If you have a listing for **Laurels**, please mail it to *Texas Bar Journal*, P.O. Box 12487, Austin, TX 78711-2487; fax it to (512)427-4107; or send an email to tbj@texasbar.com.

Jonathan Newton, a partner in Baker & McKenzie, L.L.P. in Houston, was reappointed by Gov. Rick Perry to the Finance Commission of Texas. The commission ensures banks, savings institutions, consumer credit grantors, and other state-regulated financial entities operate responsibly to enhance the financial well-being of Texans.

David M. Davis, founder of Davis & Wilkerson, was recognized as the 2010 recipient of the David H. Walter Community Excellence Award by the Austin Bar Foundation.

The following Texas-licensed attorneys were named by the National Bar Association and IMPACT, a nonprofit organization founded by a group of young professionals of color in 2006, as two of the "Nation's Best Advocates: 40 Lawyers Under 40": **Meca Walker**, an associate judge of the 309th Family District Court in Houston, and **Nefeterius Akeli McPherson**, senior media affairs liaison to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

A Texas Tech University School of Law student negotiation team won the 2010 International Negotiation Competition, held in Queensland, Australia. The team — composed of third-year law students Allyson Bazan of Lubbock and Michael Martinez of Brownfield — was coached by Nancy Soonpaa, legal practice program director, and **Wendy Humphrey**, assistant professor of legal practice. A Texas Tech team also won this event in 2005.

Robert Harris, a partner in Shannon, Gracey, Ratliff & Miller, L.L.P. in Dallas, was accepted as a member in the International Association of Defense Counsel.

The following Austin attorneys have been named officers of the board of the Austin Bar Association: **David Whittlesey**, president; **David Chamberlain**, president-elect; **Lance Sharp**, secretary; **Chris Oddo**, treasurer; and **Ann Greenberg**, past president.

The Supreme Court of Texas and the State Bar of Texas have appointed the following four Texas attorneys as new commissioners to the Texas Access to Justice Commission: Justice **Georgina Benavides**, of the 13th Court of Appeals in Edinburg; **David Hall**, executive director of Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, Inc. in Weslaco; **Scott Rozzell**, general counsel to Centerpoint Energy in Houston; and Judge **Al Bennett**, administrative judge — Civil Division, Harris County in Houston.

Al Ellis, of counsel to Sommerman & Quesada, L.L.P. in Dallas, was selected as the 2010 recipient of the Jim D. Bowmer Professionalism Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Profession by the College of the State Bar of Texas. The honor includes a cash award of $5,000 for a Texas law school, which Ellis will give to the Sarah T. Hughes Diversity Fellowships at the Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law.

Kelly M. Crawford, an attorney with Scheef & Stone, L.L.P. in Dallas, was elected a Fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation.

St. Mary's University School of Law has named **Charles A. Beckham, Jr.**, a partner in Haynes and Boone, L.L.P. in Houston, as one of its 2010 St. Mary's Distinguished Law Graduates.

Texas-licensed **Shawn Mathis**, of Chicago, Ill., was awarded a Fellowship for the 2010–11 academic year by the Beazley Institute for Health Law at Loyola University Chicago School of Law while she pursues a Master of Laws degree in Health Law.

Maria-Vittoria "Giugi" Carminati, an associate of Weil, Gotshal & Manges, L.L.P. in Houston, was selected to serve a one-year term as editor of *The Affiliate*, a newsletter published by the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division.

Albon Head, a partner in Jackson Walker, L.L.P., was awarded the 2010 Law "Good Scout" Award by the Longhorn Council of Boy Scouts of America. The award honors a well-respected attorney known for his or her strong character and respect within the Fort Worth community.

The Hispanic National Bar Association named Judge **Catherine Torres-Stahl**, of the 144th Criminal District Court in San Antonio, its Latina Judge of the Year and **Lulu Flores**, of Hendler-Law, P.C. in Austin, its National Latina Lawyer of the Year.

Gov. Rick Perry appointed **Denise V. Pratt** of Baytown and **Mark Talbot** of McAllen to the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners. Pratt's term expires Feb. 1, 2011, while Talbot's expires Feb. 1, 2013.

Texas-licensed **Ellen E. Slavin**, of the Office of Counsel to the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services in Washington, D.C., was awarded the 2010 Exceptional Achievement Award by the Office of Counsel to the Inspector General in recognition of outstanding contributions to the mission of the office.

Texas-licensed Dr. **Walter Sutton, Jr.**, associate general counsel to Walmart's legal administration and external relations division in Bentonville, Ark., was inducted into the National Bar Association's Hall of Fame.

The Texas Environmental Superconference, now in its 22nd year and sponsored by the State Bar Environmental and Natural Resources Law Section, received the first-ever State or Local Bar Environment, Energy and Resources Program of the Year Award from the American Bar Association's Section of Environment, Energy and Resources.

Katherine L. Butler, of Butler & Harris in Houston, was a part of the Kapche Litigation Team, which received the American Diabetes Association's 2010 Public Policy Leadership Award.

The following attorneys were selected as 2010 Outstanding Young Dallasites by the Dallas Junior Chamber of Commerce: **Kristin Bauer** of Jackson Lewis, L.L.P.; **Jennifer Duncan Edgeworth** of Hermes, Sargent, Bates, L.L.P., **Patsy Pei-Ling Yung Micale** of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; and **Emmanuel U. Obi** and **Angela Zambrano**, both of Weil, Gotshal & Manges, L.L.P.

Richard A. Sayles, co-founder of Sayles Werbner, P.C. in Dallas, was named Trial Lawyer of the Year by TEX-ABOTA Inc., the Texas chapters of the American Board of Trial Advocates.

Irene Hosford, a partner in Brown McCarroll, L.L.P. in Dallas, earned accreditation as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Associate (LEED® Green Associate). The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) awards this non-legal accreditation to professionals who successfully pass an exam that tests an individual's knowledge of green building practices and the LEED® rating system. According to the USGBC website, Hosford is one of 27 Texas attorneys who hold a LEED® Green Associate or LEED® Accredited Professional accreditation.

Eliot P. Tucker, a shareholder in Tucker, Vaughan, Gardner & Barnes, P.C., was elected to membership in the Houston Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates.

Patricia B. Cole, a shareholder in Decker, Jones, McMackin, McClane, Hall & Bates, P.C., was admitted to the Leadership of Fort Worth Class of 2011.

Bob Driegert, of Dallas, was elected treasurer of the American Association of Attorney-Certified Public Accountants.

Frank L. Branson, founder of the Law Offices of Frank L. Branson, was named the 2010 Outstanding Trial Lawyer of the Year by the Dallas Bar Association.

The State Bar Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect honored **Darin Darby**, a felony chief prosecutor in the Crimes Against Children Division of the Harris County District Attorney's Office in Houston, with its Annual Fairy Davenport Rutland Award for Distinguished Service to Children and Families.

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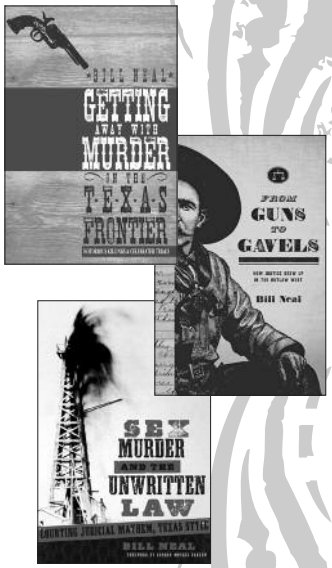

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