

Supreme Court makes appointments to Board of Bar Admissions

December 3, 2015

The Mississippi Supreme Court recently appointed two new members to the Mississippi Board of Bar Admissions and reappointed a third member. Attorneys Walter Alan Davis of Oxford and Michael C. McCabe Jr. of Gulfport are new members of the board, and attorney Jeffery A. Styres of Madison has been reappointed.



Justice Josiah D. Coleman appointed Davis from the Supreme Court's Third District, which covers north Mississippi. Davis takes the seat formerly held by attorney Wilton V. Byars III of Oxford. Presiding Justice Jess Dickinson appointed McCabe from the court's Second District, which covers the southern part of the state. McCabe replaces attorney Ann Bowden of Ocean Springs.

Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr. reappointed Styres from the First District, which includes central and Delta counties. Styres became chair of the Board of Bar Admissions on Nov. 1. He previously

served as vice-chair.

Chief Justice Waller, who signed the order of appointments, thanked Byars and Bowden for their service. They "have the Court's gratitude for their dedicated and faithful service on the Board of Bar Admissions." Bowden, who served on the board for nine years, had been chair since January 2014. Byars served on the board for six years.

Members of the Board of Bar Admissions selected Marcie Fyke Baria of Bay St. Louis as vice-chair.

New members' terms began Nov. 1. Terms are three years.

The Board of Bar Admissions administers the rules and statutes governing admission to the practice of law in Mississippi. The Board oversees the preparation, administration and evaluation of two bar examinations each year. The Board also, in conjunction with its Committee on Character and Fitness, oversees the investigation and evaluation of the character and fitness of each person who applies to become a member of the Mississippi Bar.

Davis is a partner in the firm of Dunbar Davis, PLLC, in Oxford. He has represented clients in civil litigation in state and federal courts as well as in arbitration and mediation. His practice areas include family law, estate and probate litigation, business litigation, civil rights, employment law, medical malpractice, personal injury litigation and appellate practice. He was admitted to the Mississippi Bar in 1994, and is admitted to practice before all Mississippi state and federal courts, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court.

He is a member of American MENSA and the American Inns of Court, William C. Keady Chapter. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Yoknapatawpha Arts Council, the LOU Homeless Initiative, and the Lafayette-Oxford Foundation for Tomorrow, LOFT.

Davis received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Mississippi State University, *magna cum laude*, and

earned his law degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law, *magna cum laude*. He served on the Editorial Board of the Mississippi Law Journal, and worked with the public interest Housing Law Clinic. He served on the law school's Honor Council. He served as an intern with the office of the United States Attorney for the Northern District of Mississippi. After he was admitted to the bar, he worked as a judicial law clerk for U.S. District Judge Glen H. Davidson.

McCabe is a member of the Butler Snow firm in Gulfport. He is a member of the firm's Commercial Litigation Group and concentrates his practice on commercial litigation and employment litigation. He served as defense counsel in more than 200 Hurricane Katrina bad faith insurance lawsuits. He has represented water and wastewater utility companies in litigation, and handled real estate development litigation. He has represented clients in appeals before the Mississippi Supreme Court and the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

McCabe was admitted to the Mississippi Bar in 2004, and is admitted to practice before all Mississippi state and federal courts and the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. He served on the Committee on Character and Fitness from January 2014 through October 2015. He is chair of the Young Lawyers Division Disaster Legal Assistance Committee. He previously served as chair of the Mississippi Bar Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee.

McCabe earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree *magna cum laude* from Mississippi State University and a law degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law. He was a member of the Moot Court Board and a Law School Student Body Senator.

He served as a judicial law clerk for U.S. Magistrate Judge John M. Roper Sr.

Styres, who has been a member of the Board of Bar Admissions for six years, is senior associate counsel in the legal department of Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company in Jackson. Before he joined Southern Farm Bureau, his private law practice was in life, health and disability litigation, insurance defense and pharmaceutical liability litigation. He previously served as president of the Mississippi Corporate Counsel Association. He is a member of the Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia bar associations. He serves as an adjunct professor at the Mississippi College School of Business. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting, *cum laude*, from Samford University, a Masters of Business Administration, *cum laude*, from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and a law degree from Mississippi College School of Law.

Baria has extensive litigation and appellate experience in state and federal courts. She represented businesses and individuals in employment, insurance, business, construction and accident litigation. She works extensively with community and area non-profit organizations. She founded Live Oak Alliance Mississippi, which is dedicated to the strategic use and management of Gulf Coast natural resources. She also founded Recycle Hancock, which operated recycling programs in six Hancock County schools, teaching students about resource management. She is chair of the Hancock County Food Pantry. The Hancock County Chamber of Commerce named her its Outstanding Citizen in 2007. She was selected Parent of the Year for Bay Waveland Middle School in 2010. Baria received the 2013 Outstanding Mississippi Women Award. She attended Parsons School of Design and The New School in New York. She graduated from Millsaps College and earned a law degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law. She was admitted to the Mississippi Bar in 1990.

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