

Addendum

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PROFILE: JUDGE MICHAEL J. BELLAMY

Giving something back to his community is the foundation of all that he does

At the conclusion of my interview with Russell County Judge Michael J. Bellamy, the exhortation to “give something back to your community” came into sharp focus. Born in Columbus, Georgia, Judge Bellamy attended Phenix City’s South Girard High School, and in 1973 earned his Bachelor of Science degree in political science from Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University, a historically black university). Judge Bellamy credits the TRIO Upward Bound Program of Tuskegee Institute (TI) with his academic success, including the realization of his goal to become an attorney. Upward Bound provides intensive academic and personal support designed to motivate and prepare first-generation college students.

Through the Upward Bound Program, he not only enrolled in summer classes where he and other students received tutoring and guidance from professors, but also gained admission to TI before completing his senior year in high school. While at TI, Judge Bellamy served as a counselor in the Upward Bound Program and provided encouragement and assistance to other deserving students. He notes that, “The experiences in the Upward Bound Program and the friends I met during those years were very strong factors in my desire to pursue a career in the legal profession.”

After graduating from the Southern University School of Law (Baton Rouge) in 1976, Judge Bellamy served as assistant district attorney in Russell and Macon counties, and as platoon leader in the U.S. Army Reserve’s maintenance company in Phenix City. Before embarking in private

practice in 1981, Judge Bellamy served as a municipal court judge in Camp Hill,

Huntsboro and Phenix City, and worked in the child support and condemnation proceedings units of the Office of the Alabama Attorney General. In 1998, Governor Fob James appointed Judge Bellamy to the bench as district court judge, a position to which the voters of Russell County elected him for a six-year term in 2000.

Asked what he cherishes most as a judge, he cites at the top of the list his devotion to his family and service to the people of his community. Child support programs are dear to his heart, as are issues relating to students, children and battered women. Judge Bellamy is active in his church, and has served on the boards of numerous civic organizations, including the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), the United Way, the Boys and Girls Club and the Russell County Councils for Battered Women and for Abused and Neglected Children. He is also a member of local, state and national bar associations. Five years after being appointed to the bench, Judge Bellamy told this author that people still ask him for legal advice as though he were in private practice! Inspired by the Upward Bound Program, Judge Bellamy, in turn, has worked hard to render service to those in need in his community.

—Peter A. Dumbuya, Phenix City



“The patent bar is given twice a year and is similar to the MBE on steroids, making most state bar examinations look like a literacy test.”

J.D. Not Required— The Patent Bar Revealed

The “science” behind the mystery is revealed

The Bermuda Triangle, the Roswell Incident and the Patent Bar—all are equally mysterious in the minds of many of us in the legal community.

Exactly what is the “patent bar”? Is it a legal fraternity where you must be voted in by the majority membership? Is it a group containing a sub-species of the human race, *patens justicia*? Or is it some secret society that solicits membership only from the insanely wealthy and the good-looking (if you could see some of its members, you would know this isn’t the case)?

Surprisingly, it is none of the above. The patent bar is made up of a group of individuals across the United States who have taken and passed a separate bar examination. That’s right—patent law is the only area of the law that requires its members to take a special bar examination. The patent bar is given twice a year and is similar to the MBE on steroids, making most state bar examinations look like a literacy test. Upon receipt of a passing grade, practitioners are granted their “registration number,” which is used to file documents with the United States Patent and Trademark Office in Washington, D.C.

So what is required to be granted a coveted seat in the patent bar examination?

You must have “competent, good, moral character,” and be “possessed of the legal, scientific, and technical qualifications necessary to enable him or her to render applicants valuable service.” 37 C.F.R. 10.7. In English, this means you must have some sort of science or engineering degree, or else have taken “enough” of those types of classes to qualify. What constitutes “enough” classes is determined by the United States Patent and Trademark Office, but suffice it to say, if you have an engineering

degree, you shouldn’t have a problem getting permission to sit for the exam.

