

State Bar Honors 2004 Award Recipients

The State Bar of Michigan will host a Distinguished Service Awards Banquet, Thursday, September 30, from 6:00–7:30 p.m. in the Lansing Center ballroom to honor the recipients of its major awards. The event is being held in conjunction with the Bar's 69th Annual Meeting.

The 2004 Champion of Justice Award will be presented to Hon. Terrance K. Boyle of Detroit, Sandra L. Bailiff Girard of Jackson, Richard C. Kupferschmidt of Kalamazoo, Michael V. Morgan of Troy, and Richard S. Victor of Bloomfield Hills. This award is given for integrity and adherence to the highest principles and traditions of the legal profession and for professional accomplishments that benefit national, state, or local communities.

Judge Boyle is being honored for his role in bringing about important statutory reforms in the state and in the development of the Wayne County Prosecutor's office. He began his career as a staff attorney at the National Labor Relations Board and then joined the Wayne County Prosecutor's office. He was a principal architect of proposed amendments to the Citizens Grand Jury Law enacted by the Michigan Legislature. After serving as Director of Legal Services to Wayne County Sheriff William Lucas, and returning to the Prosecutor's Office as Deputy Chief of Trials and Appeals, he guided the office in staying aware of developments in the law and taking appropriate cases to the U.S. Supreme Court. During his career, he also played a lead role in the drafting of and advocacy for monumental reforms for the protection of rape victims, which have been emulated throughout the country. In addition, he participated in the Michigan Supreme Court-appointed Com-



Hon. Terrance K. Boyle

mittee to Draft the Proposed Rules of Criminal Procedure, an eight-year undertaking. Boyle was appointed as Judge of the Recorder's Court for the City of Detroit in 1985 and served until January of 1999, after which he re-joined the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office as Deputy Chief, Appeals, in December 2002. He has served many organizations throughout his career, and was a founding member of the Criminal Law Section of the State Bar, serving as Section chairperson.

Sandra L. Bailiff Girard is being recognized for her deep and often solitary commitment to Prison Legal Services of Michigan (PLSM) and her advocacy on behalf of the incarcerated. She has spent her career championing prisoners' entitlement to fundamental due process and human rights. For nearly her whole legal career she has served PLSM, acting as its Executive Director for 20 years. In 1996, PLSM was appointed to represent Michigan prisoners in *Cain v MDOC*, which was settled in 2003 and addressed issues relating to prisoners' property rights, law library services, clothing provided, the prison mail system, and the administrative grievance process. Girard is the author of the *Michigan Prison Sentences: A Guide for Defense Attorneys*, published by the Michigan Appellate Assigned Council System, and has authored several other articles and publications. She is a founding member of the State Bar Prisons and Corrections Section, served as the Chair of the Criminal Law Section, and served on several other related State Bar committees.

Richard Kupferschmidt, of Western Michigan Legal Services, has contributed greatly to the Kalamazoo community throughout his career as a legal aid attorney for the past 25 years. In particular, he has shown a great commitment to poverty issues

through domestic violence work and housing advocacy on behalf of the poor. He has been very active in the Kalamazoo County Bar Association, serving as president (1997–1998), and currently



Richard C. Kupferschmidt

serving on its Board of Directors. He was a founder of the Pro Bono Legal Clinics in Kalamazoo and has served as an active and regular participant in the weekly clinics. Throughout his career, Kupferschmidt also served on several Kalamazoo District Court committees and the Kalamazoo County Homeless Advisory Council.

Michael V. Morgan, a solo practitioner, is being recognized for his leading role in the improvement of drunk driving defense and prosecution, and is considered an authority on the issue. He has been a committed educator through the Institute of Continuing Legal Education (ICLE) and the State Bar, and has lectured extensively since 1976 on drinking and driving law, driver licensing, procedures, and practice. He has served as a moderator on all drunk driving seminars since 1987. Morgan co-authored ICLE's first two editions on drunk driving defense *Drunk Driving Cases: A Manual for Michigan Lawyers* (1979) and *Defense of Drunk Driving Cases in Michigan* (1981). He served as the editor of *Michigan Drunk Driving Law and Practice* (1999), and served as a contributor to the *Michigan Basic Practice Handbook* (2001). Morgan is also a former chairperson of the License Appeal Board of the Michigan Department of State.



Michael V. Morgan

Richard S. Victor of The Law Offices of Richard S. Victor, PLLC, is being honored for his dedication to the practice of family

law and divorce, custody, and children's advocacy issues. Victor has been practicing family law exclusively since 1979 and is especially well-known for his commitment to grandparents' rights,



Richard S. Victor

receiving attention statewide and nationwide for his focus on complex divorce and custody matters. Victor has worked on many high-profile cases, and assisted Michigan legislators in drafting the state's most recent grandparent visitation legislation. He is the founder of the non-profit Grandparents Rights Organization, which advocates for grandparents and educates state legislatures and courts around the country on the need to protect the special bond between grandparents and grandchildren. Victor has held positions in numerous organizations, including the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, the State Bar Family Law section (Chairperson 1990–1991), the Michigan State Bar Foundation, and the University of Michigan Child Advocacy Clinic. He is an accomplished author and editor, writing many articles for the *Michigan Bar Journal*, organizational newsletters, and law-related newspapers and publications; and serving on the Board of Editors for *Michigan Lawyers Weekly*. He has also been an instructor for Oakland University and a guest lecturer at several Michigan law schools.

