

NEWSLETTER

COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF LEGAL EXCELLENCE, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND
INCREASED MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN THE PRACTICE OF LAW

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>From the President</i>	1
<i>Pay Increase for the Federal Judiciary</i>	2
<i>Are you Ready for the Bounre Pages?</i>	3
<i>Judicial Commission on Professionalism</i>	3
<i>Is this Your Last Newsletter?</i>	4
<i>Scholarship Donations</i>	4
<i>New Admittee Reception</i>	4
<i>Membership</i>	4

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



J. Franklyn Bourne
Bar Association
30th Anniversary

“What is the STATE of our bar association?”

Whoever said “time sure flies when you’re having fun” must have served in a presidential capacity because I cannot believe that this year is almost half over.

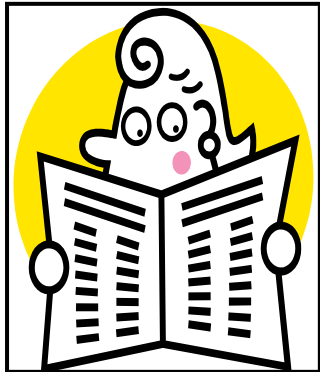
It seems like only yesterday that I assumed this responsibility (although I’m sure my partner, **Vernell Arrington**, is more familiar with the time span to date). Since assuming the presidency, I have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support and assistance I have received from all of you...for that I say “Thank You.”

We began this year with a **JFB Executive Board and Committee-Chairs** retreat (Caribbean-style), which not only set the tone for our 30th Anniversary year, but demonstrated that the STATE of our bar association is STRONG. It is strong because we are a network of individuals committed to lifting each other, as we climb the proverbial ladder, while continuing to honor the memory of **Judge James Franklyn Bourne, Jr.** In the biography of Judge Bourne, entitled *A Cross Borne* (written by JFB member **Karen Lesla Williams Gooden**) we learn that the five main objectives of our association in 1977 were as follows:

1. To create a cohesive group of [black attorneys] to deal with common problems;
2. To enhance political clout and create pressure on people in Annapolis;
3. To increase socialization of black attorneys;
4. To dispense recent case law and changes in the law to fellow attorneys;
5. To serve people as an intelligence gathering group.

Although the wording of our association’s principles has changed over time, our most basic tenet remains the same...the advancement of [black attorneys] in the field of law and government. Because there were **Judges Bourne** and **Taylor**, we now have a **Judge Alexander Williams, Jr.** Because there was a Judge **Lanzell Martin, Jr.** and **Judge Sheila R. Tillerson Adams**, we now have **County Attorney Stephanie P. Anderson...** and the list goes on. Due to the efforts of so many in our past, we no longer have to kick down the doors of racial prejudice but we must continue to march through them.

To that end, in the 2nd half of the year, JFB will look to launch a Young Lawyer’s Section, a Boycott Prison Initiative, to rekindle our relationship with local public schools and to resurrect our Voter Registration Drive in preparation for the 2008 Campaign season. So if you haven’t been active the first part of the year, don’t worry, there



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK (Cont.)

is still plenty of work to be done and we can certainly use your help.

As a reminder, we will be in recess during the months of July and August, which means no general membership meeting until **September 20, 2007**. Our committees will continue to meet however, especially our Annual Banquet Committee, in preparation for our scholarship banquet on Thursday, November 1, 2007. If you are interested in being a part of this committee, please contact the **Honorable Hassan Ali El-Amin** or **Sharon Christmas DeBerry**.

Lastly, many thanks to **Judge Michele D. Hotten** and **Shelley Johnson**, Co-Chairs of the CLE Committee, for another outstanding program on Attorney Grievance issues. According to our panelists, **William Brennan** and **Arthur Horne**, Prince George's County has a

high rate of Attorney Grievances. Let's stem the tide on this issue... if you don't know something, ask somebody!!! Thanks **Arthur** and **Bill** for sharing your expertise on this topic with us.

Although we won't be meeting in July, **Judge Sheila R. Tillerson Adams** and **Wenessa Snoddy**, Co-Chairs of the New Admittees Committee will be hosting our Welcome Reception for new Maryland Bar Members on Saturday, July 14, 2007, at the home of Judge Adams. Every year, we are honored to have the Honorable **Robert M. Bell**, **Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals** in attendance and this year is no exception. Please plan on attending this very special event. See you on July 14th.