Guess what is not required, though? A law degree isn’t. That’s right, you can sit, take and pass the United States Patent Bar without ever having suffered through law school. The non-lawyers who pass the patent bar are referred to as “patent agents.” Patent agents can prepare patent applications and represent clients before the PTO just like us patent attorneys, and usually work in law firms or corporate law departments. The only “difference” between patent attorneys and patent agents, besides a bigger salary and a window office usually, is that patent attorneys may counsel clients on patent issues.

So, what does this mean for you? If you have the science background, and the guts to sit in a room full of engineers for ten hours, it may be reassuring to know that in this turbulent economy, an exciting career path may be available to you that you hadn’t previously considered.

—Caroline Coker, Harsham, Pennsylvania



Pregnancy Not Hazardous to Your Law School GPA



I discovered I was pregnant a week after I completed second-semester exams of my second year of law school. My husband and I left for Destin right after I finished my corporate taxation exam. We chalked up my exhaustion to the fact that I was worn out from two tax exams, an evidence exam, a seminar and a future interests exam. Now I have to apologize to professors Feld, Stein, Hoffman, Murphy, and Holt. My fatigue had nothing (or at least almost nothing) to do with their attempts to academically stretch my brain. It had a lot to do with the little person who was set to arrive December 31, 2001.

When we returned from Destin, I thought I had a case of poison ivy that was not responding to the usual treatment. So I headed to the local "doc-in-the-box" (i.e., walk-in medical facility) to see if they could prescribe something to make it vanish. That is when they informed me that women who have difficult cases of poison ivy often are suffering from the hormonal changes of pregnancy. That seemed far-fetched to me, but I was game and let the nurse administer a pregnancy test. Lo and behold, they were right. (Telling my husband that my case of poison ivy was not disappearing because of an impending arrival was a comedy in itself.)

As an excited mama-to-be, I prepared all summer for my third year of law school. The necessary "bookbag on wheels" was purchased, and I arranged to take 17 hours in my fall semester so my one spring semester with the little one would consist of ten hours. I was ready for my worst semester ever with the overload. It was one of those things to endure and survive. I spent my Mondays in class all day with no lunch break; thank goodness for yogurt and pretzels on the run. Four-hour handwritten exams in the big classroom when eight and a half months pregnant make for extremely uncomfortable expectant moms, especially when the closest bathroom is in the library or downstairs!

Either karma was on my side or my pending arrival really liked law school. (I know she loved Professor Tom Jones's will drafting class because that is the only time she ever

kicked me.) I had my best semester grades ever! It also was fun to share my joy with my fellow law students. (Co-ed baby showers with law students are great, especially when baby food tasting is one of the games.)

I am not recommending pregnancy for all female law students for GPA-boosting purposes, but it certainly worked in my case.

—J. Pratt Austin-Trucks lives in Birmingham and practices in Wetumpka.

2003-04 License/Special Membership Dues Invoices

Invoices for the 2003-04 occupational licenses and special membership dues were mailed September 22, 2003. Your 2002-03 occupational license or special membership expired September 30, 2003. License fees and special membership dues for 2003-04 are due in the Alabama State Bar office by October 31, 2003. Occupational licenses purchased after October 31, 2003 will be considered delinquent and will have a \$37.50 penalty added. Send payments to the ASB or make them online at www.alabar.org. If you have a question, contact the Membership Department by e-mail at ms@alabar.org or by telephone, (334) 269-1515.



Athletics, Academics and the Law: Play It Smart!

Did you letter in collegiate sports? We'd love to hear from you!

Athletes, Academics and the Law: Play It Smart! is a project conceived by ASB President Bill Clark and sponsored by the Alabama State Bar. The project will identify varsity college athletes in the sports of football and basketball, from major Alabama colleges, who are now successful lawyers, and involve them in speaking to students about a career in law, focusing on 9th grade and above.

The goals are two-fold:

1. To highlight successful athlete/lawyers at halftime presentations during fall and winter sports schedules; and
2. To have participating lawyer/athletes make appearances

at area schools to talk to high school students about the importance of focusing on academics with an eye toward a future in law or similar professions. Athletics is a great training ground for personal development and can be a stepping stone to many future opportunities and fields of endeavor.

