

## ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

*A project of the LBF Education Committee*

### PROCESS

1. The Education Committee oversees the Oral History process. The committee works with the local Community Partnership Panels (CPP) for funding and nominations. ALL CPP recommendations must be approved by the Education Committee and ALL CPP funding request must be approved by the Board.
2. All nominations must be submitted on the Nomination Form and submitted to the Education Committee.
3. LBF staff contacts the person to see if they are interested.
4. If interested, staff sets up a date, time, and place for the interview (coordinating with interviewee, interviewer & videographer)
5. Staff sends a letter with detailed information on the interview, a Biographical Data Form, and a self-addressed stamped envelope and begins files on the interviewees.
6. Biographical Data Form is returned to the LBF and staff will send interviewer a copy of the completed form, Interviewer Tips, Interview Outline, and an Authorization and Release Form.
7. Interviewer contacts interviewee to set up pre-interview to discuss bio, topics, last question, release, and memorabilia.
8. Interviewer finalizes the interview outline/questions.
9. Interview takes place and memorabilia is recorded.
10. Interview is edited.
11. The edited interview is loaded to the LBF YouTube channel and put on LBF website.
12. An edited and unedited copy of the interview is sent to the interviewee with a thank you letter.
13. The interviewer and interviewee are invited to the regional annual fellows meeting and a presentation is made.
14. Local Bar Associations also receive a copy of each interview from their area.

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### CPP NOMINATION FORM\*

*All sections of this form must be complete to be considered.* For a list of completed Oral Histories go to <http://raisingthebar.org/programs-and-projects/oral-history-project>

Oral History Interview of (Full Name) \_\_\_\_\_

If this person is NOT a Louisiana attorney, Judge or professor please include their title:

City practiced:

City they reside:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Historical contributions to Louisiana's legal history:

Person nominating name, phone number, email, and CPP:

Would you be interested in conducting the interview?

If not, do you know someone who may?

Is CPP funding designated for this person?

*\* In addition to their making outstanding contributions to Louisiana law or legal history, all nominations must be of stellar character and professional fitness.*

**Send complete form to:** Louisiana Bar Foundation  
Attn: Meghan Van Alstyne  
1615 Poydras Street, Ste. 1000, New Orleans, LA 70112  
Email [Meghan@raisingthebar.org](mailto: Meghan@raisingthebar.org) or Fax to 504-561-1046

LBF Staff only. \_\_\_\_\_ This person has been checked for disciplinary actions.

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### BIOGRAPHICAL DATA FORM

1. Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

2. Address \_\_\_\_\_

3. Office Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

4. E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

5. FAX \_\_\_\_\_

6. Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

7. Date and Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

8. Parents (Names, dates of birth/death, occupations) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Siblings (Names, designation as older or younger) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Spouse (Name, occupation) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

11. Children (Names, dates of birth, occupations) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12. Primary, Secondary and Higher Education (where and when) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13. Military/Government Service (Dates and Places) \_\_\_\_\_

14. Professional Background (law firm/business names and dates) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

15. Judicial Service (position, dates) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

16. Political positions (position, dates) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

17. Other Employment \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Civic and Community Activities and Honors \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

19. Books and/or articles you have written \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

20. Name, relationship and phone number of three acquaintances that the interviewer may contact for further information about you.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Please feel free to use additional paper if necessary.*

**Return to: Dee Jones, Louisiana Bar Foundation**  
1615 Poydras Street, Ste. 1000, New Orleans, LA 70112  
Email [Dee@raisingthebar.org](mailto:Dee@raisingthebar.org) or Fax to 504-561-1046

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### INTERVIEW OUTLINE

#### I. INTRODUCTION BY INTERVIEWER

- A. Interviewer name, date, place, “interview being conducted for the Oral History Project of the Louisiana Bar Foundation”

#### II. BACKGROUND

- A. The interview should begin with the interviewer asking the interviewee to state his full name and full date of birth.
- B. **Birth Family:**  
Grandparents  
Parents (names, places and dates of birth, business, political and community activities and interests)
- C. **Childhood:**  
Community (home, friends, recreation, travel, hobbies, reading) Grade school (teachers, classes, special events)  
Part-time or summer work experience
- D. **College:**  
How chosen  
Influential teachers and courses, study habits, friends, extracurricular activities, part-time or summer work
- E. **Community:**  
Military service  
Non-legal career or jobs and civic function volunteer, if any Impact of major social, economic and political events
- F. **Law School:**  
How interest in the law began (did you know any lawyers?) Choice of law school  
Professors, courses Friends, activities, work  
Assessment of value of law school curriculum
- G. **Family:**  
Spouse (maiden name if applicable) Children  
Grandchildren  
Are there any lawyers or potential lawyers in the family? Would you recommend the law as a career to them?

