



Fourth District Lawyers Recognized by the Idaho State Bar

August 15, 2016

BOISE – Several attorneys were honored by their colleagues at the Annual Meeting of the Idaho State Bar recently held in Boise. They were recognized for their contributions to the communities and the legal profession. For more information, contact the attorney directly, or Idaho State Bar Communications Director Dan Black at dblack@isb.idaho.gov or (208) 955-8866.

Deborah Ferguson, of Ferguson Durham, PLLC in Boise, was awarded the Service Award, for her extensive contribution to the community and the legal profession. Ms. Ferguson was instrumental in establishing the Idaho Academy of Leadership for Lawyers (IALL), which began in 2011. The program brings together some of the best and brightest attorneys and teaches leadership skills that can be used to improve the legal profession and benefit their communities.

Since 2013, Deborah has also served as the Idaho State Bar Delegate to the American Bar Association. She serves as the Idaho Delegate to the National Caucus of State Bar Associations, and has been appointed to the ABA Legal Access Job Corps Task Force, and the Committee on Resolution and Impact Review.

Allan Bosch, of the Capitol Law Group in Boise, was honored with the Service Award.

Mr. Bosch has been active in Boise Metro Rotary Club, (president 1994-95); Catholic Charities of Idaho (board member since 2011); Idaho Youth Ranch (board 2005 to present and Chairman in 2010-12); and the Boise Housing Corporation (member since 2003).

As for service to the profession, Allan has been involved in many groups. He served on the Taxation, Probate & Trust Section of the Idaho State Bar, (Chairman 1995-1996); National Institute of Pension Administrators-Idaho Chapter (President 1998-1999); National Institute of Pension Administrators, Program Committee; Boise Estate Planning Council (President 1996-1997); and Idaho State Bar Advanced Estate Planning Conference Committee (Chairman 2002-2013).

Yecora Leaphart-Daniels, of Idaho Power Company in Boise, has also earned the Idaho State Bar Service Award for her community and professional contributions.

At Concordia School of Law, Yecora served as a Legacy Mentor and career services volunteer, as well as helping out at the career fair, and doing mock interviews. She also served as a board member for the Emmett Little League.

Ms. Leaphart-Daniels likes to get involved in professional activities as well. She was a Canyon County Youth Court Judge (2010) and a bar exam grader (2014-15). And she served as Third District Bar Association Secretary (2013-2014) and President (2014-16).

Celeste Miller, of McDevitt & Miller LLP, Boise earned the Idaho State Bar Service Award for her community and professional contributions. Ms. Miller has engaged in a career-long participation with Idaho's high school Mock Trial program, including serving on the Steering Committee to host the National Competition in 2016. She has served as Grants Chair of the Idaho Women's Charitable Foundation; and served as representation of Guardians ad Litem in numerous cases for the CASA program of Family Advocates.

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J. Walt Sinclair, Holland and Hart LLP in Boise, has earned the Idaho State Bar Service Award for his contributions to the community and the profession.

Walt is currently serving as the President of the Idaho Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. He is also the Treasurer of the Idaho Legal History Society, state Membership Chair for the U.S. Supreme Court Historical Society and has previously chaired and currently serves on the Idaho State Bar Foundation Access to Justice Committee. He serves on the University of Idaho Law School Advisory Council and is co-state chair for the International Academy of Trial Attorneys.

As for community service, Walt currently serves as the Chair of the Idaho Chapter of the American Heart Association; the President of the Board of Trustees for the Idaho Shakespeare Festival; and serves on the Advisory Board for the Learning Lab.

“There are many in our communities who need our help to make their lives a little better, and I am committed to helping make a difference, where I can,” he said.

Judge David Manweiler, of Boise, has earned the Idaho State Bar’s Service Award for his contribution to the community and the profession. An Ada County Magistrate Judge, he regularly helped grade bar exams both as a judge and lawyer. As a practicing attorney, he donated many hours representing guardians ad litem through CASA, as well as participated in Law Day activities.

“I always get a great sense of accomplishment and satisfaction from volunteering,” he said. “I also make connections and develop relationships with other professionals and attorneys throughout the state.”

Pro Bono Awards

Christ Troupis of Boise recently earned the Denise O’Donnell Day Pro Bono Award. He assisted a client in immigration matters and provided 150 hours of pro bono work. When asked what inspires Christ to continue providing pro bono he stated:

“For 40 years, I have always provided free services as part of my practice. It has never cost me a good living, and I have the deep satisfaction of remembering how many people I have helped who had no one else to turn to in their time of need.”

Brooke O’Neil of Law Alternatives, PLLC, in Boise, has earned the Denise O’Donnell Day Pro Bono Award. She donated over 130 hours to a grandmother who was seeking guardianship of her two young grandchildren due to the mother’s incarceration.

When asked what inspires her to do pro bono work and why others should do it, Ms. O’Neil replied, “There is a gap between those who can afford services and those who cannot. For those who truly need services but cannot afford them, this helps to serve the public and fill that gap.”

Penelope Gaffney, Boise, earned the Denise O’Donnell Day Pro Bono Award for work with co-recipient Brooke O’Neil representing a grandmother in a guardianship case. In addition to working directly with the client, Ms. Gaffney contributed her research, briefing and trial skills to the case.

Nate Peterson, Boise, earned the Denise O’Donnell Day Pro Bono Award for working more than 70 hours on three different cases in the past year. He also spent over 200 hours resolving matters left behind when a lead attorney at a firm passed away. Those clients, most of whom required assistance with criminal defense cases, could not afford to pay a second retainer to a new attorney. Mr. Peterson diligently defended the clients in plea negotiations, sentencing, and hearings.

Mr. Peterson says this about his inspiration for pro bono: “I went to law school to be an advocate and to work in public service. I am inspired by those in need, particularly when they are facing a bully and need help facing that bully in the legal system.”

Distinguished Lawyer Award

Three remarkable attorneys in the Boise area were recently presented with the Idaho State Bar's most prestigious recognition, the Distinguished Lawyer Award. They include Dale G. Higer, U.S. Attorney for Idaho, Wendy J. Olson, and S. Richard Rubin. Each have had remarkable careers in law, earning the respect and admiration of clients, fellow attorneys and judges. The awards were given at the Idaho State Bar's Annual Meeting on July 15 in Boise.

Another Boise attorney, David C. Cooper, has been elected by members of the Fourth District Bar to serve a three-year term on the ISB Board of Commissioners.

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