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division President
Young Lawyers Division Pro Bono Service Award
Justices of
The Supreme Court of Florida

The Honorable Jorge Labarga  
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The Honorable Barbara J. Pariente  
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The Honorable Peggy A. Quince  
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2015 - 2016
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TOBIAS SIMON
(1929 - 1982)

“He opposed capital punishment, pressed for criminal reform, fought to improve the jurisdiction of the Florida Supreme Court, taught scintillating law school classes and wrote books on appellate review. He made enemies doing so — but also a lot of friends.”

In those few words of tribute, Roberta Simon summed up much of her illustrious father’s career that ended with his death from cancer at age 52, on Feb. 25, 1982.

Toby Simon was well-known throughout Florida and beyond as a tireless civil rights attorney, a crusader for prison reform, and an appellate authority. During his 30 years of law practice, he represented such divergent interests as major land developers, Communists, Nazis, teachers’ unions, and governmental agencies. In between causes there were intervals as a visiting professor at the Florida State University College of Law and at Nova Southeastern University’s Shepard Broad Law Center. He died while serving as a representative of his fellow 11th Judicial Circuit lawyers on The Florida Bar’s Board of Governors.

He counted Martin Luther King Jr. among his clients, having provided legal counsel for King during the 1960 civil rights marches in Florida and throughout the Deep South.

“He defended everyone,” his daughter added in tribute. “He believed that every client, especially the underdog, deserves a competent lawyer.” Toby Simon’s spirit lives on in the chief justice’s award that bears his name and honors those other Florida lawyers who have unselfishly carried on his work.
THE 2016 TOBIAS SIMON PRO BONO SERVICE AWARD
Presented by the Chief Justice

The Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award commemorates Miami civil rights lawyer Tobias Simon, who died in February 1982. It is intended to encourage and recognize extraordinary contributions by Florida lawyers in making legal services available to persons who otherwise could not afford them, and to focus public awareness on the substantial voluntary services rendered by Florida lawyers in this area.

The award was created in 1982 and is believed to be the first of its kind in the country conferring recognition by a state’s highest court on a private lawyer for voluntary, free legal services to the poor. A permanent plaque listing the names of all award recipients is displayed in the lawyers’ lounge of the Florida Supreme Court Building in Tallahassee.

2016 RECIPIENT

Bruce B. Blackwell
Winter Park
For Bruce B. Blackwell, more than 40 years of pro bono service has meant not just the direct representation of clients but also recruiting others to provide pro bono representation and lobbying to strengthen and preserve the network of legal aid organizations serving the poor.

Blackwell certainly was a popular choice for the 2016 Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award, with more than 100 people – including dozens of judges, nine former Florida Bar presidents, the current Bar president and a former Supreme Court chief justice – supporting his nomination.

In 2014, Blackwell showed his commitment to service by retiring from the Orlando firm of King, Blackwell, Zehnder & Wermuth, P.A., of which he was a founding partner, and becoming only the second CEO/executive director in the history of The Florida Bar Foundation.

Blackwell was interim director for three months and then, when asked, took the full-time position. He became CEO at a difficult time for the Foundation. Low interest rates had depleted the Foundation’s reserves, meaning it slashed grants to legal aid at the very time that access to justice was becoming such a crucial issue in Florida.

“My service to The Florida Bar Foundation was the most meaningful of the many leadership positions I’ve been fortunate to hold in my career,” said Blackwell, who had been president of the Foundation, “but I never would have imagined myself in this role. This was a call I just had to answer, as the Foundation is simply too important.”

Beyond his work with the Foundation, Blackwell has donated thousands of hours of direct pro bono services. He has consistently and successfully handled cases that are complex, contentious and even controversial.

The Legal Aid Society of the Orange County Bar Association has a knack for handing Blackwell its difficult holiday cases, and he cajoles landlords in delaying evictions at least until after the holidays.

One simple landlord-tenant case surely went further than Blackwell expected. While helping a family relocate, he met the 17-year-old daughter – a
classmate of Blackwell’s daughter. The girl cared for three siblings while acting as head of the household, and Blackwell floated the idea of inviting the girl to live with his family while she finished her schooling.

Plans were made for the care of the girl’s siblings, and she became part of the Blackwell family, receiving an allowance, preparing for the SAT and even getting financial help that Blackwell recruited as she went to college and veterinary school. Today, she is a public health veterinarian with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and she considers Blackwell – her pro bono attorney – to be her father.

Blackwell has received The Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Service Award twice - in 1997 and 2013. Among other honors, he has received The Florida Bar Foundation’s Medal of Honor and President’s Award for Excellence, the American Bar Association’s Grassroots Advocacy Award and Pro Bono Publico Award, and the Florida Council of Bar Association Presidents’ Outstanding Voluntary Bar President Award.

A fifth-generation Floridian, Blackwell grew up in Marion County. He graduated from Florida State University and the FSU College of Law. He served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force.
THE DISTINGUISHED JUDICIAL SERVICE AWARD

2016

Presented by the Chief Justice

A judge is in a unique position to contribute to the improvement of the law, the legal system and the administration of justice. The support of pro bono services improves the judicial system as a whole. This award is for outstanding and sustained service to the public, especially as it relates to support of pro bono legal services.

2016 RECIPIENT

Honorable Cynthia L. Cox
The 19th Judicial Circuit Court
Felony Division
Vero Beach
Pro bono legal service has always been important to Cynthia Cox.

In 1996, as a lawyer with a solo practice in Vero Beach, Cox was honored with The Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Service Award for the 19th Judicial Circuit. Later that same year, she was elected circuit judge. Although the judgeship ended her ability to help individual clients on a pro bono basis, it did not inhibit her drive to serve and improve the administration of justice.

Since taking the bench, she has consistently sought innovative ways to improve access to justice, educate attorneys and promote the value of pro bono service. In her initial assignment to the family division, she created a website to provide attorneys with forms and calendars, conducted quarterly CLE family law updates, held night court, and created a family self-help guide, a domestic violence diversion program and several other processes to improve access for pro se litigants.

Cox also has recruited and trained attorneys for the guardian ad litem program and sought attorneys to provide pro bono legal assistance. In 2011, upon assignment to the civil/foreclosure division, she began researching and emailing a weekly foreclosure case law summary to more than 300 attorneys and judges around the state. She is frequently called upon to speak at attorney seminars and meetings of various civic and charitable organizations. Since 2007, she has volunteered with Justice Teaching, Florida Supreme Court Justice R. Fred Lewis’ initiative to pair legal professionals with Florida schools.

Perhaps most importantly, Cox has been a champion of the legal rights of people suffering from mental illness. She was a driving force behind the establishment of the first mental health court in the 19th Circuit in St. Lucie County in 2006 and later in Indian River County in 2015. She continues to preside over and administer the mental health courts in addition to a demanding division assignment. Lisa Fonteyn, client services director in the Office of the Public Defender for the 19th Circuit, wrote in a nomination letter: “She has committed herself and her personal time to ensuring that all defendants, regardless of ability to pay, have access to mental health treat-
ment. In addition, she has educated herself above and beyond what you would expect from the judiciary to understand mental illness, its symptoms, treatment options and treatment side effects so she can listen to each defendant that comes before her ... with a knowledgeable ear.”

Cox’s other activities include mentoring new judges, lecturing and educating physicians and law enforcement officers about domestic violence, serving on various court work groups and working with local bar associations. She provides more than 200 pro bono and service hours annually, has served on the board of directors of VNA/Hospice of the Treasure Coast since 1990 and is a graduate of Florida State University’s Colleges of Business and Law.
The purpose of the Chief Justice’s Distinguished Federal Judicial Service Award is to recognize an active or retired federal judge for outstanding and sustained service to the public, whether through legal or civic service or a combination of them, especially as it relates to the support of pro bono legal services. The award is given to a judge who exemplifies the ideals embodied in the Code of Conduct for United States Judges, furthering the goals of equal justice under the law and encouraging pro bono service by Florida lawyers.

**2016 RECIPIENT**

Honorable Catherine Peek McEwen
United States Bankruptcy Court
Middle District of Florida
Catherine Peek McEwen’s commitment to pro bono service reaches far back into her legal career, when she was an active participant in the Bay Area Volunteer Lawyers Program, so her appointment as a bankruptcy judge in 2007 simply offered her new opportunities to serve.

After her appointment, she began to focus on the problems faced by pro se consumer debtors. She worked with the local bankruptcy bar and other judges to produce a video on bankruptcy basics. That video now is available online in English, Spanish and Creole, and it has been used as a template for national versions.

McEwen has served on the 13th Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee since 2007, and she is the immediate past chair. In 2015, she helped organize a judicial pro bono summit, the purpose of which was to educate state and federal judges on what they can do to encourage pro bono service — and how they themselves can contribute.

In 2013 and 2014, while McEwen was president of the Ferguson-White Inn of Court, she worked to found the Wm. Reece Smith Jr. Litigation American Inn of Court for the Tampa area. McEwen saw a need, because existing inns, their rosters already full, were turning down lawyers who wanted to serve as mentors. “Literally, there was no room at the inns,” McEwen said, “so I joked that the name should be the Bethlehem Inn.” The Wm. Reece Smith Jr. inn adopted the H.E.L.P. program (Homeless Experience Legal Protection) as its pro bono project.

McEwen has been described as tenacious, passionate, driven and persistent in achieving her goals. One year, she adopted the theme of Baskin-Robbins to teach about pro bono service, telling the lawyers of the 13th Circuit that there were at least 31 flavors of pro bono opportunities and that all lawyers could find cases to suit their tastes. The campaign worked, as the circuit’s pro bono committee grew and attendance soared.

The Distinguished Federal Judicial Service Award is new this year, and McEwen is the perfect choice as its first recipient.
“The minute this award was established, I said, ‘We have to name Cathy McEwen,’” said Gwynne Young, past president of The Florida Bar.

McEwen has an unusual background, having been a sportswriter in Tampa in the 1970s. She graduated from the Stetson University College of Law in 1982, and was an attorney and later shareholder at Moffitt, Hart & Herron, which merged with what is now Akerman LLP in 1991. She then had a private practice in Tampa before moving to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Middle District of Florida.

Judge Ashley Moody, who received the Distinguished Judicial Service Award last year, said: “Judge McEwen’s extraordinary efforts in encouraging pro bono service within the 13th Circuit will benefit our community for years to come.”
THE LAW FIRM COMMENDATION

Presented by the Chief Justice

The purpose of the Law Firm Commendation is to recognize a law firm that has demonstrated a significant contribution in the delivery of legal services to individuals or groups on a pro bono basis.

2016 RECIPIENT

Duane Morris, LLP
Miami

Pro bono service has been part of the culture at Duane Morris LLP since the firm was founded in Philadelphia in 1904. The firm’s Miami office has carried on that tradition since it was opened in 1999, helping less fortunate members of the community through service projects and donations of precious time, talent and treasure.

The firm has a goal of devoting at least 3 percent of billable hours to pro bono work, and it gives all associates and special counsel 100 hours of credit annually, and all partners 50 hours, toward pro bono service.

Two key areas targeted by the firm’s offices in Miami and Boca Raton are immigration and aiding survivors of trafficking and gender-based violence.

Duane Morris lawyers represent youths seeking Special Immigrant Juvenile Status or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. Also, a team of 10 lawyers from the Florida offices visited the Krome detention center in Miami to ensure that it was meeting the Department of Homeland Security’s detention standards for immigration facilities.

