

2018 State Bar of Nevada MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

State Bar of Nevada members work hard to contribute to our organization and further the development of the legal profession. Please join us in recognizing our 2018 State Bar of Nevada Membership Award recipients for their invaluable contributions:

PRESIDENTIAL AWARD:

William Peterson

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.

With more than 30 years of practice as a commercial, administrative and personal injury litigator, William Peterson's body of work has helped shape case law in Nevada. More than 20 of his cases have been reported as decisions in the Federal Supplement, Federal Reporter, Nevada Supreme Court Reports and the California Appellate Reports. He has tried more than 40 cases to jury verdict and another 50 bench trials to judgement, setting records for his jury verdict results.

In addition to his litigation experience, Peterson spent 10 years representing Nevada power companies as general counsel, leading or participating in more than 30 public utility proceedings. He currently serves as general counsel for telephone, power and water sanitation providers, and as a partner at the law firm of Snell & Wilmer, working out of Reno.

MEDAL OF JUSTICE:

Woodburn and Wedge

The state bar is issuing the Medal of Justice award to the law firm of Woodburn and Wedge. The Medal of Justice Award is awarded to a person, group or entity that supports Nevada's legal community. Recipients are those who inspire by example and who demonstrate commitment to the advancement of the profession and to the protection of the public.



This year, Woodburn and Wedge celebrates an incredible milestone – its 100th anniversary. William Woodburn, Sr., one of its founding partners, established the firm in Reno in 1918 as the firm of Thatcher and Woodburn. At that time, the firm emphasized mining, real estate, water and corporate law, though it practiced in all areas of law, including wills, estates, probates and general litigation. William Woodburn, Sr. served as president of the State Bar of Nevada from 1932 to 1933, and his son, William K. Woodburn, took on the same role from 1954-1955. In the state bar's 90-year history, four Woodburn and Wedge attorneys have served as bar president, including William N. Forman (1946-1947) and Richard W. Blakey (1971-1972). Six of the firm's attorneys are past presidents of the Washoe County Bar Association.

Among the many milestones it has achieved during its 100-year-history, Woodburn and Wedge was awarded a contract to provide legal services to the United States Air Force in the early 1980s – the services involved advising the Air Force on environmental, water and land use law pertaining to a new missile system it had planned for rural Nevada. In 1989, the firm successfully defended the rock band Judas Priest and CBS Records in a wrongful death action brought by the survivors of two individuals who committed suicide after a night of listening to the band's music. More recently, as part of a team of lawyers, the firm obtained the 16th largest jury award in the United States for 2003, in a fraud action involving a Nevada copper mine.

Today, Woodburn and Wedge continues its history as a general practice firm, with a concentration in litigation, insurance coverage, corporate, commercial, financial, real estate, and water law, plus much more. The firm's clients include, but are not limited to, consumer and finance companies, banks, mining companies and private individuals.

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR:

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

Mock Trial Steering Committee



In 2018, the State Bar of Nevada sponsored the National High School Mock Trial Championship, a monumental and prestigious event that took place May 10-12, in Reno. Not only did this event offer Nevada the opportunity to showcase its legal community to thousands of young students interested in the practice of law, but it also offered economic opportunities to the city of Reno. In addition to the students, the event brought a quarter-million dollars in revenue to the city, as students, coaches, family members, judges and organizers gathered in Reno for one of the most impressive academic competitions of the year. It's estimated that 30 percent of students who participate in high school mock trial will go on to attend law school.

Coordinating such an event was no small task. In addition to raising more than

\$250,000 in sponsorship funds, committee members needed to secure sufficient competition space – obtaining courtrooms from the Federal Court, Second Judicial District Court, Reno Municipal Court, Reno Justice Court and Reno Family Court for the 48 teams to use for their matches. It was also necessary to recruit and organize more than 300 additional volunteers to judge competition rounds and provide logistical support for the event.

The Mock Trial Steering Committee is chaired by Paul Matteoni. Other members include Connie Akridge, Cynthia Alexander, Jannette Bloom, Don Christensen, Mark Knobel, Gene Leverty, Diane C. Marsh and Justice Nancy Saitta (Ret.). The Mock Trial Case Committee includes Don Christensen, Robert Eisenberg, David Grundy, Kenneth Lund and John Reese Petty.

Richard M. Trachok, II

As Chair of the Board of Bar Examiners, Richard M. Trachok, II leads the team that undertakes the considerable annual work of writing and grading the Nevada Bar Exam. Trachok has served on the Board of Bar Examiners since 1991, dedicating more than 25 years of his career to ensuring that the Nevada Bar Exam meets high standards and protects the public from unqualified attorneys.

The Board of Bar Examiners is comprised of 14 members, including Trachok. In his role as chair, Trachok selects the specific topics to be queried in any particular bar exam, with the goal of maintaining fairness and consistency. Using this direction, eight members of the board then write questions for each exam. Once prospective attorneys have taken the exam, board members attend a biannual three-day meeting, during which answers to the exam questions are critiqued, and exams near the passing rate are carefully regraded.

Trachok is also responsible for having the exams evaluated by nationally recognized experts, ensuring that the tests are statistically valid; studying trends in bar exams across the country and advising the state bar Board of Governors on such trends; and meeting with leadership at law schools across the country in order to

study bar exam processes and seek potential improvements. Members of the Board of Bar Examiners collectively contribute up to 300 hours of volunteer time every year to this critical work on behalf of the State Bar of Nevada.

In addition to his work for the Board of Bar Examiners, Trachok currently serves as Senior Counsel at the firm of McDonald Carano, focusing his practice on regulatory and gaming law. He was an adjunct professor at the University of Nevada, Reno for 15 years and an adjunct professor for the University of San Francisco School of Law for seven years. He is presently an adjunct professor at the University of California, Berkeley School of Law.

YOUNG LAWYER OF THE YEAR:

Jordan Davis

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.



In addition to working as a deputy public defender for Washoe County, Jordan Davis currently serves as the chair of the state bar's Young Lawyers Section. In 2015, Davis was nominated to become a Fellow of the American Bar Association for demonstrating extraordinary leadership in the legal profession, service to society, and commitment to the ideals and objectives of the American Bar Association. Prior to becoming deputy public defender, Davis was a member of Fennemore Craig's Government Affairs Practice Group and an associate at Lionel Sawyer & Collins. His practice focused on government relations, complex civil litigation and commercial litigation.

Davis's volunteer work is not limited to serving as the leader of the Young Lawyers Section. He also volunteers countless pro bono hours to legal aid service providers. In addition, he contributes his time to several community organizations in northern Nevada, including work with veterans of our armed forces and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northern Nevada. In 2014, Davis was named "Big of the Year" by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northern Nevada.