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## See Who Won Daily Report's 2024 Southeastern Legal Awards

Here is the full roster of the winners and nominees from the attorneys, legal departments and law firms recognized by Daily Report for their accomplishments in legal work, mentorship, diversity initiatives and leadership.

June 20, 2024 at 01:00 PM

Awards



**Eden Landow**

The Daily Report presented 43 trophies last night to the nearly 100 lawyers, firms and law departments recognized during the second Southeastern Legal Awards at the Flourish event venue in Buckhead.

The awards have been presented for nearly 20 years in Georgia by Daily Report, and this year was the second year they were expanded to include the Southeast.

The honorees included attorneys, departments, firms and initiatives from Georgia plus North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi. Managing editor Michael Mariano, senior litigation reporter Cedra Mayfield and Daily Report co-hosted the event.

Though most of the honorees were announced in April, several categories were announced during the dinner, including Attorney of the Year, Law Firm of the Year, Most Innovative Law Firm, Best Dealmaker, Best Mentor, Best Diversity Initiative, Best In-House Counsel, Best General Litigation Department, Best Product Liability Department and, new this year, Best Young Lawyer, who was chosen from among the On the Rise group.

In the days ahead, we will provide more news about this year's winners in the Southeast and their professional accomplishments.

## Attorney of the Year

Sarah Jorgensen, founding partner and Atlanta managing partner of Reichman Jorgensen Lehman & Feldberg, was named the **2024 Attorney of the Year**.

Daily Report's criteria, according to its call for nominations this spring, for Attorney of the Year is "intentionally broad," awarded to an attorney in the Southeast who in 2023 had the biggest impact on the law or legal community or did the most "to advance the cause of justice." Also nominated were:

- Ted Spaulding of Spaulding Injury Law
- Sally Yates, former deputy U.S. attorney general and partner, special matters and government investigations of King & Spalding

## Law Firm of the Year

In honor of law firms that have demonstrated a broad spectrum of both talent depth and achievements in the past year, the Daily Report presented its Law Firm of the Year award to King & Spalding, an international Am Law 100, Global 30 and white-shoe firm headquartered in Atlanta.

Finalists for the award also included:

- Eversheds Sutherland,
- Greenberg Traurig
- Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders

## Lifetime Achievement Awards

This is the 10th year Daily Report recognized legal lifetime achievers in Georgia and now the Southeast. This year's honorees were:

- Thurbert Baker, former state attorney general and co-leader of state attorney general practice of Dentons
- Gerald Pouncey, chairman of Morris, Manning & Martin
- Mark Wasserman, co-chief executive officer of Eversheds Sutherland

## Distinguished Leader Awards

A dozen highly respected legal minds were recognized for their contributions to the field of law. They were:

- **Andrew T. Bayman**, partner, trial and global disputes of King & Spalding
- **Ben Barkley**, partner of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton
- **Brent Hill**, partner and health care practice leader of Holland & Knight
- **Catherine Budzynski**, chief legal officer of Ohmium International
- **Charles E. Peeler**, Atlanta managing partner of Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders
- **Eric Tresh**, partner and global board member of Eversheds Sutherland
- **James Crumlin**, partner and DEI chair of Spencer Fane
- **Matthew C. Gaudet**, partner and intellectual property practice group vice chair of Duane Morris
- **Rik Tozzi**, partner focusing on consumer and business class and individual actions of Burr & Forman
- **Samuel Olens**, former state attorney general and partner, public policy practice and member of the state attorneys general group
- **Tiana Mykkeltvedt**, partner, of Bondurant Mixson & Elmore
- **Victoria Dye**, attorney of Morgan & Morgan

## Best Mentor Award

For those lawyers who have used their expertise and experience to help less-experienced colleagues become better lawyers, Daily Report presented the Best Mentor Award to **Seslee Smith**, partner and general counsel of Morris Manning & Martin. Also nominated as finalists in this category were:

- **Drew Beal**, partner, of Beal Sutherland Berlin & Brown
- **Alicia Jones**, partner, of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton
- **David King**, shareholder, of Polsinelli
- **Greg Parent**, senior neutral, of Miles Mediation & Arbitration
- **Keshia Tiemann**, shareholder, of Greenberg Traurig

## Best Diversity Initiative

The Diversity Initiative award was presented to **Bullock Ward Mason**. This award recognizes firms of that have “embraced diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.” The nominees emphasized their “proudest accomplishments,” identified related challenges facing Southeastern lawyers and highlighted “particularly inspirational” and successful diversity initiatives. Also nominated in this category were:

- **McGuireWoods**
- **Moore & Van Allen**
- **Smith Anderson Law Firm**

- **Swift, Currie, McGhee & Hiers**

## In-House Counsel of the Year

The winner in this category was **Natasha Walwyn Robinson** of Splunk Inc. Robinson is a North Carolina-based technology and intellectual property attorney. She serves as the sole legal counsel for her San Francisco-based software company's global marketing team and counsels them on her areas of law while also serving as the firm's Black employee resource group treasurer to support diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. Also nominated in this category were:

- **Catherine Budzynski** of Ohmium International
- **Erin Henderson** of U.S. Bank
- **Keith McGahan** of Spectrum Pharmaceuticals
- **Dale Pearson** of Keller Group
- **Erica Zinkie** of OneDigital

## Best Legal Innovator

**Jaime L. Theriot** of Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders was named this year's Best Legal Innovator for her role in the firm's in-house launch of Athena, which uses generative AI to draft, edit and analyze language and aims to ensure confidentiality and compliance.