Duane Morris lawyers in Florida have helped survivors of commercial sexual exploitation to vacate criminal convictions related to the trafficking. Lawyers in
the Boca Raton office have advocated for improved safe harbor laws, to protect exploited youngsters.

Pro bono service can help in less visible ways, too. One is to offer aid to area nonprofits. This can include corporate counseling as well as protection of intellectual property, such as obtaining a trademark for the “Monkey for Me” program (giving hospitalized children a stuffed monkey) offered by Alliance for Kids, Inc.

One immigration case in particular drew notice in 2015.

Duane Morris lawyers represented Javier and Denis Giron, two teenage brothers from Honduras who crossed the Rio Grande on a migrant smuggler’s raft to enter the United States. They were only two of thousands of unaccompanied children who came to the United States to escape gang violence in their native country.

Felice K. Schonfeld, a special counsel in the Miami office, helped prevent their deportation by having them declared dependents under the Special Immigrant Juvenile Status program. Those legal efforts spanned Florida Family Court, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and the Executive Office for Immigration Review. The two boys now have green cards, and Denis, 18, is studying auto mechanics.

Duane Morris is one of the 100 largest law firms in the world, with more than 700 lawyers in offices in North America, Europe and Asia.
THE VOLUNTARY BAR ASSOCIATION PRO BONO SERVICE AWARD

Presented by the Chief Justice

The purpose of the Voluntary Bar Association Pro Bono Service Award is to recognize a voluntary bar that has demonstrated a significant contribution in the delivery of legal services to individuals or groups on a pro bono basis.

2016 RECIPIENT

Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association

The Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association covers six counties – Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy and Union counties. However, although Alachua County has about 1,000 lawyers eligible to practice in Florida and is home to the University of Florida’s Levin College of Law, one other county in the circuit has only four Bar members. The Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association has only about 350 members.

For a small, rural bar, though, it does amazing things.

The EJCBA actively supports Three Rivers Legal Services, and with more than 100,000 potential eligible clients in the circuit, the efforts of individual attorneys and small practices are crucial to the delivery of legal services. EJCBA also offers support for Southern Legal Counsel, which is committed to the ideal of equal justice and basic human and civil rights.

The Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association has taken on several significant projects, two addressing the issue of homelessness.
Pitch in for the Kitchen helped raise more than $20,000 to rebuild the kitchen at Grace Marketplace, which offers services and shelter to people who are homeless in the Gainesville area. Part of the fundraiser was a food truck rally, at which EJCBA officers volunteered to take turns in a dunking booth.

EJCBA created the Ask-A-Lawyer program in January 2015, soon after the opening of Grace Marketplace. Attorneys volunteer their time, usually one Saturday per month, to help people with a range of issues that can be a barrier to housing such as family problems, landlord-tenant conflicts, criminal histories, probate and personal injury.

One woman needed help obtaining the title to her van, which was her transportation and her home. It took eight months of negotiation and intervention from a volunteer attorney, but she now owns the van. A man got legal advice on getting a settlement after his truck was stolen and wrecked. Another man simply needed help getting his ID renewed.

The Office of the Public Defender now takes part in the Ask-A-Lawyer sessions as well, and a September Ask-A-Lawyer event, held in conjunction with the Veterans Stand Down, served 150 homeless veterans.

The Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association also has a Law in the Library program, with 15 to 40 people attending seminars on various legal topics. Almost 30 lawyers have taken part during the program’s four years of existence.

A holiday project, Gifts for Head Start Children, provides a party (with Santa) and gifts to children. In 2014, EJCBA provided gifts for more than 300 children.

The association also collaborated on a Law and Justice Youth Conference, held at the University of Florida Levin College of Law for at-risk youth in middle school, and raised $15,000 for the Guardian Foundation with its annual golf tournament.
THE FLORIDA BAR YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION PRO BONO SERVICE AWARD

The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division Pro Bono Service Award recognizes the public service or legal aid performed by a young lawyer (younger than 36 or who has not practiced for more than five years in any jurisdiction) and who provides outstanding contributions to those in need of legal services.

2016 RECIPIENT
Elisa Jaclyn D’Amico

It's fitting that the Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division Pro Bono Service Award would honor work done to protect vulnerable people on the Internet, where so many young adults make friends and connections.

A little more than a year ago, Elisa J. D’Amico was sitting at the installation luncheon of the Miami-Dade Chapter of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers (MDFAWL) and listening to the immediate past president urge support for a bill criminalizing non-consensual pornography, or “revenge porn.” D’Amico took that message, worked with public officials and MDFAWL, and helped get the City Commission of Miami Beach to pass a resolution supporting the bill. The bill passed, and became law in October.

That was just the beginning.

With strong support from K&L Gates LLP, the international law firm where D’Amico is a partner in the Miami office, D’Amico and K&L Gates partner David Bateman founded the Cyber Civil Rights Legal Project to provide legal services to victims whose sexu-
ally explicit images are distributed online without their consent.

A year later, the project had 70 attorneys on three continents volunteering to help victims of online harassment. In just one year, the project dedicated the equivalent of $2 million in volunteer attorney time and consulted with more than 300 victims.

D'Amico has volunteered more than 1,100 hours to the Cyber Civil Rights Legal Project since late 2014.

Among those helped by the project was a Miami professor who had explicit photos and video shared with her class, forcing her to change her name and career. The project also has reached out to help victims in places as far away as Canada, Switzerland, Latvia and the United Kingdom.

“Elisa and the CCRLP saved me,” one victim wrote. “Elisa was my first advocate and supporter during my darkest times and has worked endlessly for months to combat the harm that has been done to me and my reputation.”

D'Amico now is helping expand the efforts begun by the CCRLP.

She has discussed her work on television and was invited by the attorney general of California to join that state’s Cyber Exploitation Task Force. That task force’s work has led to the implementation of important cyber-harassment policies by tech giants such as Google and Microsoft. In October, D'Amico was named a founding member of the Advisory Board of New York Law School’s Tyler Clementi Internet Safety Institute.

D'Amico, a graduate of the Fordham University School of Law in New York, has received numerous honors, including, in 2015, the Daily Business Review’s Attorney of the Year, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce Difference Maker Award and the K&L Gates LLP Pro Bono Service Award.

“When I thought I was alone,” another victim wrote, “God sent me angels in the form of CCRLP.”
THE FLORIDA BAR
PRESIDENT’S PRO BONO
SERVICE AWARD

The Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Service Award was established in 1981. Its purpose is twofold: “to further encourage lawyers to volunteer free legal services to the poor by recognizing those who make such public service commitments; and to communicate to the public some sense of the substantial volunteer services provided by Florida lawyers to those who cannot afford legal fees.”

This award recognizes individual lawyer service in each of Florida’s specific judicial circuits, as well as one Bar member practicing out-of-state.

THE FLORIDA BAR PRESIDENT’S PRO BONO SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS
2016

Jennifer C. Anderson – Ponte Vedra
James V. Cook – Tallahassee
William H. “Bill” Drumm – Sarasota
Patricia A. Eables – Key West
Pamela L. Foels – Orlando
Kathryn “Kate” Hill – Vero Beach
Andrew J. Kamensky – New York, N.Y.
Frederick Koberlein, Jr. – Lake City
Lyndall “Lyndy” Lambert – Miami
Jason D. Lazarus – West Palm Beach
Lawrence J. Markell – Gulfport
Raymond T. McNeal – Ocala
Russell Miller-Thompson – Sunrise
Kelley Geraghty Price – Naples
Taras S. Rudnitsky – Longwood
Thomas Saunders – Bartow
Isabel “Cissy” Boza Sevelin – Thonotosassa
Robert L. Thirston, II – Panama City Beach
Patricia Vail – Jacksonville
Jason A. Waddell – Pensacola
Mary K. Wimsett – Gainesville
Getting started as a lawyer wasn’t easy for Jason A. Waddell. He graduated from Cumberland Law School at Samford University in Alabama in May 2001 and headed for Northwest Florida. It wasn’t much later that the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 dealt a blow to the economy, and Waddell found that the job market had dried up.

However, many local lawyers and others in Pensacola offered Waddell guidance and support as he worked to build his practice. Within two years, his practice was large enough that he could add his wife as a partner – creating Waddell & Waddell, P.A. – and he has been finding ways ever since to say thanks.

Waddell contributes about 50 hours a year in direct pro bono efforts.

In 2003, Waddell joined the Public Service Committee with the Escambia Santa Rosa Bar Association, and for the next four years he assisted on projects such as providing estate-planning documents for first responders.

In 2005, he worked with The Florida Bar’s standing committee on the Unlicensed Practice of Law. Later, his work with the Bar’s Elder Law Section led to an advisory opinion from the state Supreme Court that Waddell felt would protect many senior citizens from incorrect legal advice.

More recently, working with Legal Services of North Florida and the Council on Aging of Northwest Florida, Waddell helped develop a program on advanced directives. Through two free CLE courses, lawyers and paralegals received documents and guidance as well as a refresher on durable power of attorney.

After the CLE and two presentations to Council on Aging groups, Legal Services of North Florida conducted two workshops at which, with Waddell’s assistance, about 10 lawyers provided 33 people with assistance and documents free of charge.

Waddell is involved with numerous other efforts, from mentorship to senior and dementia programs.

In a nomination letter, Legal Services of North Florida said: “It is clear to us Jason has demonstrated a desire to freely give his time and expertise to help ensure those in his community are served regardless of their situation.”
James Vernon Cook
2nd Circuit

James V. Cook is a perfect example of a truth among many pro bono attorneys – that the areas where they donate their services don’t necessarily mesh with their day-to-day practices.

At his office in Tallahassee, Cook works almost exclusively in federal civil rights law, with cases including police misconduct, sexual misconduct in prisons and the like.

In his pro bono work with dependency cases and troubled teenagers, however, Cook’s legal help is sought by guardians ad litem, the state’s Department of Children and Families, Florida State University’s Public Interest Law Center, attorneys for other parties in cases, judges in court and even the families of children in need.

A quick look at some of the cases that Cook has volunteered to handle over the last three years finds:

• A child who was in a psychiatric facility far from his mother, who had no transportation. The separation threatened the mother’s parental rights, but Cook helped reunite the mother, the boy and his siblings.

• A child afraid of being returned to her mother, because of past abuse. Cook agreed to represent the child, the parental rights were terminated, and the girl is awaiting adoption.

• A case concerning an abused youngster who faced drug-related delinquency charges involved the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Juvenile Justice, Guardian ad Litem and even the Indian Child Welfare Act. Cook arranged for a custody agreement including the mother and an aunt and uncle. The child’s delinquency problems are being resolved.

• A now-teenaged girl with a host of complex issues, including mental health and past abuse. Cook represented a prospective adoptive mother and, working with DCF and the girl’s multi-disciplinary team, helped finalize the adoption and give the girl some much-needed permanency in her life.

Cook, a graduate of the Florida State University College of Law, points out that, while a child in the juvenile justice system has the right to an attorney, often a child in dependency court has no such right. Lawyers such as James Cook can give these children the help they need.
When the story of a killing in Columbia County hit the news, the details were horrifying. A 14-year-old girl had shot her brother, then fled from their home with a younger sister. The teenager had been chronically, emotionally and physically abused. She had been locked in a room, often for weeks at a time, with only a bucket and a blanket. It was the same room where she had been repeatedly sexually abused by an uncle, who was serving a life sentence for that crime.

