

## President's Message

# LBF a Champion for Justice, Inclusivity and Equality for All

By Deidre Deculus Robert, 2023-24 President

As lawyers, we swore an oath to “never reject, from any consideration personal to [ourselves], the cause of the defenseless or oppressed or delay any person’s cause for [monetary gain] or malice.” At the Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF), our vision is to ensure that all Louisiana citizens regardless of their background or income level have access to civil legal services that they need.

The LBF brings members of our profession together, maximizing our efforts to better the profession, our communities and ourselves. When we support our marginalized communities, we all benefit. I am a proud member of the LBF, the visible public service organization of Louisiana attorneys.

Membership in the LBF is a statement of commitment to fairness and equal access for all in the justice system. This distinguished professional network will also allow you to enrich your careers through professional development and networking opportunities and apply your skill sets toward something meaningful.

Every member of the Bar should be a LBF Fellow! LBF reflects the social conscience and public responsibility of our profession and our allegiance to effective action.

Lawyers do great service work every day by helping others. Because you are driven by a firm belief that all Louisianans deserve a fair and equal justice system, regardless of income, join us in our work as a champion for justice, inclusivity and equality.

Contact the LBF at (504)561-1046 or visit the website, [www.RaisingTheBar.org](http://www.RaisingTheBar.org), and find out how you can join today.

LBF’s dedicated members are judges, lawyers, academics and individuals, whom we call Fellows. Fellows are critical to our mission to increase Louisianan’s access to civil legal aid. Fellows receive:

- ▶ association with an organization directly impacting the legal profession;



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According to the 2022 census, Louisiana is:

- ▶ 1st in the percentage of its population living below the poverty level in this country;
- ▶ 2nd in the number of children living in poverty;
- ▶ 3rd in the lowest household median income; and
- ▶ 3rd lowest in income inequality.

- ▶ recognition of one’s contribution to the profession, alliance with the Foundation’s mission;

- ▶ professional development and networking;

- ▶ invitations to special events and meetings;

- ▶ participation in annual nominations for Louisiana’s distinguished jurist, attorney, professor and Calogero Justice awards; and

- ▶ committee participation and leadership.

## Southwest Louisiana Bar Association (SWLBA) Bench Bar Conference



The Southwest Louisiana Bar Association (SWLBA) hosted its Bench Bar Conference March 16-18 in Houston. Participating, from left, Adam P. Johnson, SWLBA president; Judge Robert L. Wyatt, speaker, 14th Judicial District Court; Judge Tony Fazzio, speaker, 14th Judicial District Court; Judge Kendrick J. Guidry, speaker, 14th Judicial District Court; J. Lee Hoffoss, Jr., SWLBA president-elect; Judge David A. Ritchie, speaker, 14th Judicial District Court; and Judge Clayton Davis, speaker, 14th Judicial District Court.



The Southwest Louisiana Bar Association hosted its Bench Bar Conference March 16-18 in Houston. Several attendees participated in the Basketball Classic. From left, Jackson T. Brown, Russ J. Stutes, Michel S. Ogden, Jr., Christopher S. Lacombe, Fred C. Lebleu, Derrick D. Kee, Damon Beard, Joseph B. Williams III, Adam P. Johnson, Ezra Pettis, Jr., Justin T. Morales, Quinn Walker, David G. Castillo, Jackson T. Ritchie, Judge David A. Ritchie, Gary L. Blanchard and Kiefer G. Ackley.