Regards,
Abigale Bruce-Watson
President
J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association

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The **JFB Newsletter Committee** strives to insure that the *JFB Newsletter* provides a valuable resource to its members. But we need your help. The Newsletter Committee invites your participation as a Committee member or as a contributor. We welcome articles and information on topics of interest to JFB members. For further information, please contact **Joel Braithwaite**. (See above.)

PAY INCREASE FOR THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY

Did you know that the federal judiciary has not received a full cost of living adjustment nor a pay raise since 1989? If you are wondering why, it is because it literally takes an act of Congress to get a pay raise.

With that as a back drop, the judiciary has suffered. From 1969 through 2006, real pay for federal judges has declined approximately 25 percent, while the real pay of the average American worker has increased by about 19 percent. In fact, a significant number of federal employees (i.e., professional positions in the executive branch and banking agencies) can now receive salaries at or above the salary of district judges. For that matter, there are some career law clerks making almost as much as their judges.

With stagnating salaries, good and experience judges are leaving the bench. According to Chief Justice Roberts, "inadequate compensation directly threatens the viability of life tenure, and if tenure in office is made uncertain, the strength and independence judges need to uphold the rule of law-even when it is unpopular to do so-will be seriously eroded."

In response to the above issue, JFB has joined with countless other bar associations including, but not limited to, the American Bar Association, National Bar Association, and the Federal Bar Association, in supporting Senate Bill 1638, which, if enacted, will increase compensation for the federal judiciary. Please keep a close eye on Senate Bill 1638 to ensure its enactment this current United States Congressional Session.

READY TO ADVERTISE ON THE BOURNE PAGES?

The brain-child of **Judge Hassan El-Amin**, **www.bournepages.com**, will allow JFB members to advertise their practices on the web. Of critical importance is the involvement of JFB Members in bringing this concept to fruition. Judge El-Amin has always been diligently seeking an advertising forum for JFB Members. To this end, several years ago, he put his money where his mouth has been and pledged \$5000 to JFB for this cause. With the JFB Banquet on the horizon, Judge El-Amin's hands is sufficiently filled that he is seeking the involvement of practitioners to bring the concept to life. JFB has already purchased the domain, and, yours truly, will be working with the committee to design, promote and administer the website.

So if you are "a slacker", "a jive talker", "a half-stepper", less than "thorough", "lame", or "shaky". PLEASE DO NOT READ ANY FURTHER. The **Bourne Pages** is looking for members with superior leadership skills and a willingness to serve. No experience required. Practitioners will be charged with helping bring this dream, an advertising forum for JFB members, from concept to reality. The Bourne Pages will be a paradigm shift in legal advertising in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties. Let's make history. Please contact Joel Braithwaite for more information.

The *JFB Newsletter* is published monthly except July. All rights are reserved but articles may be reprinted without permission, provided proper credit is given. JFB members receive this newsletter at no cost. Statements expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the **J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association, Inc.** or its officers.

The *JFB Newsletter* invites letters and articles. Submissions should be sent by E-mail, in MS Word format, to joel.braithwaite@gmail.com. Editor reserves the right to shorten any submissions to meet space limitations. Deadline is the 29th of each month.

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON PROFESSIONALISM

On April 25, 2002, **Chief Judge Robert M. Bell** established the Maryland Judicial Task Force on Professionalism. The Task Force was comprised of twenty-four lawyers; one from each jurisdiction. The Task Force found that professionalism in our profession was declining. In order to further professionalism as an important core value, the Task Force recommended that a Professionalism Commission be established. Under the leadership of **Judge Lynn A. Battaglia**, the Professionalism Commission identified indicia of professionalism, developed standards of professional conduct and studied ways to improve professionalism throughout the State.

The Commission was divided into eight subcommittees: Standards and Ideals of Professionalism; Professionalism Guidelines and Sanctions for Use by Judges; Discovery Abuse; Mentoring; Update the Existing Professionalism Course for New Admittees; Development of a Professionalism Course for Lawyers Who Exhibit Unprofessional Behavior; Defining the Unauthorized Practice of Law and the Judge's Role in the Bar and the Community.

