

TBA Annual Public Service Awards

Each year the Tennessee Bar Association recognizes outstanding service by attorneys and law students who have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to increasing access to justice for underserved individuals and communities in Tennessee.

Awards are presented at the Annual Public Service Luncheon, which is held as part of the TBA Leadership Conference hosted in Nashville each January.

Awards are presented in three categories:

- Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney of the Year - recognizes an attorney for an indigent client in either civil or criminal defense who provided dedicated and outstanding services during the past year
- Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year Award - recognizes significant pro bono work by a private attorney
- Law Student Volunteer Award - recognizes a student who has provided dedicated and outstanding pro bono services to an organization that is primarily engaged in providing legal representation to the indigent

Public Service Award Nomination Criteria

Nominations should summarize the accomplishments and reasons for nominating this individual. This narrative should describe with specificity how the nominee meets the criteria of the award and attachments are welcome.

Honorees will be selected based upon the narrative provided in response to the questions, below. Nominators should advocate for the nominees: explain their accomplishments and describe both how they set the nominees apart from colleagues in their field and how they have benefited the community. Provide specific examples and avoid generalizations as much as possible.

Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year Award:

This award is given to an attorney who has contributed significant amounts of pro bono work, either in terms of numbers of cases handled or significance of the work as well as one who demonstrates dedication to the development and delivery of legal services to the poor. *The work must have occurred within the last 3 years.*

(1) Describe what the nominee has done to contribute a significant amount of pro bono work within the last 3 years, either in terms of number of cases handled and/or significance of the work. Provide specific information including, as applicable, the number of hours spent, the number of cases worked and the types of cases, the impact of an outcome in a significant case. (400 words)

(2) Describe what the nominee has done to demonstrate dedication to the development and delivery of legal services to the poor. (300 words)

(3) Describe what sets this nominee apart from his/her colleagues in the field. (200 words)

(4) If available, please provide additional material in support of the significance of the work and/or demonstrated dedication to delivery of legal services to underserved, including copies of media coverage, client comments, judicial comments, copy of judicial opinions resulting from the work, evidence of recognition of employer or other similar information.

History of the Pro Bono Award:

- 1992:** Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Nashville Bar Association
Individual Pro Bono Winners – J. Brook Lathram and Don Paine
- 1993:** Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year - Bruce Bailey
- 1994:** Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year - B. Riney Green
- 1995:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Thomas H. Forrester
(1995 was the first year the Award was named after Harris Gilbert.)
Pro Bono Award of Special Merit – Bristol Bar Association (only time this award has ever been given)
- 1996:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Kelly Stark
- 1997:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Mary Jo Miller & Elmore Holmes (Memphis)
- 1998:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Carole Ann Barron
- 1999:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Dorothy Stuhlberg
- 2000:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Terry Woods
- 2001:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Gregory D. Smith
- 2002:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – J. Myers Morton, Knoxville
- 2003:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year- Ellen Fite
- 2004:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteers of the Year- Sam Blaiss and Alexandra MacKay
- 2005:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteers of the Year-Vance Fry and David Gall
Special Recognition for Pro Bono Work-David Siegel and Richard Gordon
- 2006:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – David Esquivel
- 2007:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year- David Canas
- 2008:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year- Ross Booher
- 2009:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year- Charles Grant
- 2010:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year- Michael Abelow
- 2011:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year- J. Scott Griswold
- 2012:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year- Wendee M. Hilderbrand
- 2013:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – The Legal Team of Juana Villegas
(Philip Cramer, John Farringer, Bill Harbison and Elliott Ozment.)
- 2014:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Charles W. “Buz” Dooley
- 2015:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Rebecca McKelvey Castañeda
- 2016:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Elizabeth “Libby” Sykes
- 2017:** Harris Gilbert Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year – Susan Gruber

Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney of the Year Award

This award is given to an attorney for representation above and beyond the call of duty of an indigent client in either criminal or civil defense and who are or were, employed by an organization primarily involved in providing legal representation to the indigent.

