

# HANK CADDELL: Alabama's Volunteer Lawyer of the Year

BY MICHAEL A. SMITH



Henry A. Callaway, III, chair of the Mobile Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Program Committee, presents Hank Caddell with the MBA's Volunteer Lawyer of Year award.

Henry H. "Hank" Caddell is truly an asset to the legal profession, as well as to the community where he makes his home, Mobile, Alabama. Hank helps the indigent with their legal, medical and homeless woes, maintains a private practice, and provides support and leadership to other organizations to make the world a nicer place for all of us.

Caddell has been a faithful volunteer with the Mobile Volunteer Lawyers Program (hereinafter *VLP*) since its inception in 1989. In that period of time, he has provided well over 200 hours of legal help to those who were unable to compensate him for his services. Hank has closed the books on the problems of 48 different clients during his 17 years, providing guidance in all types of cases: contract and warranty, home-ownership, landlord/tenant (as well as other housing issues), consumer financing, public utilities, unfair sale practices, and wills and estates.

In the last couple of years, Hank has made even more time available for the VLP clients and though he did not seek it, the accolades have poured in. Hank provided 81 hours of service in 2004 and was recognized publicly as a nominee for Mobile's highest volunteer award. In

2005, he donated 80 hours of service for which he was selected as the local Volunteer Lawyer of the Year. In 2006, the Alabama State Bar followed suit and selected Caddell as its *Pro Bono* Volunteer Attorney of the Year.

Hank's volunteer efforts with the VLP, however, are not limited to helping the indigent. He is the immediate past chair of the VLP, having served at the helm for two years; he also served on the Executive Committee of the Mobile Bar Association during that period of time. During his VLP administration, Caddell instituted a fund-raising campaign among the local attorneys which raised \$30,000 in each of those years, money necessary for the program's vitality. Though no longer chair, Hank still conducts the fund-raising drive as part of his service to the organization.

While serving as a board director for seven years, Hank has been in charge of publicity for the VLP, often providing articles that he has written to Mobile's *Press-Register* to bring attention to the work being done by volunteer attorneys within the program. Without his diligence in focusing the spotlight on local efforts, good deeds would often go unnoticed and good people would be unrecognized.

Caddell was also responsible, as chair of the Mobile Bar Public Relations Committee, for starting "Law Line" in the Mobile community. Law Line is a telephone bank manned by dozens of Mobile attorneys who give advice and make referrals to community members who have called in with pressing legal problems. That program is still being conducted more than ten years after its commencement.

Hank's volunteer efforts are not limited to the VLP or the legal community, however. For more than one and a half years, Caddell has served as the chair of the board for Family Promise; this organization provides housing for the homeless in Mobile and Baldwin counties, using church properties. Caddell is on the board—and has been the chair for several years—of the Franklin Primary Health Centers which provide medical health care to the lower income populations of Mobile, Baldwin and Choctaw counties.

Caddell's volunteer efforts are not lim-

ited to the indigent, however. He is also the founder and an officer for the Alabama Coastal Heritage Trust Foundation which has an endowment for preserving the coastal environmental habitat; the foundation also provides educational resources toward that goal. Caddell is a member of the vestry (treasurer) at his church, All Saints Episcopal.

Hank Caddell is selfless in volunteering his time and energy to empower those who are less fortunate by providing legal services to the indigent people of Mobile. He not only makes sure that the poor receive legal help, as he also helps make medical care and housing opportunities available to them. When not providing help to the underprivileged, Caddell does what he can to improve the environment and build his community. Mobile and Alabama are certainly better for his efforts.

The following are written comments provided by several of Hank's clients:

A property case: "He guided me

through the entire process. My attorney walked me through several issues. He and his office prepared all necessary paperwork. They were extremely helpful."

A guardianship/conservator case: "The program helped me a lot and quick. And I thank Mr. Henry H. Caddell for helping me with my case. He is a good man that understands your problem. Thank you very much."

An unspecified case: "The attorney did a great job for me. Any time I need his services I will get him again. So, I am thankful to him." ■

**Michael A. Smith**

Michael A. Smith is a staff attorney of 19 years to U.S. Magistrate Judge Bert W. Milling, Jr. in the Southern District of Alabama. Smith is secretary of the Mobile VLP Program and chair of the Awards Committee.

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