

19th Annual  
Robert J. Beckham

Equal Justice  
**AWARDS**  
*Celebration*

Omni Jacksonville Hotel  
September 20, 2018



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GEORGE "BUDDY" SCHULZ**

for his recognition as the Equal Justice Honoree

# AWARDS CELEBRATION

## Welcome & Opening Remarks

James A. Kowalski, Jr.  
President & CEO  
*Jacksonville Area Legal Aid*

## Pro Bono Awards

The Honorable Hugh A. Carithers  
*Fourth Judicial Circuit*

## President's Awards

Ramona Chaplin  
2018 President  
*JALA Board of Directors*

## Equal Justice Awards

Introductory Remarks:  
The Honorable Melissa W. Nelson  
State Attorney, *Fourth Judicial Circuit*

Honoree Acceptance Remarks:  
George E. "Buddy" Schulz, Jr.

## Keynote Speaker

Piper Kerman  
Author, *Orange is the New Black*

## Closing Remarks

James A. Kowalski, Jr.

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## 2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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John Woodlee, *1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President*  
Tammy Butler, *2nd Vice-President*  
Kevin Algee, *Treasurer*  
Alex King, *Secretary*

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Katrina Braggs	Carson Lange	Latoya Williams-Shelton
Stacey Clark	Geraldine Lyons	

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Kaleea Loyal, <i>Secretary</i>	Fabian Jackson
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To learn more or find out how to get involved, visit [www.JaxLegalAid.org](http://www.JaxLegalAid.org)

# 19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL ROBERT J. BECKHAM

## EQUAL JUSTICE AWARDS CELEBRATION

### Equal Justice Awards

The Equal Justice Awards celebrate philanthropy and volunteerism within the legal community and recognize those who have advanced the mission of Jacksonville Area Legal Aid – providing justice for the poor and marginalized – through volunteer pro bono service, philanthropy, and an unwavering dedication to fairness and equality.

Since 1999, Jacksonville Area Legal Aid has honored an individual or organization that has done the most to promote the cause of equal justice for low-income persons with the Equal Justice Award. The event was renamed in 2009 as *The Robert J. Beckham Equal Justice Award Celebration* to honor the late Robert J. Beckham, Esq., a longtime supporter of JALA, former JALA Board Member, and past recipient of the award.

Proceeds from this evening's event support the provision of free legal aid to the community's most vulnerable populations and allow Jacksonville Area Legal Aid to react quickly to the changing needs of those seeking assistance.

***Thank you for your support!***



### Creation of the Awards

The Equal Justice Award and other recognition pieces for this year's honorees were handmade in the Jacksonville University glass studio by Brian Frus, Assistant Professor of Glass, and his students.

### About Jacksonville Area Legal Aid

A concept born out of ten members of The Jacksonville Bar Association in 1937, the organization known today as *Jacksonville Area Legal Aid* is a non-profit law firm dedicated to providing social and economic justice for low-income and marginalized individuals in North Florida.

With a staff of more than 30 attorneys in three Northeast Florida offices and tremendous pro bono support from the legal community, JALA provides more than 11,000 people annually with critical, often life-saving, legal assistance.



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Equal Justice Awards Celebration 2018



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## KEYNOTE SPEAKER



### Piper Kerman

#### Author, *Orange is the New Black*

Piper Kerman is the author of the memoir *Orange is the New Black: My Year in a Women's Prison* from Spiegel & Grau. The book has been adapted by Jenji Kohan into an Emmy Award-winning original series for Netflix.

Ms. Kerman collaborates with nonprofits, philanthropies, and other organizations working in the public interest and serves on the board of directors of the Women's Prison Association and the

advisory boards of the PEN America Writing For Justice Fellowship, InsideOUT Writers, Healing Broken Circles and JustLeadershipUSA. She has been called as a witness by the U.S. Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights to testify on solitary confinement and women prisoners, and by the U.S. Senate Governmental Affairs and Homeland Security Committee to testify about the federal Bureau of Prisons. Ms. Kerman has spoken at the White House on re-entry and employment to help honor Champions of Change in the field, as well as the importance of arts in prisons and the unique conditions for women in the criminal justice system. In 2014 she was awarded the Justice Trailblazer Award from John Jay College's Center on Media, Crime & Justice and the Constitutional Commentary Award from The Constitution Project; the Equal Justice Initiative recognized Ms. Kerman as a Champion of Justice in 2015.