- (1) Describe what the nominee has done during the past year to provide dedicated & outstanding services to an indigent client(s). Provide specific examples. (300 words)
- (2) How did those services exceed expectations? (300 words)
- (3) Describe what sets this nominee apart from his/her colleagues in the field. (200 words)
- (4) If available, please provide additional material in support of the outstanding service and its impact, including copies of media coverage, client comments, judicial comments, copy of judicial opinions resulting from the work or other similar information.

History of the Public Service Award:

- 1993:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – Gordon Bonnyman (first year for this award)
- 1994:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – Lynne Dechman
- 1995:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – David Kozlowski
- 1996:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – Lenny Croce
- 1997:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – David Tarpley
- 1998:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – W. Mark Ward
- 1999:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – Pam Ford Wright
- 2000:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – Jane Jarvis
- 2001:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – Debra House
- 2002:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – Garland Erguden
- 2003:** Public Service Attorney of the Year- Linda Warren Seely
- 2004:** Public Service Attorney of the Year- Gloria Samuels
- 2005:** Public Service Attorney of the Year-Barbara Futter
- 2006:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – Webb Brewer
- 2007:** Public Service Attorney of the Year – Jerry Williams

Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney of Year:

- 2008:** Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney of Year - Russell Overby
- 2009:** Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney- Ross Alderman
- 2010:** Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney – Doug Stevick
- 2011:** Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney - Neil McBride
- 2012:** Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney - C. Dawn Deaner
- 2013:** Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney - Jean Crowe
- 2014:** Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney - Deborah Yeomans-Barton
- 2015:** Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney – Michele Johnson
- 2016:** Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney - Dave Yoder
- 2017:** Ashley T. Wiltshire Public Service Attorney - Richard Taylor

LAW STUDENT VOLUNTEER AWARD

This award recognizes the efforts of a student enrolled at a Tennessee law school during the past year who provided dedicated and outstanding volunteer service while working with an organization primarily engaged in providing legal representation to the indigent.

- (1) State the name of organization where student worked and the dates of the student's work for the organization.
- (2) What did the nominee do to provide volunteer service during the past year? (200 words)
- (3) How did this nominee's service benefit the organization and its clients? Please avoid generalizations and provide specific examples. (300 words)
- (4) How did those services exceed expectations, demonstrating dedicated and outstanding service? (Limit your response to 300 words)
- (5) Describe what sets the nominee apart from his/her fellow students. (200 words)
- (6) If available, please provide additional material in support of the dedicated and outstanding volunteer service in delivery of legal services to underserved, including copies of media coverage, client comments, evidence of recognition by law school or organization or other similar information.

History of the Law Student Award:

- 1996:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Albert Bart (first year this award presented)
- 1997:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – W. Tucker Carrington
- 1998:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Laura J. Webb
- 1999:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Cinnamon Davis (Vanderbilt Law School)
- 2000:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Tina Sitz (Nashville School of Law)
- 2001:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Jennifer Lichstein (University of Tennessee's College of Law)
- 2002:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Shawn Caster (Vanderbilt University) and Stephen Ross Johnson (University of Tennessee's College of Law)
- 2003:** Pro bono Law Student of the Year- Tiffany Deaderick (University of Tennessee's College of Law)
- 2004:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year- April Hart (University of Tennessee's College of Law)
- 2005:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year-Joe Williams (Vanderbilt University)
- 2006:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Betsy Prendergast (University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law)
- 2007:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Patty Garner (Nashville School of Law) & Chris Sanders (UT College of Law)
- 2008:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Peggy Smith (Nashville School of Law)
- 2009:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Daniel Ellis (University of Tennessee's College of Law)
- 2010:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Diana Comes (University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law)
- 2011:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Jody Shaw (Vanderbilt University Law School)
- 2012:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Brittany Thomas (University of Tennessee's College of Law)
- 2013:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Chris Martin (University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law)
- 2014:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Katie Blankenship (Belmont University College of Law)
- 2015:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Jennifer Mayham (University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law)
- 2016:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year - Sara Page (Belmont University College of Law)
- 2017:** Pro Bono Law Student of the Year – Kirsten Jacobson (University of Tennessee's College of Law)