

2017 State Bar of Nevada Annual Membership Awards

Please join us in recognizing the legacies of our 2017 State Bar of Nevada Membership Award recipients. The awards will be presented during the Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas.

PRESIDENTIAL AWARD:

Donald J. Campbell

The State Bar of Nevada's Presidential Award is presented annually to a bar member practicing 20 years or more whose conduct, honesty and integrity represents the highest standards of the legal profession. Award recipients inspire by example, advance the administration of justice, and bring honor to the profession.

"I believe Don Campbell epitomizes [the ideals this award celebrates,]" said bar President Bryan Scott. "I still call upon him for advice and guidance."

Campbell has practiced law in Nevada for more than 35 years, beginning his career at the Clark County District Attorney's office. From there, he moved on to become Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Nevada, where he was designated by special assignment to the Organized Crime and Racketeering Strike Force of the United States Department of Justice. He entered private practice in 1986, founding the firm that would become Campbell and Williams. Campbell has continued working for clients in both civil and criminal cases.

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR:

Brandi and Jasen Cassidy

The Volunteer of the Year award recognizes outstanding service by members of a state bar committee or section.

Brandi and Jasen took over the practice of the Graham Law Firm, after attorney Robert Graham was accused of stealing millions from his clients and closed down his firm. On short notice, Brandi and Jasen took over, dealing with disorganized files and deeply angry clients, ensuring that no cases were lost despite the criminal accusations. This team dedicated hundreds of hours to organizing client files, finding attorneys to take on matters as pro bono work or at greatly reduced rates, making sure malpractice claims were filed, and assisting the bar in determining the amount of losses suffered by clients. "No one has done more to preserve the reputation of the State Bar of Nevada this year than Jasen and Brandi Cassidy," said Elizabeth Brickfield, chair of the state bar's Probate and Trust Section.

YOUNG LAWYER OF THE YEAR:

Karl Riley

The Young Lawyer of the Year award recognizes the professional and public service achievements of Nevada attorneys who are either under the age of 36 or who have been engaged in the practice of law for fewer than five years.

Riley, a member of numerous prestigious organizations including the Fellows of the American Bar Foundation, works

as a civil litigation attorney for Snell & Wilmer, representing a number of financial services institutions. In addition, Riley donates considerable time to improving Nevada's legal community; he has chaired the Young Lawyers Division of the National Bar Association, for which he has organized conferences, CLEs and community service projects. He currently serves as president of the Las Vegas chapter of the National Bar Association (LVNBA). He also works with the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, donating his legal skills to those in need, particularly as part of that organization's Children's Advocate Project.

"Karl...is willing to sacrifice his time for his clients, no matter the cause," said Nevada Senate Majority Leader Aaron Ford. "He believes the only way you can change a community is to be involved in it."

MEDAL OF JUSTICE:

In 2017, the state bar is issuing Medal of Justice awards to recognize the significant contributions of entities and a member of the legal community.

Mitch Cobeaga

The first 2017 State Bar of Nevada Medal of Justice Award posthumously honors John Mitchell "Mitch" Cobeaga, who worked tirelessly throughout his career to guide, shape, and protect Nevada's legal landscape. According to attorney Rob Murdock, Cobeaga personally mentored numerous attorneys in southern Nevada throughout his more than 40-year-long legal career, providing a sounding board for, and guidance to, generations of Nevada attorneys. He also dedicated his time to working with Nevada's veterans.

Cobeaga was a client advocate in the courtroom—and an advocate to his fellow lawyers within the Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers (LCL) community. He freely gave of his time to assist lawyers in need by responding to calls to the LCL hotline, hosting confidential LCL support groups, and spreading the message about the need to come forward when in need of help. His contributions to LCL are countless and likely exceed his, or our, calculations.

Multiple Recipients

The second awards are presented to the following pro bono legal aid service providers: Nevada Legal Services (NLS), the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, Washoe Legal Services, the Southern Nevada Senior Law Program (SLP) and Volunteer Attorneys of Rural Nevada (VARN).

Collectively, these organizations launched a coordinated, statewide plan for delivery of legal services to low-income Nevadans, working together to maximize the number of clients they assist, while facing an ever-tightening budget. Last year, nearly 2,200 bar members reported that they provided more than 100,000 hours of direct pro bono representation to persons of limited means. **NL**