Ms. Kerman is a frequent invited speaker to students of law, criminology, gender and women's studies, sociology, and creative writing, and also to groups that include the International Association of Women Judges, the National Association of Counties, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Criminal Justice Association, the American Probation and Parole Association, the American Correctional Association's Disproportionate Minority Confinement Task Force, public defenders, justice reform advocates, and formerly and currently incarcerated people.

Ms. Kerman is a graduate of Smith College. She lives in Columbus, Ohio, with her family and teaches writing in two state prisons as an Affiliate Instructor with Otterbein University.

## EQUAL JUSTICE AWARD HONOREE



### **George E. "Buddy" Schulz, Jr. Partner, Holland & Knight**

Buddy Schulz is a partner in Holland & Knight's Jacksonville office and is a Florida Bar Board Certified trial lawyer. His practice has involved him in litigation throughout the United States since 1973. He is the past chairman of Holland & Knight's litigation department, and he presently is the Chair of the Public and Charitable Service Department, which coordinates the Firm's pro bono and community initiatives that provide assistance to persons of limited means and organizations that help them.

A Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, the International Society of Barristers, American Board of Trial Advocacy and the American Bar Foundation; listed in The Best Lawyers in America and Florida Trend's Legal Elite; and a member of The Florida Bar, American Bar Association, Chester Bedell American Inn of Court and other professional organizations, Mr. Schulz is admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court; the United States Courts of Appeal for the Fifth and Eleventh Circuits; The United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit; and the United States District Courts for the Southern, Middle and Northern Districts of Florida, including the trial bar. He has served as a member of The Florida Bar's Civil Rules and Evidence Code committees and as chairman of the Fourth Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission. He is a recipient of The Florida Bar Pro Bono Service Award.

In his community, Mr. Schulz has served as a cabinet member of United Way; general counsel of PACE Center for Girls/Jacksonville; a director of Jacksonville Area Legal Aid, Inc.; a director of the Jacksonville Urban League; a member of the City of Jacksonville Ethics Commission; a member of the City of Jacksonville Juvenile Justice Comprehensive Strategy Board; and a member of the Gator Bowl Association. He is presently a volunteer to the Guardian Ad Litem program, a trustee emeritus of the University of Florida Levin College of Law and a member of Florida Blue Key.

Mr. Schulz earned his law degree following military service as a lieutenant in the United States Navy during the Vietnam War.



## EQUAL JUSTICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

George E. “Buddy” Schulz, Jr., Esq. (2018)

Samuel S. Jacobson, Esq. (2017)

William “Bill” Sheppard, Esq. (2017)

Dominic C. “Donny” MacKenzie, Esq. (2015)

Robert Spohrer, Esq. (2014)

The Honorable William A. Van Nortwick, Jr. (2013)

Paul C. Doyle, Esq. (2012)

Florida Coastal School of Law (2011)

The Jacksonville Bar Association (2010)

Harrell & Harrell, PA (2009)

Jack D. Webb, Esq. and Glorious Johnson (2008)

Robert J. Beckham, Esq. (2007)

Kevin E. Hyde, Esq. (2006)

Rogers Towers, PA (2005)

Hank Coxe, Esq. (2004)

Eddie Farah, Esq. (2003)

Gary C. Pajcic, Esq. and Stephen J. Pajcic, Esq. (2002)

Douglas J. Milne, Esq. (2000)

J. Wayne Hogan, Esq. (1999)

## PRO BONO NOTABLES

### Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division Pro Bono Service Award:

Allison McElhaney Stocker

### Florida Bar President's Pro Bono Service Awards:

Fourth Judicial Circuit, Andrea Reyes

Seventh Judicial Circuit, Pamela R. Masters

### OUTSTANDING PRO BONO SERVICE HONOREES

Debbie Lee Clark

James Russell Collins

Lisa Anne DiFranza

Crystal L. Freed

John Wilson Humes, Jr.

