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EQUAL JUSTICE FOR ALL

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PRESS STATEMENT:

Four Louisiana Public Defender Board Members Earn Accolades

September 29, 2011 (Baton Rouge) – Four Louisiana Public Defender Board members have been recognized for exceptional contributions to the practice of law. Members Sam Dalton, Leo Hamilton, Majeeda Snead and Gina Womack were honored recently for their diverse contributions to the legal system and the community.

In September 2011, Board Member Sam Dalton received the Kutak-Dodds award from the National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA). This national award is presented to an equal justice advocate, “who, through the practice of law, has contributed in a significant way to the enhancement of the human dignity and quality of life of those persons unable to afford legal representation.” Mr. Dalton will be recognized formally at the Centennial Conference of NLADA in Washington, DC on December 6, 2011. Mr. Dalton has practiced law in Jefferson Parish for nearly 60 years, received numerous awards, been counsel in significant cases before the Louisiana and United States Supreme Courts, and is a nationally recognized expert in capital cases, both at trial and on appeal.

In April 2011, Board Member Leo Hamilton, a partner of Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson LLP in Baton Rouge, is the recipient of the Louisiana Bar Foundation's prestigious President's Award. Mr. Hamilton was selected in recognition of his outstanding support, volunteer service and dedication to the mission and goals of the Louisiana Bar Foundation. This past year he served on the Foundations' Board of Directors as Secretary and as the Board Liaison and Chair of the Editorial Committee.

In August 2011, Board Member Majeeda Snead was recognized by the Urban League of Greater New Orleans as one of five African-American women honorees. Professor Snead is a Professor of Law at Loyola University New Orleans College of Law and was specifically recognized as being the first African American woman to lead Loyola University's Law Clinic. She has broad experience as a practitioner providing civil legal aid services and *pro bono* juvenile representation in Louisiana, and was honored at the Urban League Gala on August 22, 2011.

In September 2011, Board Member Gina Womack, co-founder and executive director of Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FFLIC), was named a 2011 Alston Bannerman Fellow. The Alston Bannerman Fellowship is a national award presented by the Center for Social Inclusion that honors longtime community activists of color and gives them the opportunity to take sabbaticals. Ms. Womack is one of six fellows selected this year. FFLIC's successes include sweeping reforms that closed two juvenile prisons. Currently, the organization is working diligently to interrupt the school to prison pipeline.

State Public Defender Jean M. Faria says, “The Louisiana Public Defender Board is grateful for the contributions of all of its members, and is very pleased that members Sam Dalton, Leo Hamilton, Majeeda Snead and Gina Womack have been recognized for their achievements. By

sharing their considerable talents as members of the Louisiana Public Defender Board, they are significantly improving the public defender system, juvenile justice system and criminal justice system across Louisiana.”

Sam Dalton is appointed to the Louisiana Public Defender Board by the Children’s Code Committee of the Louisiana State Law Institute. Leo Hamilton and Majeeda Snead are both appointed to the Louisiana Public Defender Board by the Governor; Professor Snead is appointed to represent Loyola University College of Law. Gina Womack is nominated by the Louisiana Chapter of the Louis A. Martinet Society.

The mission of the Louisiana Public Defender Board is: In pursuit of equal justice, the Louisiana Public Defender Board advocates for clients, supports practitioners and protects the public by continually improving the services guaranteed by the constitutional right to counsel. Through its commitment to performance standards, ethical excellence, data-driven practices and client-centered advocacy, the Louisiana Public Defender Board oversees the delivery of high quality legal services affecting adults, children and families, and supports community well-being across Louisiana.