The Parker Thomson Awards for Outstanding Legal Journalism in Florida

Highlighting the System of Law & Justice

September 24, 2018
The 22nd Floor of the Florida Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida
The Florida Bar’s Media & Communications Law Committee presents the Parker Thomson Awards for Outstanding Legal Journalism in Florida to honor a longtime champion of the First Amendment and counsel to journalists.

The Parker Thomson Awards recognize outstanding legal journalism in Florida. Qualified entries consist of a story or stories that highlight the system of law and justice as it affects Floridians.

Parker Davidson Thomson was a lawyer’s lawyer. A Florida attorney since 1961, he died in 2017. The Harvard-trained lawyer was a founding partner of Paul & Thomson. He also was a partner at Hogan Lovells, and a mentor to several members of the Media & Communications Law Committee.

From 1968 to 1983, Thomson represented many major clients including the Miami Herald, the New York Times, AT&T and Bank of America in First Amendment cases. His expertise included helping newspapers obtain public records. Thomson argued three cases before the U.S. Supreme Court, including Miami Herald Publishing Company vs. Tornillo in 1974. He represented the Herald and won, overturning a state law that required newspapers to allocate equal space to political candidates on the editorial pages.

Thomson left a legacy of legal excellence, civic duty and pro bono service. The Florida Bar Board of Governors and the Media & Communications Law Committee named these awards as a fitting tribute to Parker Davidson Thomson’s countless contributions to media law.

Overview of the Media Awards

Any newspaper, radio station, blog, television station, wire service or online-only publication located in Florida is eligible to enter. Entries must have been published or produced between Jan. 1, 2017, and Dec. 31, 2017. The determination of the awards jury is final and is not reviewed by The Florida Bar. The Florida Bar does not endorse the content of the winning entries.

Media Awards Jury

Samuel J. Morley, Chair, The Florida Bar’s Media Awards Committee; general counsel, Florida Press Association, Tallahassee. He represents the association before the state Legislature and administrative agencies and oversees the FPA legal hotline, which provides legal advice to newspapers throughout the state. Morley was formerly a partner at Holland & Knight law firm.

Liz Haltiwanger, News Director, KKTV 11 News, Colorado Springs, Colorado. Under her direction, the station has won several “Station of the Year” awards from the Colorado Broadcasters Association, and most recently was honored with regional Edward R. Murrow and Emmy Awards for best newscast.

Mark Konradi, Director of Newsroom Operations, The Dallas Morning News, Dallas, Texas. The former writer and editor helped SportsDay become one of the most decorated sports sections in the newspaper industry. Previously, Konradi was sports editor of the Arlington Morning News.

Jennifer Mansfield is a partner at Holland & Knight in Jacksonville, Fla. She practices in the area of commercial litigation, with extensive experience in media law. Mansfield’s practice includes representing newspapers and television stations in defense of defamation claims, courtroom access, Florida’s Sunshine Law, and for access to public records under the Freedom of Information Act and Florida’s public records laws.

Dwayne Robinson is Of Counsel at Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton in Miami and focuses his practice on complex litigation. Robinson is a former reporter for The Palm Beach Post, and prior to law school, he was editor-in-chief of The Independent Florida Alligator at the University of Florida. Robinson has been a member of The Florida Bar since 2012. He serves on The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division Board of Governors and as vice chair of the Media & Communications Law Committee. Robinson is a graduate of the Bar’s Wm. Reece Smith, Jr. Leadership Academy.

David M. Snyder is a media lawyer in Tampa and an adjunct professor in the Department of Journalism & Media Studies at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. He was a staff writer/beat reporter for the Clearwater Sun and St. Petersburg (now Tampa Bay) Times. Snyder also served 34 years in the Naval Reserve as a military journalist NCO and public affairs officer, retiring at the rank of captain.
PROGRAM

Troy Kinsey, Reporter, Bay News 9 ................................................................. Welcome Remarks and Introduction of The Florida Bar President
Michelle Suskauer ......................................................................................... Welcome Remarks and President of The Florida Bar, 2018-2019
Hon. Charles T. Canady .................................................................................. Keynote Speaker
Chief Justice, Florida Supreme Court
Troy Kinsey .................................................................................................... Presentation of the 2018 Media Awards
Mamie Joeveer, Chair, Media & Communications Law Committee
Samuel J. Morley, Chair, Media Awards Committee

THE WINNERS

Radio

Television
1st Prize – WESH-TV 2, Reporter Greg Fox, “Veterans, Mental Health & Guns”
2nd Prize – WTSP-10 News, Reporter Noah Pransky, “Florida Texting Laws”

Print
1st Prize – Miami Herald, Reporter Carol Marbin Miller and Audra D.S. Burch, “Fight Club”
2nd Prize – Tampa Bay Times, Reporter Dan Sullivan, Juvenile Resentencing

Troy Kinsey ..................................................................................................... Dismissal of Guests