### III. CAREER AS LAWYER

#### A. Early experience:

- Bar exam, job search
- Beginning salary; comparison with other professions First clients, cases
- Daily routine (working hours, lunch, office location) Description of surrounding community
- Law Firm/Law Department First day at the office Responsibilities as an associate Partners and other associates
- Strong influences on early career (people, events)

#### B. Evolving career:

- Practice specialty (how developed, changes) Professional and political outlook and affiliations Work habits
- Local bar and bench Influence of state bar
- Other lawyers, business people, and colleagues
- Professional, economic and social atmosphere of local community
- Involvement in local, state, national politics
- Impact of major events (wars, civil rights movement, women's movement) Impact of legislation on your specialty
- Changes in office technology Becoming a partner
- Major firm clients, matters and cases
- Changes in law firm administration (leadership and decision making, recruiting and hiring, committee system)
- Newly developing practice areas Recollections of judges and other lawyers
- Trial strategies, business practice and counseling strategies How corporate culture is passed down
- Business development and future planning, geographical expansion

## **ATTENTION JUDGES:**

*Please see attached JUDGES SECTION I. and II. before moving on.*

### **IV. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND CAREER OVERVIEW**

- Professional and other organizations
- Impact of a judicial career on family life and social activities Rewards and advantages of judicial career
- Hardships and pitfalls
- Major contributions to society and legal history

### **V. THE PRESENT**

- Current activities
- Projects yet to be accomplished “Retirement”/parameters of your type of retirement

### **VI. SECOND TO LAST QUESTION**

The second to last question to the interviewee should be “Is there anything else you wish I had asked and you would like to tell us?”

### **VII. FINAL QUESTION**

The final question should be prefaced by saying, “My final question to you is” to give a signal to the interviewee to wrap things up. The final question should be determined in advance, e.g. “How would you like to be remembered?” or “Of what accomplishment are you the most proud?” or “What accomplishment gave you the most satisfaction?”

**REMEMBER: Please remember to ask for memorabilia.**

## JUDGES SECTION I. CAREER AS JUDGE

### A. Transition to the bench:

- Accession - election or appointment
- Political and professional factors in going on the bench; changes in selection process over the years Change in income

### B. Early Experiences:

- First day or week on the job
- Associations with other judges and lawyers A typical day

### C. Judicial Techniques: Methods of preparation

- Approach to making decisions Working with colleagues
- Significant cases (precedent making, most interesting, most challenging, most typical)
- Characteristics of a good trial Changes in rules
- Changes in demands on court since appointment; court response to overloaded dockets Writing opinions; significant opinions
- Leadership qualities of judges
- Settlement of cases (procedures, changes)
- Changes in society's attitude toward law (litigation, lawyers, judiciary) Increasing tendency toward raising constitutional issues
- Changes in types of cases Scope of case management



## JUDGES SECTION II.

### *Other Aspects of Administration and Public Policy*

#### **A. Colleagues and legal associates:**

- Outstanding lawyers: What are required qualities? Post-trial relationships with litigants
- Law clerks
- Qualities of a good judge

#### **B. Judicial Administration:**

- Technological changes and their impact
- Increasing numbers of judicial conferences (advantages and disadvantages)
- Alternative dispute resolution (arbitration, mediation)

#### **C. Public Policy/Judicial Philosophy:**

- How judicial philosophy has evolved over the years Political and social philosophy
- Federal legislation (impact and implications) Judicial activism
- Major challenges facing the judicial system today
- Importance of informal contacts (judicial meetings, bar meetings, social events) for development of law
- Relationship between punishment and reform Extent of court's influence on public policy
- Role of judiciary toward legislation (applying statute or interpreting it) Resolving a conflict between law and conscience
- Effects of new emphasis on ethics in law practice
- Regional differences in judiciary and law practice throughout U.S. Significance of legal-aid groups
- Cameras in the courtroom