So you might have excused Frederick L. Koberlein, Jr. if he had politely declined a request from the public defender to act as an attorney ad litem for the girl. Instead, Koberlein, whose office is in Lake City, agreed without hesitation, knowing full well the complications and time that might be involved.

The appointment of an attorney ad litem was important, because Koberlein would be working to prevent anything in a parallel dependency case from compromising the teenager’s rights in the criminal case. Koberlein – an experienced criminal defense attorney – was a strong advocate for the teenager and helped prepare a strategy that resulted in her entering a plea in juvenile, not adult, court to a charge of burglary and being sentenced to probation.

In the dependency case, the parental rights were terminated and the girl was placed in the custody of the Department of Children and Families. But more importantly, Koberlein incorporated the conditions of probation into the girl’s treatment plan, thus avoiding the conflicts that often arise.

“Mr. Koberlein not only provided a great benefit to (the teenager) but he has served as a great example to other lawyers,” Columbia County Public Defender M. Blair Payne wrote in a nomination letter. “He readily agreed to take on this child’s cause without having any idea of how much time and effort would be necessary.”

Koberlein estimates that he spent more than 100 hours on the case – an estimate that Payne considers low.

Koberlein, a graduate of the University of Florida Levin College of Law, has been a volunteer attorney with Three Rivers Legal Services since 2009. His father, Frederick Koberlein, Sr., won the 3rd Circuit honor in 1994.
What an incredible legal career Patricia Vail has had.

After getting her J.D. from the Cleveland Marshall Law School, she spent more than three years with the Office of the Attorney General in Ohio, followed by a long stint as a staff attorney with CSX Transportation in Jacksonville. Then it got really interesting.

She was a liaison with the American Bar Association’s Central and Eastern European Law Initiative, heading an office in Kazakhstan and working with that country’s Supreme Court to establish an independent judiciary. Later, she returned to Jacksonville to open a private practice. She then found a new direction as state pro bono coordinator with Florida Legal Services and working with Jacksonville Area Legal Aid.

The constant in her long career is that she has had a broad and far-reaching positive impact on her community, and she has consistently advanced the cause of underserved, vulnerable and low-income people.

Vail “retired” in 2003, but she has hardly slowed. She is a trusted resource as a pro bono attorney “on call” in a number of Northeast Florida senior centers and HUD residential facilities. Issues she helps people with include simple wills, durable powers of attorney, designation of health-care surrogates and pre-need guardians, contract matters and consumer issues.

For three years she did all this single-handedly, but in 2011, recognizing the great need, she initiated an effort that became the Advance Directives for Seniors Pro Bono Project. The project -- a partnership of Jacksonville Area Legal Aid, Florida Coastal School of Law, The Jacksonville Bar Association and the Northeast Florida Paralegal Association -- serves 60 to 80 seniors each year with complete advance directive packets. In 2015, the project expanded to include senior patients at medical clinics and rural Council on Aging campuses.

“Patricia Vail serves all with respect and professionalism,” wrote Kathy Para, the pro bono director at Jacksonville Area Legal Aid. “The relationships she has fostered in the legal and senior citizens communities and beyond are built on trust, compassion and a sense of humor. Her presence comforts, encourages and empowers hundreds of our most vulnerable citizens – our low-income seniors.”
During a long legal career that included almost 30 years as a judge, Raymond T. McNeal had a life-changing moment on, of all places, a mission trip to Brazil. There, he was asked: “What are you going to do when you go home? Home is a mission field also.” On the flight home, McNeal made a list – and providing pro bono legal assistance was on it.

In 2010, the now-retired judge began volunteering with Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida, and two years later he became a board member of CLSMF and its sister organization, the Legal Advocacy Center of Central Florida.

As a volunteer attorney, McNeal has assisted more than 200 people who needed legal advice and pro se assistance with family law matters. He also has worked to develop pro se pleadings for Guardian Advocacy, and he has helped countless parents complete the forms to become the guardian advocates for their adult children with disabilities.

McNeal works with the staff at CLSMF to recruit lawyers willing to do pro bono work, and he actively participates in the agency’s fundraising efforts. He is now working with CLSMF to serve people who are homeless by creating a legal-advice clinic at an area church that provides services and meals.

McNeal, who lives in Ocala, earned his J.D. from the University of Florida College of Law in 1972. He became a Marion County judge in 1979 and moved to a 5th Judicial Circuit judgeship in 1983.

The former judge also is no stranger to honors. Among recent honors he has received are the Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida’s Richard D. Custureri Pro Bono Award (2013), The Florida Bar Family Law Section’s Keeper of the Flame Award (2012) and the Commitment to Children of Divorce honor from the Florida Psychological Association (2012).

The Florida Bar’s Family Law Section in 2014 created the Honorable Raymond T. McNeal Professionalism Award. Naturally, McNeal was the first recipient of the honor, which recognizes an individual who has been involved in the Family Law Section’s 32-member executive council.
Lawrence J. Markell, a lawyer since 1964, is now retired – if you want to call what he does retirement. Markell, who earned his law degree at Boston College Law School in 1962, had a long legal career in Massachusetts, interrupted by about 11 years in Florida. Soon after he retired to southern Pinellas County in 2012, he began volunteering with the Community Law Program, and, in the words of Executive Director Kimberly Rodgers, he has been “a godsend.”

Since 2012, Markell has handled about 40 contested family-law cases and donated more than 1,000 hours of pro bono service, including volunteering at workshops and legal clinics. Markell accepts challenging cases, often involving victims of domestic violence.

A list of his recent pro bono cases includes a single mother whose husband would not return their 14-year-old autistic son, as previously agreed; a wife in a contested divorce made more difficult because the husband and opposing counsel were out of state; a father of two whose petition for injunction for protection had been denied, even though the mother had been charged with child abuse; and a young mother of two seeking child support in a case complicated by the fact that both parents were being treated or counseled for drug addiction.

In the nomination for this honor, Markell even received support from opposing counsel in a family law case. Carolee K. Blackmon had drafted a settlement in a family law case, but she feared that the agreement wouldn’t be completed before a final hearing. However, Markell worked nights and weekends to review pleadings, confer with his client and negotiate a deal.

“I can honestly say that I have never met an attorney as dedicated to pro bono service as Mr. Markell,” Blackmon wrote.

One of the clients helped by Markell told of the “dignity and respect” with which she was treated. She said there were times when Markell “was the only person in my corner.”

Another client, one caught in a bitter divorce and seeking to move out of the state with her son, summed Markell’s efforts: “If it weren’t for Larry, I don’t know where we would be today. But it wouldn’t be good.”
Acting as a guardian ad litem is not just an investment of time – there’s the emotional cost as well.

Jennifer C. Anderson’s husband, Gregory, expresses amazement at her willingness to accept cases that involve abuse and despair. “I have told Jenn that I cannot even bear to hear them anymore,” he said.

But, as Anderson demonstrates, there also are great rewards. Consider one of the cases she accepted, involving a girl whom Anderson has been helping to protect for two-and-a-half years.

The girl was 9 when they first met, a victim of sexual abuse by her father and abandoned by her mother, who had drug and alcohol issues. Anderson’s first task was to locate the mother who was in Tennessee, in the hope that she was rehabilitated enough that the mother and child could be reunited. Anderson then faced the challenge of finding suitable foster care for the girl.

In getting to know the girl, Anderson found that she had a talent for music and helped get her a guitar for Christmas, the girl now is thriving at a school for the arts in Jacksonville after Anderson helped her get an audition. Anderson still visits with the girl monthly, as she does with other children she represents, and those visits often include lunch, shopping or a movie. She has spent hundreds of hours on this one case.

“Jennifer Anderson ... has been a best friend to me,” the girl wrote as part of Anderson’s nomination. “She has made sure that I had everything I needed and that my needs and requests were heard by the judge.”

Anderson, who earned her J.D. at the Stetson University College of Law, is a partner at AndersonGlenn LLP in Ponte Vedra Beach, focusing on product liability and insurance coverage.

In addition to her professional work, she has three children – one of whom she and her husband took in after the child’s mother abandoned her six years ago.
As if Mary K. Wimsett doesn’t have enough to keep her busy – managing a solo practice in Gainesville that is focused on adoption law, volunteering as a guardian ad litem and attorney ad litem, and being a devoted mother and friend – she also competes in marathons and triathlons. She says, “If you can run a mile, you can run a half-marathon.” Stephanie Marchman, of the City Attorney’s Office in Gainesville, said, “By mile 13 of my first half-marathon, I began to question the wisdom of this encouragement, although I will say that I managed to run the entire race.”

If you plan to work with Wimsett, you’d better be prepared to run the whole race.

Wimsett, a graduate of the University of Florida Levin College of Law, began volunteering with the Guardian ad Litem Program when she was a new lawyer. Today, she usually is representing four or five children pro bono as a guardian ad litem and attorney ad litem or through Three Rivers Legal Services. Since 2006, she has worked with the Partnership for Strong Families and Children’s Home Society to find adoptive homes for children. The state provides a minimal fee for prospective parents, so Wimsett often absorbs the extra costs and time of travel, filing fees and other expenses. She also is a frequent resource for foster families that call for advice and assistance.

In 2010, Three Rivers Legal Services rarely handled adoptions, but when Wimsett became a volunteer attorney, she quickly became the person to answer questions, provide support to staff and accept referrals. When she added elder law to her expertise, she began to accept referrals in that area, too.

The cases Wimsett accepts can be complicated, such as representing a child in a contested dissolution of marriage. One case mentioned by several nominators that at first glance seemed simple – helping a child disabled by abuse get a motorized wheelchair – involved a fee waiver contested hearing and a subsequent Medicaid appeal.

Wimsett was instrumental in establishing the Gerald T. Bennett Inn of Court, which focuses on professionalism, and she now serves as its president.
Pamela Lynn Foels
9th Circuit

Pamela L. Foels is a shareholder with Zimmerman Kiser Sutcliffe P.A., in Orlando, concentrating on worker’s compensation cases.

But when Jamie Billotte Moses, president of the Orange County Bar Association, spoke to a middle-school class and asked if anybody had a lawyer in the family, she got a special insight. A girl raised her hand and explained that her father “defended hospitals” and her mother “protected children.” The girl was Pamela Foels’ daughter.

Since 1989, the year she became a member of The Florida Bar after getting her J.D. from the University of Florida’s Levin College of Law, Foels has helped more than 100 children and contributed more than 1,500 hours accepting guardian ad litem appointments.

One of Foels’ first such cases was horrifying. A mother with addiction issues left her three children at a hotel. They were adopted by a woman who abused them physically and emotionally. The oldest child, only 9, would run away with his siblings, trying to protect them. That’s when Foels got the case.

There aren’t always happy endings. The oldest child ended up incarcerated, the middle one went into foster care and moved out of state, and the youngest was reunited with his biological mother. She is rehabilitated, but the child has permanent physical and emotional scars.

However, the case cemented Foels’ commitment to being an advocate for children.

Foels is currently the guardian ad litem for 14 children, and many of her former clients have stayed in touch. A co-worker recalls being in Foels’ office and seeing some photos she hadn’t noticed before. Foels explained that they were children she had helped through the GAL program.

Co-worker and mentee Jamie Blucher said Foels’ busy work and home life would have made it easy for her to pay $350 – the suggested annual contribution to a legal aid organization under the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar – in lieu of doing pro bono work. Instead, Foels not only has accepted the work but also has taken the hard cases, ones that require continuous contact with the children, case managers, foster care workers, social service workers and the juvenile justice system.
The people at Florida Rural Legal Services know that family law cases can be the stickiest and most time-consuming — and the hardest to find volunteers for.