Douglas John Milne

Jeanine Beard Sasser

Tania Romaine Schmidt-Alpers

### PRO BONO HONORS

#### Gold Level (100 hours or more)

Connie Byrd  
Brian Joseph Cabrey  
Ross Chafin  
J. Russell Collins  
Raelyn Covington  
Ericka Curran  
Howard Lykins Dale  
Ronald Duryea  
Troy Farquhar  
Leanna S.A. Freeman  
Jay Grife  
Ashtin Henninger

John Humes , Jr.  
Aaron Irving  
Edward Jackson  
Sean Kelley  
Kathleen A.M. Krak  
Maxine Long  
Daniel Mahfood  
Thomas Mayton, Jr.  
Carrington Mead  
Joseph Meux, Sr.  
Chip Parker, Jr.  
Michael Pelkowski

Nicholas Pulignano, Jr.  
Thomas Pycraft, Jr.  
Andrea Reyes  
Donato Rinaldi  
Elizabeth Rothenberg  
Ann R. Shorstein  
Jack Spence  
Vincent Sullivan  
Sarah Sullivan  
Natalie Tuttle  
Alan Weiss

## PRO BONO HONORS

### Silver Level (50—99 hours)

John Bennett  
Michael Bittner  
Debbie Lee Clark  
F. Susannah Collins  
Robby Cook  
Lisa Anne DiFranza

Bruce Duggar  
Crystal L. Freed  
Ardian Gjoka  
Ada Hammond  
Daniel Hilbert  
Amber Hines

Virginia Morgan  
Jessica Narducci  
Jennifer Pruden  
Paul Regensdorf  
Tania Schmidt-Alpers  
Jonathan Zisser

### Bronze Level (20—49 hours)

Maria Aguila  
Fraz Ahmed  
Debra Alexander  
Zachary Alfant  
Joseph Alvarez  
Brandon Beardsley  
Lucreita Becude  
David Barksdale  
Daniel Bean  
Rebecca Beller  
Iana Benjamin  
Rebecca Black  
Barry Bobek  
Kim Bongiovanni  
Kim Bouchard-Chaimowiz  
Vicki Bowers  
Imani Boykin  
Richard Britton  
Richard Brooks II  
Steve Brust  
Melina Buncome  
Pablo Cabrera  
Ramona Chaplin  
John Cherneskie  
Courtney Connor  
A. Hamilton Cooke  
Gabriel Crafton  
Joseph Crawford  
McCarthy Crenshaw, Jr.  
James Cummings  
Ericka Curran  
Thomas Cushman  
Carol Daniels  
Lisa Dasher  
Holli Dean  
Eileen Dolaghan  
Jasmine Dortival  
Kristen Drake  
Poppy DeCunto  
Yvonne Edo-Olotu  
Amanda Edwards  
Robert Ellis

Caroline Emery  
Lynell Everett  
Katie Fackler  
Joanne Fakhre  
Valerie Faltemier  
Chelsea Farrell  
William Flournoy  
James Floyd, Jr.  
Hollyn Foster  
Crystal Freed  
Barry Fuller  
Chloe Furfine  
Beverly Furtick  
Laura Gapske  
April Geer  
Anne Marie Gennusa  
John Germany, Jr.  
Wiley Gillam, IV  
Leslie Goller  
Jonathan Graessle  
William Graessle  
Mark Green  
Ashley Greene  
Angela Grewal  
Christopher Guarino, Jr.  
Christie Guerrero  
Judy Hargitai  
Peter Hargitai  
G. Thomas Harper  
Chantal Harrington  
Geraldine Hartin  
Lintera Harvin  
James Hatfield  
Michelle Hawthorne  
Jason Havens  
Thomas Heekin  
Jared Hernandez  
Alison Hickman  
Alexandria Hill  
Pamela Holcombe  
Rebekah Hope  
Laurence Huttman

