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## PRESS RELEASE

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**Atlanta** – The 23rd Annual Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service will be presented in a special ceremony on **Thursday, March 2, 2023**. Since 1998, these awards have been presented to honor lawyers and judges in Georgia who have made significant contributions to their communities and who demonstrate the positive contributions of members of the Bar beyond their legal or official work.

The Lifetime Achievement Award is the highest recognition given by the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism, organizer of the Justice Robert Benham Awards for Community Service. This year it will be awarded to one outstanding community and public servant: **J. Michael Levensgood**, member, Law Office of J. Michael Levensgood, LLC, Lawrenceville. This award is reserved for a lawyer or judge who, in addition to meeting the criteria for receiving the Justice Robert Benham Award for Community Service, has demonstrated an extraordinarily long and distinguished commitment to volunteer participation in the community throughout his or her legal career.

Awards are presented to selected attorneys in the judicial districts of Georgia from which nominations were received. This year's other recipients are **Mary T. Benton**, pro bono partner, Alston & Bird, Atlanta; **Simon H. Bloom**, founding partner, Bloom Parham, LLP, Atlanta; **Ronald J. Freeman, Sr.**, managing member, Johnson & Freeman, LLC, Historic Union City; **Elicia N. Hargrove**, assistant district attorney, Henry County District Attorney's Office, McDonough; **Edward H. Lindsey, Jr.**, partner, Dentons US LLP, Atlanta; **Jason Banks Moon**, attorney at law, Moon Law Firm, Valdosta; **Wallace H. Wright**, retired attorney, Wright & Edwards, P.C., Metter.

These honorees have served a wide range of community organizations, government-sponsored activities, and humanitarian efforts outside of their professional practices and judicial duties. Their service includes: advocacy for refugee children; athletics coaching for youth; clothing drives; certified therapy dog handler that visits local schools, hospitals and retirement homes; community leadership development; education; election regulation; faith-based service; food giveaways; fundraising; healthcare, homelessness and increasing access to safe, affordable housing; public transportation; record restriction clinics; scouting; tutorial programs; and voting rights training. These awards recognize the commitment of Georgia lawyers and judges to volunteerism, encourage all

lawyers and judges to become involved in community service, improve the quality of lawyers' lives through the satisfaction they derive from helping others and raise the public image of lawyers and judges. All honorees are members of the State Bar of Georgia.

The Awards Presentation is scheduled for March 2, 2023, from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Nathan Deal Judicial Center. For more information, please visit <http://cjcpga.org/benhamcsa23/> or contact Karlise Y. Grier via email at [kygrier@cjcpga.org](mailto:kygrier@cjcpga.org) or via telephone at (404) 225-5040.