The John W. Cumiskey Pro Bono Award, which recognizes commitment to pro bono issues, is being presented to Joseph W. Cunningham, a Partner in the Litigation Services



Joseph W. Cunningham

Department at Plante and Moran, PLLC. Cunningham is being honored for his work on a project that helps legal aid attorneys prepare Qualified Domestic Relations Orders (QDROs) for their clients, which enable divorcing parties to divide pensions and 401(K) accounts. Cunningham, who is also a certified Public Accountant (CPA), has concentrated his practice in tax, retirement benefit, and business valuation aspects of divorce for

more than 20 years. He served as co-editor of the *Michigan Family Law Sourcebook* and has lectured at seminars for judges, attorneys, and CPAs on a wide range of litigation support, valuation, and tax matters, and on the subject of an accountant's role as an expert witness. Cunningham has held several positions in the Oakland County Bar Association and the State Bar Family Law Section, and has authored several articles for the *Michigan Bar Journal* and local bar association publications. He has chosen the \$2000 designation that comes with his award, to further the delivery of legal services to the poor, to be split between the Women's Survival Center in Pontiac, and the University of Detroit Mercy (UDM) clinical law programs as a memorial to F. Philip Colista, a lawyer who was committed to civil rights.

The Representative Assembly will also present its newly created Unsung Hero Award to Henry Lukowiak of Detroit, and its Michael Franck Award to E. Christopher Johnson, Jr. of Detroit and Dean Allen Robb of Empire. The Michael Franck Award is given annually to a lawyer in good standing who has made an outstanding contribution to the improvement of the profession; the Unsung Hero award is presented to a lawyer who has exhibited the highest standards of practice and commitment for the benefit of others.

Henry Lukowiak, a staff attorney for the Legal Aid and Defender Association, Inc., which works in partnership with Wayne State University Law School, is recognized for ded-



Henry Lukowiak

icating his career to serving the underprivileged and acting as a guide for generations of law students as the lead attorney and advisor to the Free Legal Aid Clinic. Since 1979, Lukowiak had directed the activities of up to 30 law students per semester in their representation of indigent clients in civil matters, which was the clinic's past focus, and family law matters, which is the clinic's current focus. He has served as a mentor and teacher to many Michigan lawyers, and they have acknowledged that he provided them with

their first hands-on experience with the law and affected their career paths significantly.

E. Christopher Johnson, Jr., the Vice President and General Counsel of General Motors North America, is being recognized for his commitment to diversity issues and for helping



E. Christopher Johnson, Jr.

to advance opportunities for racial and ethnic minority lawyers. In particular, he is being honored for his efforts in organizing the "Minority Outside Counsel Networking Conference," held in October 2002, which was a two-day national meeting in Detroit that helped promote diversity in the legal profession by building relationships between corporations and minority lawyers. For this work, Johnson was also the recipient of the ABA's Spirit of Excellence Award for 2004. In his current position at General Motors, Johnson manages the delivery of all legal services that impact the firm's North America Region and its hundreds of attorneys, support staff, and outside law firms. Before joining General Motors, Johnson worked as an attorney search consultant and an associate attorney with the New York firm of Mudge Rose Guthrie Alexander and Ferdon. Johnson has served in many organizations, including the American Bar Association, the United Negro College Fund, and the Detroit Bar Foundation.

Dean Allen Robb, of the Dean Robb Law Firm, is a well-known liberal activist and trial attorney who has been committed to the issues of civil rights and justice since his career began in



Dean Allen Robb

1949. A Traverse City-area attorney who first practiced in Detroit (1949–1971) and was a founding partner in the firm of Goodman, Crockett, Eden and Robb, he is widely recognized for his efforts to help disadvantaged and oppressed people and for fighting against discrimination and intolerance. A lifetime member of the NAACP, Robb was active in the civil rights movement of the 1960s and

provided legal services in the South. He is a member of and has served numerous organizations including the Michigan Trial Lawyers Association (past president), the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (past governor, sixth circuit), Michigan ACLU (past state officer and director), and he was a founder and past president of the Trial Lawyers for Public Justice, a national public interest law firm. He has lectured extensively at national, state, and local bar associations on trial practice, personal injury, and products liability law and served as a featured guest lecturer at sev-

eral law schools. Robb is also known for one of his hobbies, acting, through both community theater and his one-man Mark Twain shows. He was a recipient of the State Bar Champion of Justice award in 1994.

There were no winners for the Roberts P. Hudson and Frank J. Kelley Distinguished Public Servant awards this year. For more information about awards criteria and the awards process, visit www.michbar.org. To order tickets for the awards banquet, contact State Bar Events Coordinator Caryl Markzon at (517) 346-6371. ♦

Liberty Bell Award

The Liberty Bell Award, given to one or more non-lawyers who have strengthened the effectiveness of the American system of freedom under law, will be presented to Saginaw K-9 police officers Joaquin and Cari Guerrero and their canine partners Rookie (now deceased) and Felony, who were also the recipients of the 2004 Saginaw County Liberty Bell Award. Since 1998, the Guerreros have presented educational programs to more than 230,000 children and adults through Precinct 131, a non-profit organization founded by Joaquin and dedicated to educating youth about the dangers of tobacco, drugs, gangs, and violence through puppet skits, songs, videos, literature, and K-9 demonstrations. After September 11, 2001, the Guerreros and their dogs responded to the terrorist attacks in New York City in the areas of K-9 search and rescue, recovery K-9 therapy, demobilization, and diffusion.



Joaquin Guerrero, Rookie



Cari Guerrero, Felony

Photo of Cari Guerrero by Ric Hodgins, courtesy of "Victor Images"