That’s why Thomas Saunders is so appreciated by Mary Daugherty, pro bono coordinator for the 10th Judicial Circuit. Without lawyers such as Saunders, she wrote in her nomination, “FRLS would not have had the resources to assist these families.”

Saunders, who earned his J.D. from the University of Florida Levin College of Law, practices with the Saunders Law Group in Bartow, with a concentration on family law, business litigation and personal injury-medical malpractice. In the last year, Saunders and his firm devoted almost 80 hours to two pro bono cases.

In one, he represented a client trying to establish paternity and a parenting plan for his daughter, after the client’s ex-wife and her family refused to allow time-sharing with the child. The case, litigated over two years, was complicated by the fact that both Saunders’ client and his ex-wife – as well as the child – required sign language interpreters.

In a second case, Saunders helped a woman get a dissolution of marriage and an award for alimony. The case is ongoing, with Saunders still working to ensure that the client gets the alimony awarded to her. The woman has no income, and the alimony is crucial to her survival.

A glance at Saunders’ other pro bono cases in recent years shows a similar pattern of dealing with family-law issues such as divorce, custody and child support. In one case, a couple trying to file adoption papers pro se walked into his office and asked for assistance. Saunders helped, and a final judgment of adoption was entered.

Saunders has served as president of the Polk County Trial Lawyers’ Association, and as chair of the 10th Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission and The Florida Bar Civil Trial Certification Committee.

“I have always felt that it is our duty as lawyers to give back to the community,” Saunders says, “and I have experienced great satisfaction in being able to give back through pro bono work.”
A child having her future determined in family court needs an advocate. She often also needs a mentor and a friend. That describes Miami lawyer Lyndall “Lyndy” Lambert.

Over the past 11 years, Lambert has represented six foster children in dependency court in Miami as an attorney ad litem. She also has acted as a pro bono guardian ad litem for five children in family court and has represented a parent in a child visitation dispute.

Lambert’s influence shows through in the case of a 14-year-old she began representing in 2012. The girl, whose mother died soon after she was born, lived with an abusive father, was in and out of group and foster homes, ran away several times and was sexually exploited. The state wanted to place her in an involuntary lockdown mental facility, but Lambert said that was not appropriate.

Lambert helped find a stable foster home for the girl -- and the girl’s new baby, who had been removed from her custody. The girl will age out of foster care soon, and Lambert has been helping her find a place to live and mentoring the girl as she transforms into a caring, loving mother. “She realized she had an adult who was on her side,” Lambert told the Daily Business Review. “She started taking my advice, and that was the turning point.” Since 2013, Lambert has spent more than 600 hours on this case.

In family court, Lambert represented a young mother whose custody dispute was complicated by an arrest and homelessness. Since 2012, Lambert has devoted about 180 hours to this case, and the woman now has a job, stable housing and 50/50 time sharing with her child.

Lambert’s pro bono efforts also include recruiting other attorneys to do pro bono work. She organized and hosted a full-day CLE training seminar in child advocacy and organized another seminar on guardian ad litem work.

Lambert, a graduate of the University of Miami School of Law, also has found strong support from Holland & Knight in Miami, where she is a partner. When Lawyers for Children America lost its office space, Holland & Knight stepped in to provide space in its Brickell Avenue offices.

Lyndall M. “Lyndy” Lambert

11th Circuit
Legal Aid of Manasota has been leaning heavily on William H. “Bill” Drumm since 2001, when he moved from New York state to sunny Sarasota.

Since 2001, Drumm has donated more than 530 hours of pro bono legal service. Drumm’s areas of concentration are family law along with business litigation. That’s good news for Legal Aid of Manasota, because family law is the biggest need in legal aid.

At any given time, Drumm may be representing several legal aid clients in complex family-law matters. He has been willing to take the most challenging cases, even the ones Manasota has been unable to place with any other attorney.

“He is deserving of this year’s award not only for the hundreds of pro bono hours he has donated, but also for his kindness, leadership and dedication to the cause of the less fortunate in our community,” wrote Pamela Fields, the pro bono coordinator at Legal Aid of Manasota. Fields also praised Drumm for being quiet and unassuming, even as he rarely turns down a pro bono referral.

Drumm, who earned his J.D. at New York Law School in New York City, also is active in the legal profession and community. He was a board member at Legal Aid of Manasota for seven years, and is a member of the Judge John M. Scheb American Inn of Court. He also is a youth basketball coach and has served as a Big Brother, in addition to being a board member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast.

“I attended law school because I wanted to be empowered to help people seek justice,” Drumm says on the website of the Law Office of William Drumm. “I chose family law and business litigation because our legal system, while not perfect, provides the best available remedies for assisting people and protecting their rights.”
Isabel “Cissy” Boza Sevelin
13th Circuit

For most of the first 13 years after she earned her J.D. from Barry University’s Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law, Isabel “Cissy” Boza Sevelin worked for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court of the Middle District of Florida and was unable to provide pro bono legal service.

She opened a solo practice in Thonotosassa in 2013 – and since then has made up for lost time.

In 2014, Sevelin donated 863 hours to various organizations, and in 2015 that total was even higher. In fact, most of her practice now consists of pro bono work, which explains why she was nominated for the 13th Circuit honor by the Bay Area Legal Services’ Volunteer Lawyers Program, Crossroads for Florida Kids, Inc., and Are You Safe, Inc.

With the Bay Area program, Sevelin began by volunteering with the Domestic Violence Assistance Project. She also serves on the Care Referral Panel and always is working on several cases at a time. When she has a break between hearings, she will head down to the clerk’s office to assist victims.

Sevelin also helps victims of domestic violence through Are You Safe, mostly representing women as they seek injunctions for protection.

With Crossroads for Florida Kids, Sevelin’s work goes beyond simply representing a troubled youth. She makes frequent trips to jail to visit and gain the trust of teenagers. If the teens fall back into trouble – as they sometimes do – Sevelin won’t give up, continuing her visits and counseling them in the hope that they will make better choices.

“Ms. Sevelin is successful in winning the trust and respect of her teen clients because of a combination of legal advocacy, compassion and empathy,” Crossroads founder Rosemary Armstrong wrote in a nomination letter.

Sevelin also volunteers in teen court and has devoted hundreds of hours serving as a guardian ad litem in dependency court.

In a nomination letter, Jena Hudson, a staff attorney with Bay Area Legal Services, wrote: “Ms. Sevelin has not only provided significant pro bono legal assistance to indigent clients but has also made a substantial emotional impact on each of these clients’ lives.”
Robert Louis Thirston, II
14th Circuit

Robert L. Thirston, II, of Panama City Beach got an early start when it comes to providing free services to those in need.

As a student at Appalachian School of Law in Grundy, Va., Thirston dove right in with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, and in his last two years at law school, he was the program director. Before earning his J.D. in 2007, Thirston provided more than 180 hours of pro bono service.

When Thirston started working for the State Attorney’s Office in the 20th Circuit in 2008, he continued his volunteer work. He organized and participated in the National Bar Association’s annual Thanksgiving Day dinner program, delivering dinners to low-income families. He also served as a judge in the Southwest Florida High School Mock Trial competition and worked with the Southwest Florida Community Foundation and the local chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha to award scholarships to high school students. With a group of other minority attorneys, he volunteered for the National Bar Association’s outreach program, visiting elementary schools in underserved neighborhoods to inspire students to think about careers in the law.

When Thirston opened his own practice in Panama City Beach in 2012, the 20th Circuit’s loss was the 14th Circuit’s gain.

He immediately became involved with the Bay County Bar Association/Legal Services of North Florida’s monthly First Saturday Legal Clinic. There he provides legal assistance to low-income individuals and families in civil legal matters. Through this program, he has spent well in excess of 100 hours on cases involving divorce and child custody.

From 2014-15, Thirston was co-chair of the clinic, meaning he not only was helping clients but also was recruiting fellow attorneys and making sure everything ran smoothly.

Recently, Thirston started volunteering with Legal Services of North Florida to represent clients who are having trouble with their federal income taxes. He has agreed to do the same through Three Rivers Legal Services in Jacksonville, through its Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic.
Since joining Holland & Knight’s West Palm Beach office in 2001 after several years as an assistant state attorney, Jason D. Lazarus has provided a wide range of pro bono services, including defense of eviction, foreclosure, Lemon Law cases and contractual disputes. Over that time, he has donated more than 900 hours, and in one case in which there was an award of attorney’s fees, he directed that the money be given to the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County.

That record of service has earned Lazarus several honors, and in 2015 he was inducted into the Legal Aid Society’s Hall of Fame.

One case in particular demonstrates Lazarus’ dedication and legal ability, as well what pro bono work can mean to a needy client. In 2008, Debbie Vaughn, a woman in her 50s, was arrested after spraying a neighbor with a hose. During the arrest by a sheriff’s deputy, her arm was broken, her shoulder was dislocated and she lost several teeth. In addition, she faced several charges related to resisting arrest.

After some charges were dropped and a trial concluded, she was found guilty only of resisting an officer without violence.

In a pro se action, she sued the deputy and the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office for excessive use of force and other claims. As the case went on, Vaughn was unable to find a lawyer to represent her even on a contingency fee basis, and she was running out of money and risked foreclosure.

Lazarus, with help from Holland & Knight, became involved after accepting the case from the Volunteer Lawyers’ Project for the Southern District of Florida in 2014. In the end, the sheriff’s office admitted it should not have hired the deputy, considering his background, and a settlement was reached. The law firm did not keep any attorney’s fees, and gave the entire settlement, minus a few minimal costs incurred, to Vaughn. Lazarus spent more than 200 hours on the case.

“It was a miracle that an attorney as good as you took my case and believed in me,” Vaughn told Lazarus, who is a graduate of the University of Florida Levin College of Law.
Patricia A. Eables is no newcomer to The Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Awards.

In 2008, Eables also received the honor for the 16th Circuit, with a nomination focusing on her guardian ad litem work. This year, Eables’ nominators from Legal Services of Greater Miami told a story that illustrates the struggles to find access to justice, the dedication of pro bono attorneys and the twists and turns a case can take.

In 1997, unbeknownst to family members, a Key West man took out a reverse mortgage on the conch-style home that had been in the family for generations. He deeded the house to a daughter in 2001, then died in 2010. In 2012, to the surprise of his daughter, the process server came with a foreclosure action.

The daughter wanted to keep the home where she had been raised. She qualified for services from Legal Services of Greater Miami. Eables got the case and raised numerous defenses, but was unable to reach a settlement at mediation that would let her client remain in the house. Meanwhile, the home had fallen into disrepair, and the client, who had a disability and a limited income, knew she would be unable to make the necessary repairs. Worse, though the initial maximum amount of the loan was about $96,000, by 2015 it had grown to more than $375,000.

At that point, Eables and her client realized that their best hope would be to salvage the equity in the family property. The daughter approached a friend, who also is an architect, and he and his business partner made an offer to buy the house. The daughter accepted.

In the end, the daughter couldn’t retain ownership. But she did come away with some money, and Eables helped her relocate to an apartment. Eables contributed more than 158 hours to this case.

Eables, a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law, moved to Key West in 1994 after beginning her legal career in Little Rock. She now has a solo practice, Patricia A. Eables, PA, and has been active in many local organizations.
Russell Miller-Thompson
17th Circuit

Russell Miller-Thompson has had an interesting career – not all of it law-related – since earning his J.D. from the University of Miami School of Law and being admitted to The Florida Bar in 1985. He was already a successful executive with Pylon Manufacturing, an automotive parts supplier in Deerfield Beach. After becoming a lawyer, he stayed with the company, working his way up to chief operating officer and, finally, president and CEO.

