

News Release

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Davidson to Lead the Louisiana Bar Foundation 2024-25 Board

(New Orleans, Louisiana) Welcome Hon. John C. Davidson (Ret.) of Alexandria, Louisiana, the 2024-25 president of the LBF. Other officers are Vice President Edmund J. Giering IV of Baton Rouge; Treasurer Michael J. Mestayer of New Orleans; and Secretary Charles C. Bourque of Houma. The 2024-25 board was installed at the 38th Annual Fellows Gala by Chief Justice John Weimer.

The LBF is the single statewide funder fully committed to ensuring that our civil justice system is accessible to all. Through grants, we assist women, children, elderly, people with disabilities, newly unemployed, those facing loss of their homes, disaster victims, veterans and military families, and many others by providing services that go to the very heart of the health, safety, and security of many of our citizens and their families.

President Hon. John C. Davidson (Ret.)

Davidson received his undergraduate and law degrees from LSU. He is a 1988 graduate of the Paul M. Hebert Law School where he was Order of the Coif (an honor awarded to the top 10% of the graduating class), a member of the Louisiana Law Review, and inducted into the Paul M. Hebert Hall of Fame. He was in private practice until his election as a district court judge for the 9th Judicial District Court in November 2004. He retired in September 2023. He remains active in his community and state as a volunteer with local nonprofits and president of the Louisiana Bar Foundation.

Vice President Edmund J. Giering IV

Giering serves as general counsel to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and his practice emphasizes corporate law & governance, transactions, risk management, and nonprofit & tax-exempt organizations. He was in private practice for six years and served as corporate counsel to The Powell Group for eight years prior to joining the Foundation. He received a B.A. in History from LSU in 1990, a J.D. degree from the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center in 1994, and a M.B.A. from the LSU E.J. Ourso College of Business in 2005.

Treasurer Michael J. Mestayer

Mestayer is a solo practitioner in New Orleans, where he handles a broad range of litigation, including admiralty, product liability, and complex civil matters. He received his B.S. from L.S.U. and his J.D. from Tulane University Law School. He is also an adjunct faculty member at Tulane School of Law where he teaches Solo and Small Firm Practice.

Secretary Charles C. Bourque

Bourque is a New Orleans native, and currently resides in Houma, where he is a partner in the law firm of St. Martin & Bourque. He graduated in Accounting from LSU and received his Juris Doctorate from Loyola University School of Law in 1990. Prior to entering law school, he served as an officer

and helicopter pilot in the United States Army and continued flying helicopters in the Louisiana Army National Guard until he retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 2011. Bourque is licensed to practice before all state and federal courts in Louisiana and is an active member of the Terrebonne Parish, New Orleans, Louisiana State, Federal, and American Bar Associations.

New board members: Jonathan L. Johnson, Lake Charles; Teresa D. King, Houma; Maggie Simar, Lafayette; Hon. Karelia R. Stewart, Shreveport; and Edward J. Walters, Jr., Baton Rouge.

Other members of the 2024-25 board of directors include: Linda Law Clark, Baton Rouge; G. Adam Cossey, Monroe; George D. Ernest, Lafayette; Hon. Cynthia Clay Guillory, Lake Charles; Christopher B. Hebert, Baton Rouge; A. Kelton Longwell, New Orleans; Hon. Page McClendon, Madisonville; Barbara B. Melton, Alexandria; Paula Miles, Baton Rouge; Sheri Morris, Baton Rouge; Deidre D. Robert, Glynn; Shayna L. Sonnier, Lake Charles; Anthony Staines, Metairie; and Pat Talley, New Orleans.

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Louisiana Bar Foundation is the state's largest funder of civil legal aid. We partner with a trusted network of more than 70 organizations that lead community driven efforts to help families facing non-criminal, civil legal challenges. Our goal is to make sure that all Louisianans, regardless of their background or income level, have access to civil legal services that they need.