Diana Johnson  
Patrick Joyce  
Milagros Kanyar  
Jamie Karpman  
David King  
Emily Lange  
Brent LaTour  
Eric Lawson  
Jennifer Lawson  
Carleen Leffler  
Marissa Lenius  
Lewis Lockett  
Whitney Lonker  
Shana Loomar  
Matthew Lufrano  
Beth Luna  
John Macdonald  
Susan Mack  
Dominic MacKenzie  
Sarah Mannion  
Lloyd Manukian  
Reese Marshall  
Kathryn Masters  
Blane McCarthy  
Nawal McDaniel  
William Michaelis  
Jimmy Midyette  
Douglas Milne  
Robert Morgan  
Levi Morris  
Mark Moss  
David Naples, Jr.  
Katherine Naugle  
Vanessa Newtonson  
Cynthia Nichols  
Erin O'Brien  
William Odom  
Jamie Olinto  
Ingrid Osborn  
Diana Owusu  
Anthony Papa  
Andrew Pietrylo, Jr.

Jennifer Pineda  
Madelyn Pittman  
Matthew Posgay  
Allen Poucher, Jr.  
Rose Marie Preddy  
Ned Price  
Anand Raythatha  
Andrea Reyes  
Chanda Rogers  
Jamin Rubenstein  
Jeanine Sasser  
Xavier Saunders  
George Schulz, Jr.  
Joseph Scone  
Markus Sermons  
Judith Setzer  
Seth Shapiro  
Craig Sherar  
Christiane Sommer  
Michael Stanski  
Denise Stocker  
Rick Stockton  
Mitchell Stone  
Max Story  
Elizabeth Teelon  
Beth Terry  
Albert Tetrault  
Amanda Thoele  
Matthew Tonuzi  
Cynthia Trimmer  
Carla Trinca-Conley  
Patricia Vail  
Michele Waddell  
Kasey Wagner  
Felecia Walker  
Colleen White  
Trevor Williams  
Karen Winston  
John Woodlee  
Cheryl Worman  
Bonnie Yamani  
Barry Zisser

## OUTSTANDING PRO BONO SERVICE AWARDS

### **Debbie Lee Clark – Champion for Low-income Seniors**

Debbie Lee Clark takes her advocacy to our seniors in locations that are familiar and accessible. She offers presentations at HUD residential facilities, senior centers, and in our libraries describing the purpose and importance of advance directives documents. Clark is a regular participant in the advance directives events held in senior communities and at the monthly advance directives nights at JALA. She has assisted dozens of pro bono clients with probate, will creation, and advance directives matters. Clark helped launch the Alternative Spring Break projects providing training and mentorship to law students assisting with senior citizen outreach initiatives. She is often an advising attorney at neighborhood Ask-A-Lawyer events. Clark is a passionate advocate and friend of our low-income seniors and their families helping them navigate our complex world.

### **James Russell Collins – Positive Impact Beyond St. Johns**

James Russell (Rusty) Collins has been a member of The Florida Bar for ten years and he has earned a pro bono service award in St. Johns County Legal Aid for ten years in a row. Collins selflessly and consistently gives hundreds of hours of pro bono service to those in need every year in St. Johns County and in other Florida counties. Collins has expertise in many areas of law and particular expertise in property, title, probate, and consumer law. He is an aggressive litigator for those being bullied or marginalized like the homeless man arrested near his office. Collins' advocacy for the poor, elderly, and disabled is work he calls "lots of fun!" Always patient and professional, Collins' heart is as big as his caseload. His positive impact on our community is far-reaching and immeasurable.