In 2000, though, he decided to use his legal skills to help private clients, and he opened up a solo practice, the Law Offices of Russell M. Thompson, a personal-injury firm in Sunrise. Soon after, Thompson also began using his legal skills to help those less fortunate than him.

A longtime advocate for the poor, Thompson now volunteers with Legal Aid Service of Broward County and Coast to Coast Legal Aid of South Florida, working mostly through three pro bono projects: Broward Lawyers Care, Mission United Veterans Pro Bono Legal Project and the Tracey McPharlin Pro Bono Pro Bono Dependency Recruitment Initiative, whose purpose is to aid at-risk children.

Over the past 12 years, Thompson has represented 22 pro bono clients on distinct cases, with those who benefitted including veterans, survivors of domestic violence and child survivors of abuse and neglect. He also has advised more than 30 low-income clients on housing and debt-collection issues through the Legal Advice Hotline in just the last two years.

“In my regular practice, I may win a large award for a client and they complain that it was not large enough,” Thompson said. “On the other hand, I do a simple dissolution of marriage for a mother, and after the case is complete she will come to my office with a basket of fruit to thank me for the work I did for her.”

Thompson also has worked with the Broward County Bar Association’s mentorship program and is a member of the Broward County Bar Association’s Board of Directors.

In 2011 and 2013, Thompson received awards for Outstanding Pro Bono Service from Broward Lawyers Care and Coast to Coast Legal Aid of South Florida.
When a foster child named Lonnie turned 18, he figured it was time to take the money he had been saving from an after-school job and buy his first car so he could travel to a better job as well as to a local college.

Lonnie bought a used car and, a week later, the car was inoperable and the cost of repairs out of reach. Luckily for Lonnie, his caseworker contacted the Seminole County Bar Association Legal Aid Society, which placed a call to Taras S. Rudnitsky.

Rudnitsky, of the Rudnitsky Law Firm in Longwood, has devoted his career to consumer protection. As a bonus, he is an automotive engineer with bachelor’s and master’s degrees in mechanical engineering. When negotiations with the used-car dealer broke down, Rudnitsky filed a 20-page complaint and aggressively pursued the case. In the end, the dealer gave a full refund to Lonnie, who now drives a car he purchased with a bit more caution.

Rudnitsky is a treasure to three legal aid groups – the Seminole County Bar Association Legal Aid Society, Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida and the Legal Advocacy Center of Central Florida. He has logged more than 600 hours of pro bono work over the last five years, and those hours don’t include the time he has spent training and mentoring legal services attorneys, consulting on cases, making presentations on behalf of legal services groups or serving as a member or officer of their boards. He also has been generous financially to help sustain the mission of legal aid.

Rudnitsky has served on The Florida Bar’s Small Claims Rules Committee since 2011 and is president of the Ukrainian American Bar Association.

“Taras is always willing to help the most vulnerable in our community gain access to the legal system to resolve their legal issues,” Silvia McLain, executive director of the Seminole County Bar Association Legal Aid Society, said of Rudnitsky.

Rudnitsky’s commitment to consumer justice began before he finished his J.D. at the University of Michigan Law School. As part of the school’s clinical law program, he assisted consumers in cases ranging from landlord/tenant disputes to employment discrimination.
Kathryn “Kate” Joan Hill
19th Circuit

Kathryn “Kate” J. Hill began her legal career as a prosecutor in the 19th Judicial Circuit, but after five years she moved into private practice – and almost immediately began taking pro bono cases.

Today, Hill is a go-to lawyer for Florida Rural Legal Services, which covers Indian River County. The services she provides for low-income people include dissolutions of marriage, shared-parenting plans, child support and other related matters of family law.

Hill, who has been taking pro bono clients from Florida Rural Legal Services since 1999, reported more than 200 hours of pro bono work in 2015 – more than any other lawyer with FRLS.

What really impressed the Indian River County Bar Association, one of the groups nominating Hill for the pro bono honor, is that she always seems to have an active pro bono case. When one case is resolved, she is ready to accept the next one.

Hill also is willing to accept cold calls from people who need legal services but say they aren’t able to pay. Hill frequently refers such cases to Florida Rural Legal Services for screening, indicating that she is willing to take the case on a pro bono basis if Florida Rural Legal Services finds that the client qualifies economically.

“Kate provides peace of mind when people are most vulnerable,” wrote 19th Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Coordinator Carolyn Fabrizio in her nomination of Hill. “She lives her oath as an attorney that ‘I will never reject, from any consideration personal to myself, the cause of the defenseless or oppressed.’”

Hill, who earned her J.D. at the University of Miami School of Law, has a solo practice in Vero Beach. She has served on the boards of directors of C.A.S.T.L.E. (Child Abuse Services, Training & Life Enrichment) in Fort Pierce, the March of Dimes and Child Care Resources She also has worked with the United Way and the Domestic Violence Task Force, taken part in the Florida Supreme Court’s Justice Teaching program, served as a literacy tutor and helped with an immigration clinic in Miami.
Kelley Geraghty Price
20th Circuit

In her office work, Kelley Geraghty Price has used her leadership skills to become a director at the Cohen & Grigsby office in Naples. In her pro bono work, she has used those skills to lead three major initiatives that expanded access to justice in Collier County.

In 2004, with the creation of Legal Aid Service of Collier County as part of a statewide consolidation of legal aid programs, Price used her position as then-president of the Collier County Bar Association to focus attention on the need for legal services for those who could not afford them. She worked with both groups to create the Collier Lawyers Care Pro Bono Program and to recruit a core group of volunteer attorneys. Today, CLC has almost 200 pro bono lawyers.

When the foreclosure crisis hit in 2008, Price sprang back into action and helped found the Collier County Foreclosure Task Force. She led recruitment, organizing and outreach efforts, and through 2012, the task force helped more than 1,000 local homeowners at risk of foreclosure. Thousands more visited the task force’s website.

In 2012, Price decided the county needed a pro bono event to honor and serve veterans. The inaugural Wills for Heroes was conducted that November – to coincide with Veterans Day – with the purpose of providing wills, power of attorney forms, medical care directives and other estate-planning documents to veterans as well as first responders.

Since then, Wills for Heroes has served more than 100 people, with more than 40 lawyers participating, along with paralegals and law students.

There was one more benefit to Wills for Heroes: It has served as a gateway to further pro bono service, encouraging lawyers who never had done pro bono work for the Legal Aid Service of Collier County to take cases.

“She creates an environment that makes it easy and comfortable for other attorneys to perform pro bono service through legal aid,” wrote Jeffrey Ahren, director of development at LASCC.

Price, a graduate of the University of Florida’s Levin College of Law, joined the LASCC Board of Directors in January 2016.
Even in a law firm that values pro bono service – for six consecutive years, 100 percent of the 650 U.S. lawyers with Hunton & Williams LLP have devoted time to pro bono service – the efforts of partner Andrew Kamensky stand out.

Over the past three years, Kamensky has dedicated more than 1,200 hours to the legal needs of low-income people. That’s on top of his successful bankruptcy practice at the firm’s New York City office.

Most of Kamensky’s pro bono work has been with two projects: the Volunteers of Legal Service’s Incarcerated Mothers Law Project and the International Refugee Assistance Project.

Almost every month, Kamensky takes a train to the Taconic Correctional Facility in Bedford Hills, N.Y., where he provides legal services to mothers who are in prison. The issues these women face include custody and visitation, guardianship, foster care, child support and termination of parental rights. Kamensky has spent more than 300 hours helping more than 15 mothers over the last three years, and the project is now part of his firm’s summer associate program.

“Recently, a client who had not seen her children in several months mailed me photos of herself playing with her children at Taconic, after I helped her arrange for visitation,” Kamensky recalled. “Her kids’ smiling faces were priceless!”

The refugee project teams lawyers and law students to help refugees who need assistance in navigating the rules and processes of resettlement in the United States.

Kamensky has dedicated more than 200 hours helping an Afghan refugee who had provided assistance to the U.S. armed forces. In November 2015, Kamensky and his team scored a victory by obtaining visas for the client, which means he can continue to seek full asylum.

Kamensky, a graduate of the University of Florida’s Levin College of Law, has served as the pro bono chair of the New York office for the past four years. He also assists lawyers in other Hunton & Williams offices with their pro bono cases, and he has devoted significant time to a bankruptcy case involving a New York nonprofit that provides housing and health care to AIDS patients.
Recipients of the Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award

Ira J. Kurzban, Miami (1982)
Philip John Padovano, Tallahassee (1983)
William J. Sheppard, Jacksonville (1985)
Roderick Norman Petrey, Miami (1986)
Steven Lauren Seliger, Quincy (1987)
Jean Gillespie Booher, Fort Lauderdale (1988)
Herbert Lee Allen, Jr., Orlando (1989)
Howard W. Dixon, Miami (1990)
Steven Mark Goldstein, Tallahassee (1992)
Nancy S. Palmer, Maitland (1993)
Allan Howard Terl, Fort Lauderdale (1994)
Richard Craig Milstein, Miami (1996)
James M. Russ, Orlando (1997)
Vance Edwin Saltier, Miami (1998)
Daniel Frederick Wilensky, Jacksonville (1999)
Gerald Israel Kornreich, Miami (2001)
Maurice Wagner, Deltona (2002)
Jacqueline Marie Valdespino, Miami (2003)
Edward M. Waller, Jr., Tampa (2004)
James M. Vanderplas, Indian Rocks Beach (2005)
Katherine Warthen Ezell, Miami (2006)
Talbot “Sandy” D’Alember, Tallahassee (2007)
Sylvia Hardaway Walbolt, Tampa (2008)
Russell E. Carlisle, Fort Lauderdale (2009)
Robert C. Josefsberg, Miami (2010)
Robert G. Kerrigan, Pensacola (2011)
Rosemary E. Armstrong, Tampa (2012)
Jeanne Trudeau Tate, Tampa (2013)
Karen Meyer Buesing, Tampa (2014)
John W. Kozyak, Miami (2015)
Bruce B. Blackwell, Winter Park (2016)

Recipients of the Distinguished Judicial Service Award

Hon. William A. Van Nortwick, Jr., Tallahassee (2005)
Hon. Lauren L. Brodie, Naples (2007)
John Robert Blue (Retired Judge), St. Petersburg (2009)
Hon. Susan G. Sexton, Tampa (2011)
Hon. James M. Barton, II, Tampa (2012)
Hon. Claudia Rickert Isom, Tampa (2013)
Hon. Emily A. Peacock, Tampa (2014)
Hon. Ashley B. Moody, Tampa (2015)
Hon. Cynthia L. Cox, Vero Beach (2016)
Recipients of the Distinguished Federal Judicial Service Award
Hon. Catherine Peek McEwen, Tampa (2016)