The project begins this month and runs through April 2004, and is scheduled to receive recognition in final games of Alabama high school athletic tournaments and playoffs.

We are compiling a list of lawyer/athletes. If you lettered in collegiate sports or know of colleagues who did, and are interested in participating in this program, please contact Susan Andres, ASB director of communications, at (800) 354-6154, ext. 132, or send an e-mail to sandres@alabar.org.

The Addendum Experience

Do you have something to "Add" to the Addendum?
We're always looking for ASB members to write for us!

Interested? Here's what you get:

- **FAME** (You'll actually have your name in print!)
- **FORTUNE** (The *Addendum* staff has some jokers.

Sorry, there is no great fortune, but you do get to do a great service to your state bar!)

- **A FREE LUNCH** (There's only one meeting a year to attend and we even feed you!)

Here's what we get:

- **ONE ARTICLE PER YEAR** (500 words, max, we promise!)



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Please help! Mail this form to Margaret Murphy,
P.O. Box 4156, Montgomery 36101 or fax it to
(334) 261-6310.

Beyond the JD: What Else is Out There?

Educational opportunities
abound for attorneys
seeking advanced degrees
or specialty certifications

You have your JD, or Juris Doctor, and wonder what more you can learn. In other words, what's beyond the JD? Law schools in the United States and overseas offer studies in various areas. Attorneys may earn a Master of Laws (LL.M.) in taxation, comparative law, health law, international law, and other law fields.

For a more challenging curriculum, "legal beagles" can pursue a Doctor of the Science of Law (J.S.D.) or a Doctorate of Laws (LL.D.) or a doctorate in other areas of law. Obtaining an advanced degree can be expensive and it is usually most beneficial for attorneys who plan to teach or research law.

This fall, the University of Alabama School of Law again began offering the LL.M. in taxation. The program covers two calendar years, and instruction is available through interactive video mixed with live instruction at several sites across the state. Classes are held during the fall and spring on Wednesday nights and Saturday mornings. Candidates must have a law degree and strong academic record. For more information, visit the University's Web site at www.law.ua.edu/llmtax or phone (205) 348-2648.

For information about schools offering post-J.D. degrees, consult the *ABA-LSAC Official Guide to ABA-Approved Law Schools*, 2004 edition.



In addition to pursuing an advanced degree, attorneys may earn certifications in admiralty law, environmental law, mediation, arbitration, and other specialties of law.

For more information about educational opportunities, visit these Web sites: www.alabar.org (Alabama State Bar), www.alabamaadr.org (Alabama Center for Dispute Resolution) and www.abanet.org (American Bar Association).

—Geraldine Rose Daniels, Montgomery

Rosters Available

The 2003-04 Alabama State Court Mediator Roster and the Alabama Arbitrator Roster are now available. Please call the Alabama Center for Dispute Resolution at (334) 269-0409 to order them. The Mediator Roster is \$5 per copy and the Arbitrator Roster is \$3 per copy. Postage is included in the price.



ASB Resources

Law Office Management
Assistance Program:
Helping you with the “nuts
and bolts” of your practice

Were you aware that many lawyers lack the business background necessary to effectively manage their law practices?

Some solo practitioners and small firms may not have the resources or training to handle the business aspects of their practices without help, or have the time to acquire this type of information on their own. The Alabama State Bar's Law Office Management Assistance Program (LOMAP) was established to assist solo practitioners and small firms with the “nuts and bolts” of the daily operation of a law practice.

LOMAP is designed to act as a clearing house for information on all aspects of the operation and management of the modern law office.

Services include:

- A checkout library of practice-management related materials;
- A bank of practice management forms and checklists;
- Discounted books on management related topics from the ABA's Law Practice Management Section;
- Assistance with acceptable and effective ways of developing new business;
- Articles and manuals to help you with your practice;
- Information on software suitable for law office use;
- Information on sources for malpractice insurance;
- Self-audits and office visits to help you evaluate and improve your practice; and
- A referral source for office products, equipment and consultants.