### **Lisa Anne DiFranza – Standing with Vulnerable Adults**

Lisa Anne DiFranza has helped establish a guardianship and guardian advocacy pro bono project by assisting clients, mentoring colleagues, and improving processes. DiFranza was a leader in encouraging new attorneys to accept the guardianship matters and was always available to provide guidance and feedback to them as they proceeded through their cases. In addition, DiFranza has assisted dozens of senior citizens with advance directives documents and has been a regular presenter in the Lawyers in Libraries project. She has also accepted pro bono cases in the areas of custody, landlord/tenant, and consumer law. DiFranza helped establish stability and safety for families with young adults who are medically frail and for our area seniors. She is a compassionate professional providing assurance and encouragement to some of our most vulnerable.

### **Crystal L. Freed – An Advocate for Survivors**

Crystal L. Freed has become a recognized leader in the fight against human trafficking nationwide. Here in northeast Florida she has represented survivors of both labor and sex trafficking activities and has advocated for them in civil matters, wage claims, and establishing immigration documentation. Freed has increased awareness of the problem of human trafficking locally including knowledge of the warning signs and how to work with community agencies to intervene. Her pro bono efforts extend beyond those impacted by trafficking to low-income persons seeking legal assistance with guardianship, housing, and dependency. Freed is thorough and undaunted by the complexity of the case. She has provided hundreds of hours of pro bono service. Freed is zealous in her defense of the oppressed and victimized and in her commitment to justice.

## OUTSTANDING PRO BONO SERVICE AWARDS

### **John Wilson Humes, Jr. – At Mary Singleton the Lawyer is In**

Several years ago, upon retirement from the CSX legal department, John Wilson Humes, Jr. became a pro bono attorney at JALA. He quickly identified his pro bono niche, and began accompanying longtime pro bono attorney, Joe Meux, Sr. (honored in 2013), in his weekly visits to the Mary Singleton Senior Center, a routine that Meux established decades ago. On Tuesday mornings, the legal team of Meux and Humes sets up shop and meets with seniors who have legal questions. It's not unusual for them to leave with a pro bono matter or two for follow-up and assistance resulting in dozens of cases accepted each year. Humes has assisted seniors in a broad range of matters including, advance directives, will creation, contracts, collections, and housing. Humes takes legal guidance to a trusted location to those who are underserved providing support, empowerment, and advocacy.

### **Douglas John Milne – A “Go To” Advocate for Decades**

Douglas John Milne has been on the front line of civil legal assistance for low-income persons for the duration of his career. He has provided representation and support for JALA clients and for the JALA organization. Milne has served on the JALA Board of Directors and on the Board of the JALA Foundation and he's also served many individual clients. He's represented pro bono clients in probate, trusts, and foreclosures. Milne assists with Estate Planning Intakes nights and provides support for colleagues by serving as a mentor. With his involvement as a leader with other community organizations, Milne brings a broad perspective on poverty, but is not removed from the needs of individual clients. His work is significant on a community-wide scale and to the individual pro bono clients he serves.

### **Jeanine Beard Sasser – General Practitioner for Some Most in Need**

Jeanine (Nina) Beard Sasser, a solo practitioner, has provided a wide range of pro bono services for people in need throughout her legal career. From family law matters to social security appeals to wills and advance directives, Sasser has provided pro bono services to families for decades. She participates in Estate Planning Intake Night at the JALA downtown office and in the JALA intake nights at the City Rescue Mission coordinated by the Christian Legal Society. Sasser brings concise, clear guidance as well as determination and resolve to each pro bono matter giving clients confidence and hope as they proceed through some of their most difficult life chapters. Sasser's longtime commitment to service and access to legal assistance along with her leadership have provided stability and opportunities to thrive for many across northeast Florida.

### **Tania Romaine Schmidt-Alpers – Advocacy When Time is of the Essence**

Tania Schmidt-Alpers has been a champion of domestic violence victims since she started practicing in 1996. Originally hired by legal aid in Putnam County to work under DV grants that area of law ended up being her true calling. She is now a statewide and nationwide DV trainer, expert, and appellate lawyer as well. Regardless of where Schmidt-Alpers has worked throughout her career she has preemptively accepted any and all meritorious DV cases. She volunteers at the shelters and on her own initiative accepts every injunction or deserving family law matter--totaling hundreds of hours of pro bono service every year on behalf of desperate and deserving victims. Schmidt-Alpers' vitally important “time is of the essence” safety planning and legal work has literally saved countless lives and provided stability for families in need.