Recipients of the Chief Justice’s Law Firm Commendation
Thomson, Zeder, Bohrer, Werth, Adorno & Razook (1985)
Holland & Knight (1990)
Emmanuel, Sheppard & Condon (1992)
Steel Hector & Davis (1994)
The Broward County Attorney’s Office, Office of the Public Defender (1997)
Thirteenth Judicial Circuit (1998)
Carlton Fields (2003)
Barrett & Barrett (2005)
Johnson, Pope, Bokor, Ruppel & Burns LLP (2006)
Hogan & Hartson LLP (2007)
Messer & Messer (2007)
City Attorney’s Office, City of Tallahassee (2008)
Fishback, Dominick, Bennett, Stepter, Ardaman, Ahlers, Bolton & Langley LLP (2009)
Hunton & Williams LLP (2010)
Foley & Lardner, LLP (2011)
Akerman LLP (2015)
Duane Morris LLP (2016)
Recipients of the Chief Justice’s Voluntary Bar Association Pro Bono Service Award

Hillsborough County Bar Association (1991)
Orange County Bar Association (1992)
Put Something Back, A Joint Project of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit and Dade County Bar Association (1993)
The Legal Aid Foundation of the Tallahassee Bar Association, Inc. (1994)
Escambia/Santa Rosa Bar Association (1995)
Counsel for Cuban Detainees (1996)
Jacksonville Bar Association (1997)
Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers, Inc. (1998)
Collier County Bar Association (1999)
Bankruptcy Bar Association of the Southern District of Florida (2000)
St. Petersburg Bar Association (2001)
Jacksonville Bar Association (2002)
Indian River County Bar Association (2003)
Clearwater Bar Association (2005)
Hispanic Bar Association, Stetson College of Law (2006)
Bankruptcy Bar Association of the Southern District of Florida (2007)
Cuban American Bar Association (2008)
Dade County Bar Association (2009)
Seminole County Bar Association (2010)
Tallahassee Women Lawyers (2011)
Saint Lucie County Bar Association (2012)
Tampa Bay Hispanic Bar Association (2013)
Central Florida Bankruptcy Law Association (2014)
Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers (2015)
Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association (2016)

Recipients of the Florida Bar’s Young Lawyers Division Pro Bono Service Award

Robert Alan Williams, Tallahassee (1993)
A. Bryant Applegate, Orlando (1994)
Cheryl Ada Elizabeth Little, Miami (1995)
Robert Lowery Hamilton, Orlando (1996)
Michelle Anchors, Tallahassee (1997)
Karen Josefsberg Ladis, Miami (1998)
Scott Edmonds Ray, Miami (1999)
Steven H. Malone, West Palm Beach (2000)
Jacqueline Hogan Scola, Miami (2001)
Lawrence Howard Kolin, Orlando (2002)
Laurel Francis Moore, Tampa (2003)
Thomas Alan Zehnder, Orlando (2004)
Melanie Emmons Damian, Miami (2005)
Mac Richard McCoy, Tampa (2007)
Heather Pinder Rodriguez, Orlando (2008)
Carin Manders Constantine, St. Petersburg (2009)
Monica Miller Evans, Tallahassee (2010)
Rachel May Zysk, Tampa (2011)
Timothy Allen Moran, Oviedo (2012)
Rebecca Lauren Sosa, Miami (2013)
Laura E. Ward, Tampa (2014)
Sara Alpert, Tampa (2015)
Elisa J. D’Amico, Miami (2016)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Recipients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1982 | Ralph Artigliere, Lakeland  
Kenneth S. Beall, Jr., Palm Beach  
Russell E. Carlisle, Fort Lauderdale  
William M. Chanfrau, Daytona Beach  
Leon Blakely Cheek, III, Altamonte Springs  
Irwin A. Connelly, Bunnell  
C. Andrew Coomes, Orlando  
Lyman T. Fletcher, Jacksonville  
Clara Floyd Gehan, Gainesville  
Judith Ann Ginn, Wildwood  
Baya Harrison, III, Tallahassee  
Mayo C. Johnston, Panama City  
Ira J. Kurzban, Miami  
Michael S. Moreland, Fort Myers  
Michael F. Novilla, St. Petersburg  
Stephan Jay Ross, Tampa  
Richard J. Saliba, Fort Pierce |
| 1983 | Harvey Martin Alper, Altamonte Springs  
Ben F. Barnes, Marianna  
William Bill Barnett, Orlando  
Neil Chonin, Coral Gables  
Julian Edward Collins, Lake City  
Linda A. Conahan, Fort Lauderdale  
Burton Cornell Conner, Okeechobee  
Whitney Hugh Cotney, Jacksonville  
Joseph Cardwell Fuller, Fort Myers  
Harry Allison Johnston, II, West Palm Beach  
Jacalyn Nichols Kolk, Tampa  
Philip John Padovano, Tallahassee  
Shon Alan Saxon, Gainesville  
W. Denis Shelley, Daytona Beach  
James Vanderplas, Indian Rocks Beach  
Robert Arthur Young, Bartow |
| 1984 | Jon Harmon Anderson, Lakeland  
Robert Stanley Appleton, Marathon  
William Reid Clifton, Cocoa  
Cecil L. Davis, Jr., Tallahassee  
Kenneth S. Davis, Gainesville  
Rafael E. “Ralph” Fernandez, Tampa  
Donald T. Franke, Naples  
Samuel R. Hillman, Clearwater  
Walton B. Hunter, Tavares  
Thorwald John Husfeld, Deland  
Milton Kelner, Miami  
Robert Gordon Kerrigan, Pensacola  
Carroll L. McCaulay, Panama City  
Hugh T. Maloney, Fort Lauderdale  
Richard Joseph R. Parkinson, Orlando  
John “Jack” Scarola, West Palm Beach  
William J. Sheppard, Jacksonville |
1985
Terrence William Ackert, Orlando
Joan Helen Bickerstaff, Melbourne
Michael Lee Bryant, Gainesville
Henry M. “Hank” Coxe, III, Jacksonville
Michael Dubiner, West Palm Beach
Jose Antonio Garrido, Jr., Miami
John C. Guerriero, Fort Pierce
James W. Kynes, Tampa
Susan Sheppard Lazier, Key West
Walter W. Manley, II, Lakeland
David Paul Montgomery, Bradenton
Cathi C. O’Halloran, Tallahassee
John Michael Passidomo, Naples
Ronald Greg Thornton, Port Richey
John Dirffie Tyler, Daytona Beach
R. John Westberry, Pensacola
William J. Zloch, Fort Lauderdale

1986
Samuel Thomas Adams, Panama City
Ronald V. Alvarez, West Palm Beach
Marvin Wecker Bingham, Jr., Gainesville
Jack Thomas Edmund, Bartow
Sally Harris Foote, Clearwater
Sandra Torcise Fowler, Key West
Kenneth Roy Hart, Tallahassee
Harry Michael Hipler, Dania
H. Randolph Klein, Ocala
Richard Craig Milstein, Coral Gables
Samuel John Morley, Pensacola
John G. Pare, Tampa
John C. Patterson, Jr., Sarasota
Gerald Sheldon Rutberg, Casselberry
Kimberly Sands, Daytona Beach
Stephen Duane Thompson, Fort Myers
Louis B. Vocelle, Jr., Vero Beach
Waddell Arlie Wallace, II, Jacksonville
Michael Raymond Walsh, Orlando

1987
Terrence William Ackert, Orlando
William H. Andrews, Jacksonville
Dan Phillip Brawley, Lakeland
Rowlett W. Bryant, Panama City
Charles J. B. Cino, Daytona Beach
Patrick G. Emmanuel, Pensacola
Thomas Kenwood Equels, Miami
Bobbie Lee Eubank, Gainesville
Saxton Robert Gaskin, III, Clearwater
Julian R. Hanley, Naples
Stephen P. Hoskins, Fort Pierce
Alice Ruth Huneycutt, Tampa
William Hamlin Kilby, Fort Lauderdale
Gregory Charles Meissner, Bradenton
Steven Lauren Seliger, Quincy
Charles Raymond Stepter, Jr., Orlando
Michael A. Viscomi, West Palm Beach
1988
Robert Lee Appleget, Jr., Ocala
Rosemary E. Armstrong, Tampa
Jean Gillespie Booher, Fort Lauderdale
Joseph Glenn Bywater, Lakeland
John B. Carr, Pensacola
Clyde Mabry Collins, Jr., Jacksonville
Meredith Craig, St. Petersburg
Donald N. Crowell, Orlando
Thomas E. Cushman, St. Augustine
John Paul Fleck, Jr., Bradenton
Crissie Bates Foster, Palm Bay
Kathleen Carol Fox, Gainesville
William Adams Lewis, Panama City
John Bolling Powell, IV, West Palm Beach
Maurice Rosen, North Miami Beach
Robert A. Sandow, Live Oak
Joan Stewart, Tallahassee
David Clayton Weigel, Naples
Carol Ann Wolf, Tavernier

1989
Herbert Lee Allen, Jr., Orlando
Sandra Gail Atkins, Panama City
Robert B. Bennett, Jr., Sarasota
Barbara A. Burkett, Gainesville
Pamela D. Cichon, Daytona Beach
William Gentry Crawford, Jr., Hollywood
Marlin Marion Feagle, Lake City
Charlotte I. Hunter, Ocala
Jeffrey Michael Kirsch, Stuart
David J. Lillesand, Miami
Julie Osterhout, Cape Coral
Robert E. Pyle, Winter Haven
Kenneth Steven Rappaport, Boca Raton
Louis Francis Ray, Jr., Pensacola
Richard M. Smith, Tallahassee
Robert E. Warren, Jacksonville
Thomas Edmondson Whigham, Sanford
Douglas Mark Williamson, St. Petersburg

1990
Martin Gerald Brooks, Hollywood
Pamela Arianne Brown, Deland
Patrick Desmond Doherty, Clearwater
Patrick James Faucheux, Panama City
Ricardo A. Fernandez, Tampa
Gwendolyn Elaine E. Gibson, Jacksonville
James Kellogg Green, West Palm Beach
Fierce James Guard, Jr., Lakeland
Douglas Martin Halsey, Miami
Charles Emil Heim, Jr., Indian Harbour Beach
Norman Linder Hull, Orlando
Michael W. Johnson, Ocala
Martha Ann Lott, Gainesville
Pamela S. MacKie, Naples
Donald Francis O’Connell, Venice
Karen Lynn Oehme, Tallahassee
Timothy McManus Ryan, Dania
Evett Louise Simmons, Port St. Lucie
Daniel Mark Soloway, Pensacola
Joseph Bryan Wolkowsky, Tavernier
1991

Eddie Mack Anderson, Lake City
Mitzi Cockrell Austin, Gainesville
Vanda Y. Bayliss, Sarasota
M. Robert Blanchard, Pensacola
Sara Blumberg, Boynton Beach
M. Thomas Bond, Jr., Ocala
Timothy Craig Campbell, Panama City
Samuel George Crosby, Lakeland
V. James Dickson, St. Petersburg
Theresa Bland Edwards, Fort Lauderdale
Donald Arthur Gifford, Tampa
Diego Handel, Ormond Beach
William Huggett, Miami
Sally Dee Millward Kest, Orlando
Wayne Raymond McDonough, Vero Beach
John Michael Passidomo, Naples
George “Buddy” E. Schulz, Jr., Jacksonville
Steven P. Shea, Marathon
William Eugene Sizemore, Tampa
William Mark Stern, Maitland
David Gregory Tucker, Tallahassee