I had the opportunity to serve on the Mentoring subcommittee which was chaired by **Court of Spe-**

cial Appeals Judge, James P. Salmon. Our Committee recommended that the MSBA mentoring program be revamped so that new admittees will be assigned a specific mentor at the semi-annual Professionalism Course. The Committee has also recommended that a "Judicial Experience Program" be established at the two Maryland law schools. The Judicial Experience will be a 40-hour voluntary program open to all second and third-year students in which students attend court with a Judge, ALJ or Master to learn from the mentor-judge what is expected of a professional.

On May 30, 2007, the Maryland Judicial Commission on Professionalism filed its Revised Final Report and Recommendations ("Revised Final Report") with the Court of Appeals. The Revised Final Report will be heard in the fall by the Court of Appeals, at which time, the Court will entertain public comments from the Bench and the Bar. The Revised Final Report, Supplemental Reports of the eight subcommittees and the minutes of the statewide Town Hall Meetings can be accessed via the Maryland Judiciary's website www.courts.state.md.us.

Felecia L. Greer, Esq.

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Important Dates to Remember

JFB New Admittee's Reception Home of the Hon. Sheila Tillerson-Adams.

Sat., Jul. 14, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

RSVP to **Edna Dillard** at
eddillard@co.pg.md.us for more info.

General Membership

Thurs., Sept. 20, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Prince George's Community College
301 Largo Road, Largo, Maryland
Largo Student Center, Room 232A

YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER?

Is This Your Last JFB Newsletter? If you haven't paid your 2007 JFB dues yet, this edition of the JFB Newsletter will be your last JFB Newsletter. JFB dues are payable the first of each year and, as a courtesy, we continue to send the Newsletter to active members of the previous year for six months—through this June edition. If you have any uncertainty about your membership status for 2007, contact Membership chair Judge Herman C. Dawson at (301)952-3676 or Janelle Jordan.

SCHOLARSHIP DONATIONS

Let's give the gift of charity – J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association Scholarship Fund, Inc.

Money is like manure; it's not worth a thing unless it's spread around encouraging young things to grow... Thornton Wilder

In keeping with JFB's mission, the Scholarship Fund has been raising money and awarding scholarships to local area law students to help defray the cost of law school tuition. Please join with us in those efforts by making a donation to the Scholarship fund. Donations are tax deductible and any amount would be appreciated. Checks should be made payable to J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association Scholarship Fund, Inc. and mailed to P.O. Box 1121, Upper Marlboro, MD 20773.

NEW ADMITTEE RECEPTION

It's that time of the year again to welcome new admittees into the Maryland State Bar. We can all remember how satisfying it was to not only pass the Bar Exam, but to be sworn in as practicing attorneys. Please join us in welcoming our new admittee's to the Bar at our annual **New Admittee's Reception**.

This year's event will be at the home of Past President, **Judge Sheila R. Tillerson-Adams** and her husband, **Timothy Adams**, on July 14th, 2007 from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Co-chairs of this event, **Judge Tillerson-Adams** and **Wennesa Snoddy**, invite you to join us in a fun-filled afternoon of networking. Don't miss it. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to **Edna Dillard** at eddillard@co.pg.md.us.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION — DUES NOW BEING ACCEPTED.



JFB is committed to legal excellence, community service, and the advancement of African-American minorities in the legal profession. Our membership consists primarily of African-American attorneys who live and/or work in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

Membership classes are:

Active: Licensed to practice law in Maryland. Dues: admitted to the Bar for less than 5 years — \$25; all others — \$50.

Associate: Licensed in *any other jurisdiction*, who lives in Montgomery or Prince George's County. Dues: admitted to the Bar for less than 5 years — \$25; all others — \$50.

Student: Matriculated at a Washington metropolitan area law school *or* lives in Montgomery or Prince George's County and matriculated in any law school. Dues: \$5.

New Admittees: Admitted to practice in Maryland in the last 12 months. Dues waived.

For membership applications, contact Janelle Jordan & Judge Herman C. Dawson.