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Description	Interested?
School starting. If evicted, child will change from an A school to a D school. Single father working two jobs needs you. Help them build a better tomorrow.	
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Where YOU make the connection.



## PRESIDENT'S AWARD RECIPIENTS

- ◆ Canan Law; Driver, McAfee, Hawthorne & Diebenow  
(2017—*Outstanding Philanthropy*)
- ◆ Lois Ragsdale, Esq. (2016—*JALA Board President*)
- ◆ Jeffrey Goldhagen, MD MPH; Rhonda Peoples-Waters  
(2015—*Outstanding Philanthropy*)
- ◆ Jacksonville Bar Association; Rogers Towers  
(2014—*Outstanding Philanthropy*)
- ◆ Councilman Bill Gulliford; Councilman Warren A. Jones;  
The Honorable J. Michael Traynor (2013)
- ◆ The Honorable Hugh A. Carithers, Jr.; Renu Heda;  
M. Kimberly Martyn, Esq.; Jacksonville Women Lawyer's Association;  
Pajcic & Pajcic, PA; Tom Slater, Esq.; Lois Ragsdale, Esq. (2012)
- ◆ Jacksonville Area Legal Aid Board of Directors (2011)
- ◆ Edwards & Ragatz, PA; Norm & Lenora Gregory;  
Robert W. Murphy, Esq.; Regions Bank (2010)
- ◆ Jake Schickel, Esq.; Patrick Canan, Esq. (2009)
- ◆ Danya D. Duncan, Esq.; Caroline C. Emery, Esq.; Christa F. Figgins, Esq.;  
Deborah McDuffie; Rose Marie Preddy, Esq.; Deborah Reid, Esq.;  
Susan W. Sowards, Esq.; John Wolfel, Esq. (2008)
- ◆ Billy Catlin (2007)
- ◆ Evelyn Mew (2006)
- ◆ John Duvall, Esq. (2005)
- ◆ Emily Magee, Esq.; Kathy Para, Esq.; Donald Robinson, Esq.;  
Deanna Sessions-Mitchell; Kimberly Smith (2004)
- ◆ Harrell & Johnson, PA; Emerson Lotzia, Esq. (2003)
- ◆ Donny MacKenzie, Esq.; Lynn Drysdale, Esq. (2002)



## **Freed to Run - Six Marathons in Six Days to Help Pediatric Patients.**

Freed to Run benefits the Northeast Florida Medical Legal Partnership (NFMLP), through which health-care professionals collaborate with attorneys to produce better outcomes for children experiencing health or medical conditions. Jacksonville Area Legal Aid provides free civil legal aid to pediatric patients and their families and operates the partnership in collaboration with: Baptist Health; Wolfson Children's Hospital; Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Jacksonville; UF Health Specialty Pediatric Clinics; and Community PedsCare®, a pediatric program of Community Hospice & Palliative Care.

With a five-year fundraising goal of \$1 million, and a \$1.25 million match by Baptist Health, JALA expects to create a \$2.25 million endowment for the NFMLP.

Freed to Run started in 2017 when Jacksonville lawyer Mike Freed ran the six marathons himself, from courthouse to courthouse, garnering regional and national media attention for the cause and raising over \$150,000 including the **Baptist Health match**. **This year, relay teams are joining Mike to increase the impact.**

For more information about Freed to Run 2.0, to register or support a team, or to become a sponsor, visit: [www.jaxlegalaid.org/freedtorun](http://www.jaxlegalaid.org/freedtorun)

**The Baptist Health Foundation will match all donations by 125%.**



In support of the Northeast Florida Medical Legal Partnership



The NFMLP is part of a nationwide network of projects in which professionals from the medical and legal communities combine resources to produce outcomes for low-income and vulnerable patients (children and adults) that positively impact their health and ability to thrive.