



PRESS NOTICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE ERNEST F. HOLLINGS AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN STATE PROSECUTION PRESENTED

Three Prosecutors Honored at S.C. Solicitors Conference in Hilton Head

COLUMBIA, South Carolina --The 13th annual Ernest F. Hollings Awards for Excellence in State Prosecution, sponsored by the Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee of the U.S. Attorney's Office, were presented during the annual banquet at the S.C. Solicitors' Association Conference at The Weston at Hilton Head Island on Monday evening, September 28, 2009.

The Ernest F. Hollings Awards for Excellence in State Prosecution began in 1997 as a means for federal prosecutors to take the lead in publicly recognizing their state court colleagues. Senator Hollings recognizes an Assistant Solicitor each year in each of the following categories: (1) excellence in prosecution in the Court of General Sessions; and (2) excellence in prosecution in the Family Courts. In 2006 Senator Hollings added a third category to recognize an outstanding Assistant Attorney General.

The 2009 awards were presented to Alicia Allsbrook Richardson, Fifteenth Judicial Circuit (Family Court); John W. "Bill" Weeks, Deputy Solicitor, Second Judicial Circuit (General Sessions Court); and Salley W. Elliott, Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General (South Carolina Attorney General's Office).

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2009 Family Court Recipient

Alicia Allsbrook Richardson Senior Assistant Solicitor Fifteenth Judicial Circuit

Sr. Assistant Solicitor Alicia Allsbrook Richardson has served in the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office since 2001. Prior to coming to the Solicitor's Office, she was in private practice in Marion County where she was also a public defender in Juvenile Court for nearly five years. Within one month of coming to the Solicitor's Office, she attained the position of Senior Solicitor in charge of the Family Court Division where she has continually worked to improve the quality of life of at-risk youth.

It is through Mrs. Richardson's dedication and commitment that, with only two juvenile prosecutors, the Horry County Family Court handles the second highest juvenile caseload in the state. Horry County Family Court is well above the state average in the number of juveniles that are given a chance to avoid court through diversion. Under Mrs. Richardson's leadership, the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office has established six different diversion programs, designed to increase accountability while taking into account the need to protect victim's rights and public safety. Mrs. Richardson also participates in training resource officers from around the county and state, and is available after hours to assist law enforcement in juvenile matters.

Mrs. Richardson graduated *cum laude* from Clemson University with a B.A. in English in 1992. She earned a Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1995, where she was a member of S.C. Law Review, Order of Wig and Robe, and Order of the Coif. She is married to Charles Richardson of Britton's Neck and they have three children, Ragan, Walt, and Grace.

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2009 General Sessions Court Recipient

John W. “Bill” Weeks Deputy Solicitor Second Judicial Circuit

Deputy Solicitor John W. “Bill” Weeks has been a member of the legal profession for 28 years, 14 of which have been spent as a prosecutor for three administrations in the Second Judicial Circuit. During his tenure, he has played many roles to include: a supervisor, a senior trial attorney, and probably most important to him, a mentor and a teacher.

Deputy Solicitor Weeks has tried hundreds of cases to include capital cases and literally dozens upon dozens of murder, CSC, and other violent offenses. His latest accomplishment was resolving an 8-defendant murder case involving the abduction, torture and murder of a young man in the Monetta area of Aiken County wherein all defendants plead guilty *at the same time* with no parole sentences ranging from 17 to 45 years. In the office, Bill is a wealth of institutional and practical knowledge and offers his down-home common sense to both new and seasoned attorney staff. He has taught and lectured through the years at the University of South Carolina Aiken and at various CLE’s. He is well respected by the judiciary, his colleagues, and law enforcement.

Deputy Solicitor Weeks graduated Cum Laude from the University of South Carolina Aiken with a B.A. in Political Science and earned a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina Law School. Last year Mr. Weeks was inducted into the USC-Aiken Hall of Fame for his success as a college basketball player where he still holds the school’s scoring record. Bill and his wife Amy reside in Aiken with their two children, Megan and “Little Bill.” Both Bill and his wife Amy are known throughout the state for their efforts to bring awareness and one day a cure for autism.

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2009 Attorney General's Office Recipient

Salley W. Elliott Assistant Deputy Attorney General South Carolina Attorney General's Office

Salley W. Elliott is the Chief of the Criminal Appeals and Post-Conviction Relief Sections of the South Carolina Attorney General's Office and has served in that capacity since 2003. As the supervisor of the Criminal Appeals Section, Ms. Elliott supervises the 900 pending Criminal Appeals and handles some appellate cases on her own. In the management of the Post-Conviction Relief Section, Ms. Elliott supervises the 2000 pending Post-Conviction Relief cases and the 900 Post-Conviction Relief Appeals. Ms. Elliott also handles some of these cases on her own.

Ms. Elliott has worked in the South Carolina Attorney General's Office for more than 24 years in various positions including Assistant Director of the Criminal Division, Chief of the Criminal Appeals Section and Assistant Attorney General in the Post-Conviction Relief Section, Opinion Section and Child Support Division of the Office. She also confers with solicitors on many different appellate issues and post-conviction relief related matters.

Ms. Elliott is also a former Chief Staff Attorney for the South Carolina Court of Appeals, where she supervised the Court's Staff Attorney Office. Additionally, Ms. Elliott has worked as a legislative liaison for a child advocacy project and as a staff attorney for Palmetto Legal Services.

Ms. Elliott was admitted to the South Carolina Bar in 1979, the United States District Court in 1980, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit in 1987 and the United States Supreme Court in 1998.

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