1992

Janice F. Bessinger, Lake City
Ronald Ira Cole, Ocala
Richard J. D’Amico, Ormond Beach
Karen A. Gievers, Miami
Pierce James Guard, Jr., Lakeland
Ralph Vincent “Terry” Hadley, III, Winter Park
Randall Wayne Hanna, Tallahassee
Jeffrey Allen King, Sarasota
Karen Boroughs Lopez, St. Petersburg
Linda Weinhold McIntyre, Coral Springs
Roger N. Messer, Port St. Lucie
David W. Palmer, Destin
Marina Stevens Roach, Naples
Robert M. W. Shalhoub, West Palm Beach
F. Emory Springfield, Gainesville
Edward Leonard Stahley, Merritt Island
William A. Van Nortwick, Jr., Jacksonville
William Gerard Warner, Panama City
John W. Wilcox, Tampa

1993

Michael Alan Bedke, Tampa
Charlotte Elaine Brayer, Tallahassee
Matthew James Comisky, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Richard Domenick Custureri, Ocala
John Fletcher Daniel, Panama City
William E. Evans, Jr., Bartow
Linnes Finney, Jr., Fort Pierce
William Stephen Graessle, Jacksonville
David Brian Haber, Coral Gables
Michael Halpern, Key West
Jane Kreusler Walsh, West Palm Beach
Michael Leddy O’Neill, Daytona Beach
George Thomas Paulk, II, Cocoa Beach
James M. Russ, Orlando
Robert P. Scheb, Sarasota
Jeanne Marie Reichrath Singer, Gainesville
James Dunwoody Swearingen, Pensacola
Allan Howard Terl, Fort Lauderdale
Craig Christopher Villanti, New Port Richey
Robert David Young, North Fort Myers

1994

J. Nickolas Alexander, Jr., Orange Park
Brian Peter Battaglia, St. Petersburg
Jerri Ann Blair, Tavares
Edwin M. Boyer, Sarasota
Kathryn Eckerlein Errington, Pensacola
Nancy Wood Gregoire, Fort Lauderdale
Charlene G. Guller, Key West
Christine P. Hisam, Naples
Frederick Laurence Koberlein, Lake City
Clark David Lochridge, Naples
Alexander C. MacKinnon, Orlando
Ellen Sly Masters, Bartow
Elizabeth Maria Schwabedissen, Miami
Robert Alan Shimberg, Tampa
Anne Talbot, Washington, D.C.
Joseph Tomberg, Wabasso
Robert L. Travis, Jr., Quincy
Frank D. Upchurch, III, St. Augustine
Terence John Watterson, Palm Beach Gardens
Jeffrey Pat Whitton, Panama City
E.A.W. “Pan” Zettler, Williston

1995

J. Victor Africano, Jr., Live Oak
Thomas Porter Bell, Pembroke Pines
Joyce Marie Clayton, Gainesville
Jane Louise Cornett, Stuart
Caroline Carthage Emery, Jacksonville
Jonathan Edward Hausburg, Sarasota
Harley Herman, Leesburg
David Brooks Kundin, Tallahassee
Warren Thomas LaFray, Clearwater
Alan Isaac Mishael, Miami
Carol C. Murphy, Lakeland
Harold D. Oehler, Tampa
Julie Lynne Ozburn, Holly Hill
Christopher Nida Patterson, Panama City
Melinda Paniagua Riddle, Naples
Louis Kahn Rosenbloum, Pensacola
Siobhan Helene Shea, Palm Beach
Tegan Slaton, Key West
Pearl Crosby Smith, Cocoa
William David Wallace, Washington, D.C.
Dorothea Watson, Orlando

1996

Louis Vincent Cianfrogna, Titusville
Graham Clarke, Panama City
Ivan Kensey Clements, Jr., Deland
Cynthia L. Cox, Vero Beach
Robert Franklin Dallas, Atlanta, Georgia
Jessica Calvert Dumas, Jacksonville
Sara Vermelle Fielding, Lakeland
Josephine Gagliardi, Fort Myers
Cary Augustus Hardee, II, Madison
William Charles Henry, Bradenton
John Alexander Jabro, Key Largo
Charles Daniel Jamieson, West Palm Beach
Richard Thomas Jones, Gainesville
John Marshall Kest, Orlando
Nancy Moate Ley, Clearwater
William Douglas Marsh, Pensacola
Robert A. Mick, Tallahassee
Richard Craig Milstein, Miami
David Thomas Price, Deerfield Beach
Gilbert Michael Singer, Deerfield Beach
Carol Ann Volini, Ocala

1997
Leonard Albert Barrow, Jr., Melbourne
Bruce Beford Blackwell, Orlando
Barbara Ann Burns, Chicago, Illinois
Raymond Francis Brady, Gainesville
Susan Lynn Chapman, Sarasota
Stephen Herre Echser, Pensacola
Joseph P. George, Jr., Key West
Alice Julia Graves, Vero Beach
Frank Allan Kreidler, Lake Worth
Henry Latimer, Fort Lauderdale
Dominic C. MacKenzie, Jacksonville
Teresa Byrd Morgan, Lake City
Kimberlee Ann Nagel, Lakeland
Stewart Oliver Olson, St. Petersburg
Abigail Price Williams, Miami
Warren Russell Ross, Punta Gorda
Lou Tally, Mount Dora
Cerese Crawford Taylor, Tampa
Timothy Michael Warner, Panama City
Sarah Hague White, Daytona Beach (posthumously)
Harriet Williams Williams, Tallahassee

1998
Jodi Marie Anderson, Tavares
Gypsy Cowherd Bailey, Tallahassee
Charles Bennett Bollinger, III, Panama City
Jill Jacob Burzynski, Naples
A. Thomas Connick, Jr., Deerfield Beach
Mary Alice Ferrell, Sarasota
Frank M. Gafford, Lake City
Robert James Gorman, Fort Pierce
Lynne Hankins Fielder, Key West
Kelly B. Hardwick, III, Bartow
Norberto Sergio Katz, Orlando
Joseph D. Lorenz, Fort Walton Beach
Margaret Diane Mathews, Tampa
Joseph Clay Meux, Sr., Jacksonville
Roger W. Plata, St. Petersburg
Robert Rivars, Boca Raton
Phyllis M. Rosier, Starke
Vance Edwin Salter, Miami
Dwight W. Severs, Titusville
Michael Bryant Wingo, Daytona Beach
Howard Jeffrey Wunderlich, East Islip, New York

1999
Calvin Joseph Allen, Key West
Robert Lee Appleget, Jr., Ocala
Terry Lytle Bledsoe, Altamonte Springs
James Andrew Conway, Stuart
George T. Dunlap, III, Bartow
Ross Mathew Goodman, Pensacola
Lloyd C. Hawthorne, Live Oak
A. Margaret Hesford, Lauderdale Lakes
David Albert King, Orange Park
Elizabeth R. Mannion, Clearwater
Sidney Lewis Matthew, Tallahassee
Catherine Gail Novack, Tampa
Marilyn Wolf Peterson, Gainesville
Lawrence James Phalin, Orlando
Stephen Ralph Ponder, Daytona Beach
Bonnie Kay Roberts, Bonifay
Richard Brian Simring, Miami
Kurt Alan Streyffeler, Fort Myers
Stanley Robert Swartz, Fort Myers
Gary A. Woodfield, Palm Beach

2000
Anne V. Gallagher Alper, Fort Lauderdale
Deborah J. Andrews, Ponte Vedra Beach
Joy Anne Bartmon, Boca Raton
Conrad Cecil “Sonny” Bishop, III, Perry
Mikele Stander Carter, Blairsville, Georgia
Russell Lyle Cheatham, III, St. Petersburg
John Richard Cook, Okeechobee
John David Dumbaugh, Sarasota
Susan Whaley Fox, Tampa
Amy Ellen Goodblatt, Orlando
Alexander John Gordon, Punta Gorda
Larry D. Hardaway, Lakeland
Bruce Edward Hoffman, Gainesville
Samuel S. Jacobson, Jacksonville
M. Catherine Lannon, Tallahassee
Patrick M. Magill, Orlando
Joel Margules, Panama City
John W. Merting, Pensacola
Keith Marshall Schenck, Inverness
Holly R. Skolnick, Miami
Joseph J. Vetrick, Key Largo

2001
Bryan Lee Albers, St. Petersburg
Nina Nigest Ashenafi, Tallahassee
Michael S. Becker, Daytona Beach
Mark Alan Bednar, Pensacola
Jeffry Jon Branham, Orlando
Thomas W. Brown, Lake City
J. Kevin Carey, Tampa
Lawrence Gordon Chadband, Lakeland
Mary Day Coker, Gainesville
Billy Joe Hoot Crawford, Panama City
Josephine Gagliardi, Fort Myers
Peter Thomas Gianino, Stuart
Marvin C. Gutter, Fort Lauderdale
Edward Pendleton Jackson, Jacksonville
Gerald Israel Kornreich, Miami
John Edwin Moxley, Ocala
William O’Neil, III, Longboat Key
Adam D. Palmer, Boca Raton
Julie Glocker Pierce, Melbourne
Helen Howell Sundgren, Naples
Richard E. Warner, Marathon
2002

N. Albert Bacharach, Jr., Gainesville
Thomas Richard Bakkedahl, Fort Pierce
Robert Thomas Bergin, Jr., West Palm Beach
John Thomas David, Fort Lauderdale
Celia Ellen Deifik, Naples
Jerry W. Gerde, Panama City
John Michael Keller, Brooksville
David Patrick Kirwan, Marathon
Alex D. Littlefield, Jr., Tallahassee
Merette Oweis, Lakeland
James Justice Partlow, Sanford
Robert Louis Peters, Jr., Fernandina Beach
Richard Barton Ray, Bradenton
Patricia Ann Redmond, Miami
James Clayton Runyon, St. Petersburg
Hala A. Sandridge, Tampa
Thomas Edward Stone, Madison
Maurice Wagner, Deltona
G. Charles Wohlust, Winter Park

2003

Catherine F. Ackerman, Ocala
Sher L. Allan, Panama City
Susan Meyer Barber, Lake Wales
Paul Richard Berg, Vero Beach
Susan H. Bingham, St. Petersburg
Kathleen McCarthy Bishop, Perry
F. Blane Carneal, Fort Lauderdale
Bruce Richard Conroy, Tallahassee
Susan Fagan, Daytona Beach
Daniel Patrick Faherty, Cocoa
Richard James Fowler, Key West
Gary Lloyd Kornfeld, West Palm Beach
Richard A. Leigh, Winter Park
Christopher Alan Likens, Sarasota
Katherine Bliss Para, Jacksonville
Sharon W. Potter, Pensacola
James Randall Stokes, Pensacola
Cynthia Stump Swanson, Gainesville
Jacqueline Marie Valdespino, Miami
Gwynne Alice Young, Tampa

2004

Chris M. Ballentine, Orlando
David A. Bentley, Washington, D.C.
John Joseph Cassidy, Jr., Naples
Robert Saul Cohen, Tallahassee
Irwin A. Connelly, Bunnell
Walter Merritt Green, Gainesville
Nancy Wood Gregoire, Fort Lauderdale
Michael Louis Guttmann, Pensacola
Jack Helinger, St. Petersburg
Allen Nathaniel Jelks, Jr., Panama City
Robert Conrad Meyer, Miami
Guy W. Norris, Lake City
Joseph N. Nusbaum, Boca Raton
Paulette R. Pace, Bradenton
Richard A. Perry, Ocala
Alan Matthew Pickert, Jacksonville
Christine E. Puto-Murray, Jacksonville
Portia Beth Scott, Stuart
Sheryl Diane Snodgrass, Lakeland
Edward M. Waller, Jr., Tampa