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### INTERVIEWER TIPS

1. The interviewer will not be seen; only the voice will be heard. The interviewee, however, will be seen throughout. Men should wear a white or blue shirt and to avoid herringbone or any fine plaid or patterned jacket or tie. Pinstripes or large patterns are acceptable. Women should follow the same instructions regarding small patterns or plaids in their choice of clothing.
2. Plan for your questions and the answers of the interviewee to last approximately one hour.
3. To insure a smooth interview, we recommend that the interviewer meet with the interviewee at some point prior to the event for a pre interview. Go over the process and the topics you intend to cover. Ask if there are any issues the interviewee would particularly like to discuss. Also, ask if there are any subjects the interviewee does not want to mention (and then follow that instruction).
4. During the pre interview, ask the interviewee to bring to the interview memorabilia such as photos of themselves, family, friends, time periods, court houses, significant events, mentors, copies of publications, degrees, etc. These items will be captured on film the day of the interview and returned that same day.
5. Ask open ended questions. Do NOT retell the interviewee's story. Act as though you are meeting the interviewee for the first time. Ex. Do not say "You worked as a judge for the fifth circuit court of appeals. Tell me about it." Instead ask, "What was your job title? And what did you do?" The second question will force the interviewee to say "I was a judge for the fifth circuit court of appeals. During that time, I..."
6. Don't let periods of silence fluster you. Give your narrator a chance to think of what she wants to add before you hustle her along with the next question. Relax, write a few words on your note pad.
7. You are creating a record for posterity. Encourage the interviewee to use the full names of people to whom he refers, e.g. "Judge John Doe" as opposed to just "Judge Doe."
8. When the interviewee has finished answering the last question, thank him for his participation to show that the interview has ended. Wait for the signal from the videographer that the camera has stopped running.

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### LBF COVID-19 VIDEO RECORDING PROCEDURE

The Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) will follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines regarding safe practices and activities for vaccinated and unvaccinated participants with our oral history interviews (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>).

*Please note that the video documentarian has been fully vaccinated.*

#### STEPS:

##### Set-up

- The documentarian will arrive 30 minutes prior to interview for set up, and wipe everything down.

##### Photos for the Oral History

- We encourage the interviewee to provide digital photographs prior to the interview.
- If hard copies of photos and other items are brought in for the documentarian, they will be spread on the table and the documentarian will take photos of them.

##### At conclusion of the interview:

- The interviewer and interviewee will sign the release before leaving.

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### **LOUISIANA BAR FOUNDATION AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE**

I hereby authorize the Louisiana Bar Foundation (the "Foundation") to use the videotape of my interview in its Oral Histories Project for any and all purposes consistent with the mission of the Foundation to further the goals of professionalism and public service among the bench, bar and academia of Louisiana and to increase the public's understanding of the vital role performed by lawyers, judges and academicians in our society. I also do hereby release the Foundation, its officers, board members, employees and agents, from any and all claims based upon the content and publication of the aforesaid videotape, in whatever form it may be presented, including, without limitation, any delictual claim for invasion of privacy, defamation of character, infliction of emotional distress, or misappropriation of intangibles.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness 2: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **AGREEMENT GOVERNING USE OF VIDEOS OF THE LOUISIANA BAR FOUNDATION'S ORAL HISTORIES PROJECT**

On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ (PRINT NAME OF ENTITY OR PERSON)

(the "User"), I acknowledge that the Louisiana Bar Foundation (the "Foundation") has consented to and authorized the User's disclosed use of one or more of the videos in its Oral Histories Project. The User certifies that the purposes for its disclosed use of such video(s) is consistent with the mission (the "Mission") of the Foundation to further the goals of professionalism and public service among the bench, bar and academia of Louisiana, and to increase the public's understanding of the vital role performed by lawyers, judges and academicians in our society. To the extent the Foundation determines that the User's actual use of the video(s) is improper, as determined by the Foundation, the User will cease all such use upon request of the Foundation, and the Foundation reserves any and all of its rights to prevent any such unauthorized use. The User also acknowledges that it has no right to convey to any other person or entity either permission or authority to use the Foundation's video(s).

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of User or User's Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Title (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_