This category recognizes innovative efforts by individual lawyers and legal professionals for putting "game-changing ideas for their practices or organizations" into reality. Also nominated in this category were:

- **Stephen Bittinger** of K&L Gates
- **Julie Heine** of Seyfarth Shaw
- **Jill Huse** of Society 54 + Society Tech
- **Rose Jones** of King & Spalding
- **Kevin Miner** of Fragoman, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy

## Litigation Departments of the Year

**Alston & Bird** was named as having the Litigation Department of the Year. The Atlanta-based firm also won the The American Lawyer's Regional Litigation Department of the Year award in 2023, for its representation of clients including the U.S. Soccer Federation, the Kaiser Foundation and former White House employee Cassidy Hutchinson.

The Litigation Departments of the Year awards are open to law firms with any size Southeastern presence. They are based on accomplishments by lawyers from the Southeast but can relate to matters litigated anywhere. Some categories, such as for Appellate, Personal Injury and Securities Litigation departments, were previously announced, while General Litigation and Product Liability were announced Thursday night. Below is information about the finalists and winners. Also nominated in the General Litigation category were:

- **Beal Sutherland Berlin & Brown**
- **Burr & Forman**
- **Greenberg Traurig**
- **King & Spalding**

**Litigation Department of the Year—Product Liability:** The winner was Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough; Greenberg Traurig was runner-up.

**Litigation Department of the Year—Appellate:** Bondurant Mixson & Elmore

**Litigation Department of the Year—Personal Injury:** Harris Lowry Manton

**Litigation Department of the Year—Securities:** Motley Rice

## Managing Partner of the Year

The Managing Partner of the Year award was presented to **Diandra “Fu” Debrosse** of DiCello Levitt, who has recovered nearly \$1 billion in damages for her clients in multidistrict and mass tort litigation using modeling to identify technology-based and other forms of discrimination.

This category recognizes the Southeast’s leading lawyers who have had an impactful year that stands out among their peers. Finalists in this category were:

- **Ted Blum** of Greenberg Traurig
- **Tina Bullock** of Bullock Ward Mason
- **Greg Bosseler** of Morgan & Morgan
- **Matt Burnstein** of Holland & Knight
- **Stu Goldstein** of Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft
- **Guilford “Gif” Thornton** of Adams and Reese
- **Henry Walker** of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton
- **Sidney Welch** of Bradley Arant Boult Cummings

## Most Effective Dealmaker

**Chris Daniel**, a partner in Paul Hastings’ corporate department and founder and chair of the firm’s global fintech and payments group, was named Most Effective Dealmaker.

This award is presented in honor of attorneys whose negotiation skills, strategies and results generate repeat business. The finalists in this category were:

- **Richard Bange**, executive partner, Charlotte, North Carolina office of Holland & Knight
- **Justin Barry**, partner, commercial real estate development and finance and commercial lending practice groups, of Morris, Manning & Martin
- **Rich Cicchillo**, partner, of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton
- **Michael Gurion**, partner, of Eversheds Sutherland

- **Kolin Holladay**, business department co-chair of Polsinelli
- **Gerald Roach**, firm chair of Smith Anderson

## Most Innovative Law Firm

**Lightfoot, Franklin & White** was named Most Innovative Law Firm for its use of in-house tech solutions to reduce cost and boost efficiency. Among them are Lightfoot, Jury, which is used in jury selection, and Lightfoot 360, which provides a roadmap of client cases from beginning to end. The finalists in this category were:

- **Bell Law Firm**
- **McGuireWoods**
- **Ogletree Deakins**
- **Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders**

## Young Lawyer of the Year

**Milinda Brown** of Beal Sutherland Berlin & Brown was named as Daily Report's 2024 Young Lawyer of the Year for achievements in her first seven years as a litigator balancing community service and leadership goals. This is the first year Daily Report has presented this award.

## On the Rise

On the Rise is a category that for nearly 20 years has recognized Georgia's and for the past two years the region's top lawyers 40 and under. Here are Daily Report's 2024 "On the Risers:"

- **Alyssa Baskam** of Beasley Allen Law Firm
- **Adrian D. Boddie** of Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders
- **Milinda Brown** of Beal Sutherland Berlin & Brown
- **Grace Chandler** of Motley Rice
- **Thomas Clarkson** of Griffin Durham Tanner & Clarkson
- **Courtney Lutz Creal** of Spencer Fane
- **Stephanie Nullman Eban** of Thrift McLemore
- **Andrew Hatchett** of Alston & Bird
- **Matt Kahn** of Butler Kahn Law Firm
- **Andrew Kaufman** of Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein
- **Ben Keen** of Beasley Allen Law Firm
- **Will Keyes** of the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District of Georgia
- **Aigner Kolom** of Beasley Allen Law Firm
- **Alison LeVasseur** of Alston & Bird
- **Daniel Peterson** of Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein
- **Allison Pryor** of Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders
- **Amelia C. Stevens** of Oliver Maner
- **Joseph VanZandt** of Beasley Allen Law Firm

- **Amanda Waide** of Alston & Bird

**Editor's note:** *The incorrect web link was originally posted for Most Innovative Law Firm finalist Bell Law Firm.*

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*For more information on our awards, please visit our event site. To learn about the judging process, read here. If you missed out on this year's Daily Report professional awards, maybe it isn't too late to be considered for other awards that will be presented this year by several of our sister publications.*

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