2005
Matthew Patrick Coglianese, Miami
D. Patrick Dalton, Ocala
Martin Robert Dix, Tallahassee
Joanne Fanizza, Fort Lauderdale
William Robert Garrett, Panama City
Diego Handel, Daytona Beach
Beth Harlan, Lakeland
Nancy Carol Holliday-Fields, Lake City
Deborah Marie Hooker, Okeechobee
Richard Allen Horder, Atlanta, Georgia
Joseph Steven “Joe” Jackson, Gainesville
Aileen Naja Josephs, West Palm Beach
Jacquelyn Mack, Englewood
James Michael Magee, Orlando
Kathleen Schin McIver, Tampa
Michael I. Miller, Sanibel
Steven Edward Quinnell, Pensacola
Chad Steven Roberts, Jacksonville
Kenneth F. Tworoger, Micco
James M. “Van” Vanderplas, Indian Rocks Beach
Linda Beth Wheeler, Key West

2006
Gwendolyn Palmer Adkins, Tallahassee
Matthew Gary Brenner, Orlando
P. Ause Brown Jr., Gainesville
Brian James Connelly, Vero Beach
Thomas Gene Freeman, Jr., Altamonte Springs
John Justin Kendron, Lake City
John Wesley Kozyak, Coral Gables
Janeice Trippe Martin, Naples
John Stewart Mills, Jacksonville
Larry Donald Murrell, Jr., West Palm Beach
Bryant Martin Richardson, Washington, D.C.
Douglas Julien Sale, Panama City
Charles H. Scruggs, Tampa
Stephen Russell Senn, Lakeland
Michael John Stebbins, Pensacola
Mary B. Steddom, Ocala
Julia Ann Soerpeboel, Palm Coast
Joseph Frank Summonte, Jr., Sarasota
Howard M. Talenfeld, Parkland
Elise Katherine Winters, Clearwater

2007
Margaret M. Anderson, Vero Beach
Rita C. Chansen, Fort Myers
Robert Cintron, Key West
Philip Henry Elliott, Jr., Daytona Beach
Wendy Pamela Fischman, Rockville, Maryland
Walter Eugene Forehand, Tallahassee
Kelly B. Hardwick, III, Bartow
Nancy Carol Holliday-Fields, Lake City
Thomas Murray Jenks, Jacksonville
Marian Audrey Lindquist, Fort Lauderdale
Frank Edward Maloney, Jr., Macclenny
William Leonard Penrose, St. Petersburg
Michael Robert Reiter, Lynn Haven
Elisha D. Roy, Palm Beach Gardens  
Neil William Scott, Sarasota  
Lawrence Dean Silverman, Miami  
Deborah M. Smith, Rockledge  
Susan Voight Stucker, Apopka  
Rollin Eric Tomberlin, Ocala  
Arthur Richard Troell, III, Crestview  
Sylvia H. Walbolt, Tampa

2008
Debra Trevlyn Alexander, St. Augustine  
Carlotta Appleman-Moniz, Panama City  
Danelle Dykes Barksdale, Tampa  
Morgan Ray Bentley, Sarasota  
Dionne Maria Blaesing, New Port Richey  
Ross Benjamin Bricker, Chicago, Illinois  
Suzanne Smith Brownless, Tallahassee  
Theodore Mark Burt, Trenton  
Russell E. Carlisle, Fort Lauderdale  
Melanie Emmons Damian, Miami  
Patricia Ann Eables, Key West  
James D. Francis, Jacksonville  
Robert Eugene Fridley, Gainesville  
Gary Randal Gossett, Jr., Sebring  
John Richard Hamilton, Orlando  
Amy Christine Hamlin, Longwood  
Julie Hope Littky-Rubin, West Palm Beach  
William Jemison Mims, Jr., Pensacola  
Ginger Allison Miranda, Port Pierce  
Jack Arthur Moring, Crystal River  
Melinda Paniagua Riddle, Naples

2009
Todd Clifford Brister, Panama City  
Melanie Freeman Chase, Lake Mary  
Judith Duggan Davidson, Bunnell  
Jean M. Finks, Punta Gorda  
Thomas Carlton Gano, West Palm Beach  
George Michael Germann, Spring Hill  
Shari Thieman Greene, Gulf Breeze  
Harry Charles Greenfield, Merritt Island  
Mark Edward Hill, Vero Beach  
Robert C. Josefsberg, Miami  
Albert Lewis Kelley, Key West  
John Justin Kendron, Lake City  
Heidi Davis Knapik, Fort Lauderdale  
James Anthony Kowalski, Jr., Jacksonville  
Stanley Morris Krawetz, Sarasota  
William James Lobb, Bartow  
Shannon McKenzie Miller, Gainesville  
Gregory Keith Showers, Clearwater  
Twyla Lawrene Sketchley, Tallahassee  
Scott Alan Stichter, Tampa  
Susan Voight Stucker, Orlando  
Michael J. Willis, Kalamazoo, Mich.

2010
Richard Lloyd Abedon, West Palm Beach  
Rebecchah Lee Beller, Jacksonville  
Caroline Kapusta Black, Tampa  
William G. Bostick, Jr., St. Petersburg  
Larry Ronald Chulock, Bradenton
Michael Jordan Cooper, Ocala
Robert Lee Dietz, Orlando
Kerry M. Donahue, Dublin, Ohio
Robert Steven Goldman, Tallahassee
Scott Douglas Krasny, Melbourne
Juliette Ellen Lippman, Fort Lauderdale
Dana Yvonne Moore, Winter Haven
John Edward Moore, III, Vero Beach
Gordon Charles Murray, Sr., Miami
Kathleen C. Passidomo, Naples
Stephen Lee Romine, Tampa
Robert Anthony Rush, Gainesville
Raven Elizabeth Sword, Daytona Beach
Monica Taibl, Madison
Timothy Michael Warner, Panama City
Thomas Edward Woods, Key West

2011
Rosemary E. Armstrong, Tampa
Neal Jonathan Blaher, Maitland
Noah Clements, Washington, D.C.
Alan Roy Crane, Boca Raton
D. Todd Doss, Lake City
William W. Fernandez, Winter Springs
Bryan Scott Gowdy, Jacksonville
Michael Halpern, Key West
Daniel Lee Hightower, Ocala
Russell Thomas Kirshy, Port Charlotte
Lawrence G. Marin, Fort Lauderdale
Troy Harold Myers, Jr., Sarasota
Valerie Erwin Prevatte, Pensacola
Benjamin Reid, Miami
Stephen Russell Senn, Lakeland
Rudolph Carroll Shepard, Jr., Panama City
Shimene Ashlie Shepard-Ryan, Port Orange
Murray Bruce Silverstein, Tampa
Margaret Mitchem Stack, Gainesville
Thomas Warren Tierney, Vero Beach
Elizabeth Willard “Bib” Willis, Tallahassee

2012
Edmund T. Baxa, Jr., Orlando
Steven G. Cripps, West Palm Beach
Elizabeth Geary Daugherty, Fort Lauderdale
Sandra H. Day, Spring Hill
Michael Patrick Dickey, Panama City
Daniel John Endrizal, III, Fort Myers
Arthur Don Ginsburg, Sarasota
Leslie Smith Haswell, Gainesville
Charles Patterson Hoskin, Pensacola
Myriam Irizarry, Clearwater
Suzanne M. Judas, Jacksonville
James Anthony Kowalski, Jr., Saint Augustine
Wendy S. Loquasto, Tallahassee
Melissa Lea Mackiewicz, Baltimore, Maryland
Leenette Wilhelmina McMillan-Fredriksson, Mayo
Adrian J. “Stan” Musial, Jr., Tampa
Norman L. Paxton Jr., Fort Pierce
James F. Pollack, Miami
James Lawrence Torres, Indialantic
Deborah Lynn Wells, Bartow
Thomas Edward Woods, Tavernier
2013
Bridget Ann Berry, West Palm Beach
Bruce Beeford Blackwell, Orlando
Jennings Kemp Brinson, Lakeland
Mary-Ellen Cross, Gainesville
Carolyn Davis Cummings, Tallahassee
Janice Joy “J.J. Dahl, Clermont
William Kenan DeBraal, Vero Beach
Frederick J. Gant, Pensacola
Steven D. Kramer, Altamonte Springs
Janella Kayla Leibovitz, Sarasota
Maxine Master Long, Miami
Emerson Lotzia, Jacksonville
Steven Wayne Marcus, Fort Lauderdale
James D. “Jim” McDonald, Venice
Robert Allan “Bob” Pell, Port St. Joe
Tania Romaine Schmidt-Alpers, St. Augustine
Leon Claudio Skornicki, New York, New York
David Elihu Steckler, Fort Myers
Monica Taibl, Live Oak
Jeanne Trudeau Tate, Tampa
Mary Vanden Brook, Key West
Jeannine Smith Williams, St. Petersburg

2014
Joseph L. Amos, Jr., Orlando
Virginia Marie Buchanan, Pensacola
Karen Meyer Buesing, Tampa
Maria Frances Caldarone, Vero Beach
A. Leigh Cangelosi, Branford
Susan V. Carroll, Panama City
J. Davis Connor, Lake Wales
Sonia R. Crockett, Tallahassee
William Walker Gallogly, Jacksonville
Timothy G. Hains, Naples
Michael Harshman, Lakewood Ranch
Amy U. Hickman, Boynton Beach
David Mangiero, Miami
Joseph M. Mason, Jr., Brooksville
William Fletcher McMurry, Louisville, Kentucky
Stephen Bruce Moss, Fort Lauderdale
Jessica L.C. Rae, St. Petersburg
David Joseph Rodziewicz, Ormond Beach
Gary Siegel, Sanford
David Van Loon, Key West
Nancy Ericksen Wright, Gainesville

2015
Elizabeth S. Baker, Miami
Andrew R. Boyer, Sarasota
Kenneth Brooks, Jr., Milton
Samuel G. Crosby, Lakeland
Jimmy Allen Davis, Deltona
Michelle L. Farkas, Gainesville
Garrett A. Fenton, Washington, D.C.
Robert “Bob” Goldman, Key West
Bonnie Green, Lake City
Elizabeth L. “Betsey” Hapner, Tampa
Anne E. Hinds, Fort Lauderdale
Gregory T. Holtz, Estero
Michael G. Howard, Melbourne Beach
Jay Kim, Fort Lauderdale
Blane McCarthy, Jacksonville
Steven A. Messer, Port St. Lucie
Richard A. Perry, Ocala
Elizabeth Ricci, Tallahassee
Douglas L. Smith, Panama City
Frank C. Wesighan, Orlando
Brent A. Woody, Tarpon Springs

2016
Jennifer C. Anderson, Ponte Vedra
James V. Cook, Tallahassee
William H. “Bill” Drumm, Sarasota
Patricia A. Eables, Key West
Pamela L. Foels, Orlando
Kathryn “Kate” Hill, Vero Beach
Andrew J. Kamensky, New York, N.Y.
Frederick Koberlein, Jr., Lake City
Lyndall “Lyndy” Lambert, Miami
Jason D. Lazarus, West Palm Beach
Lawrence J. Markell, Gulfport
Raymond T. McNeal, Ocala
Russell Miller-Thompson, Sunrise
Kelley Geraghty Price, Naples
Taras S. Rudnitsky, Longwood
Thomas Saunders, Bartow
Isabel “Cissy” Boza Sevelin, Thonotosassa
Robert L. Thirston, II, Panama City Beach
Patricia Vail, Jacksonville
Jason A. Waddell, Pensacola
Mary K. Wimsett, Gainesville