Materials include:

- Information Packets—New Lawyer/Law Firm; Time, Billing & Accounting Software; Case Management Software; Bankruptcy Software; and Real Estate Closing Software
- Quick Tips Brochure—Budgeting; Organizing & Maintaining Files; Calendar Basics; and Marketing
- Most Requested Library Materials—*How to Start & Build a Law Firm*; *Flying Solo: A Survival Guide*; *Collecting Your Fee*; *Effective Yellow Pages Advertising*; *Compensation Plans for Law Firms*; *Law Office Policies & Procedures Manual for Solos & Small Firms*; *So Little Time—So Much Paper*; and *Paralegals, Profitability & the Future of Your Practice*
- LOMAP Update—Sign up to receive this free newsletter, published two to three times per year, that includes tips, short articles and information on management-related CLE to help improve your practice.
- LOMAP Web site—For updates and current resources, visit the Law Office Management Assistance Program link on the ASB Web site at www.alabar.org.

For more information, contact either LOMAP Program Director Laura A. Calloway at (334) 269-1515, extension 116, or send an e-mail to lcalloway@alabar.org, or Program Assistant Sandra Clements at (334) 269-1515, extension 302, or send an e-mail to sclements@alabar.org.

Materials are being gathered and services added frequently. Please check often to find out what's new!

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Have You Heard?

COMMITTEES

Military Law

The committee held the 14th Annual Military Law Symposium in August at the University of Alabama School of Law. Speakers included ASB President Bill Clark, Congressman Artur Davis and various military attorneys from Washington and deployed military units.

Solo/Small Firm

The committee has five major projects: mentoring; a practice book; a survey of ASB members regarding technology; member benefits; and a technology seminar.

LOCAL BAR ASSOCIATIONS

Autauga

The county bar is co-sponsoring with the Prattville Chamber of Commerce the Peoples' Law School, a ten-week course of law-related topics for the general public.

Coffee

The bar and the Pike County Bar Association conducted a CLE seminar in May. National Security Insurance Group of Elba hosted it, and included a special presentation by WestLaw.

Houston

The HCBA donated a television to the jury assembly room of the newly renovated Houston County Courthouse, and hosted a reception for the Supreme Court of Alabama in conjunction with oral arguments held at Troy State University-Dothan.

Lee

The bar association recently contributed \$1,645 to the Food Bank of East Alabama and \$250 to the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Lee

County. Meetings are held at the Saughatchee Country Club and the LCBA has already sponsored five CLE programs this year. The bar is also in the planning stages of enlarging the Lee County Justice Center.

Mobile

New officers of the MCBA are Michael D. Knight, president; James A. Yance, president-elect; Beth McFadden Rouse, vice-president; A. Edwin Stuardi, secretary; and Walter G. Chavers, treasurer.

Tuscaloosa

The local bar's ongoing projects include the Adopt-A-School program, Drug-Free Puppeteers and honorariums for several bar members.

SECTIONS

Appellate Practice

The section was chartered by the ASB in March 2003 and has mailed membership forms to all members who expressed an interest in joining. For more information, contact Will Webster at (334) 264-9472 or will@whipc.com.

Criminal Justice

This new section has a diverse membership, with prosecutors and defense counsel. The Governing Council and committee chairs include Richard Allen, Michael Billingsley, Bill Bostick, C.H. Brantley, Len Brooks, Rebekah Callaghan, John Carroll, Don Cochran, Dale Fuller, Greg Gambriel, Richard Jaffee, Hon. Pete Johnson, Anthony Joseph, Michel Nicrosi, Martha Jane Patton, Hon. John Ott, Andy Redd, Mary Turner, Bob Williams, Carlos Williams, Bobby Wooldridge, and Tameka Wren.

Alabama Child Support Association Holds Annual Conference

Enjoy Orange Beach, earn up to 12 CLE credits and learn everything there is to know about child support

The Alabama Child Support Association will hold its annual conference this month, October 29th–31st at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach. The agenda will include topics associated with the enforcement, establishment and collection of child support obligations. The conference is expected to be



approved for up to 12 hours of CLE credit. Registration is open to a limited number of non-member attorneys at the cost of \$175. For a registration packet, contact Sheila Smith at the Office of Prosecution Services, (800) 423-7658.

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