

Renae Reed Patrick Named ‘Citizen Attorney’ by Virginia Women Attorneys Association

Renae Reed Patrick, who has devoted her career to serving the poor as a legal aid attorney and volunteer for advocacy organizations, has been presented with the Virginia Women Attorneys Association’s first Citizen Attorney Award.

Currently, Patrick is the supervising attorney for Blue Ridge Legal Services in Harrisonburg, where she mentors new lawyers.

Since she became a lawyer in 1981, she has been a staff attorney for legal aid programs that serve Lexington, Northern Virginia, the Roanoke Valley, and Christiansburg, and she managed the program in Lynchburg. She also was special counsel to the Virginia Division of Child Support Enforcement.

Before she moved to Blue Ridge, she served two years as a visiting professor at Washington and Lee University School of Law, where she directed the Black Lung Clinic.

Her volunteer work has included leadership in bar associations throughout the state. She chairs the Virginia State Bar’s Access to Legal Services Committee, is a member of the VSB Senior Lawyers Conference Board of Governors, and she received the VSB’s Legal Aid Attorney of the Year Award in

2003. Earlier, as an attorney in private practice she chaired the board of directors of the Virginia Poverty Law Center.

She was president of the VWAA for the 2001–02 term, and served as a substitute judge in Lynchburg while previously employed at legal aid.

Projects she has worked on involve homelessness, Court Appointed Special Advocates volunteers, family law issues, and domestic abuse. Newer interests focus on consumer law, including mortgage foreclosure prevention.

VWAA President Kathleen J.L. Holmes said Patrick exemplifies the type of attorney the organization wants to single out: the person who, when others are saying “somebody needs to do something about that,” becomes “the somebody who did something.”

The award was created by the VWAA in response to a speech this year in which former Virginia Gov. Gerald L. Baliles extolled “lawyers of honed ability and integrity who take positions of civic and political leadership, and apply their skills for the broad public good.” (See http://www.vsb.org/docs/valawyer magazine/vl1008_clba.pdf, in the October 2008 edition of *Virginia Lawyer*.)



Retired Roanoke Circuit Judge Diane M. Strickland (left) presents the first VWAA Citizen Attorney Award to Renae Reed Patrick.

The statewide organization hopes that its chapters will present the award in their regions “to identify those Virginia lawyers who have worked to make their communities better places to live, through legal representation of clients, civic involvements, or a combination of both,” Holmes said.

The VWAA has ten chapters across the state. (For more information, see <http://www.vwaa.org/>.)

— CALL FOR NOMINATIONS —

2009 LEWIS F. POWELL JR. PRO BONO AWARD

and the

2009 Oliver White Hill Law Student Pro Bono Award

The deadline for receipt of nominations by the bar is 5:00 PM, Friday, February 13, 2009.

For more information visit
http://www.vsb.org/site/pro_bono/resources-for-attorneys/
 and scroll to Awards & Honors.

— Call for Nominations —
 in the 6th, 19th and 22nd
 Judicial Circuits for the

2009 VSB Awards to Appointed
 and Pro Bono Counsel
 making extraordinary
 contributions to the
 Virginia Justice System

For more information see
http://www.vsb.org/site/pro_bono/2009-circuit-awards-nominations.