

DSS Awards

COUSIN, STEMBLER AND TILLMAN HONORED

Ertharin Cousin (J.D.'82), William J. "Bill" Stembler (J.D.'71) and Audrey Boone Tillman (J.D.'89) are the 2017 Distinguished Service Scroll Award recipients.

This accolade is the highest honor given by the Law School Association and recognizes outstanding dedication and service to the legal profession and the law school.

Cousin served as the 12th executive director of the United Nations World Food Programme from 2012 to 2017. The U.N. World Food Programme is the world's largest humanitarian organization that addresses hunger and promotes food security. The organization employs approximately 12,000 staff who serve more than 80 million people in 80 countries worldwide. An advocate for the improvement of the lives of hungry people, Cousin traveled extensively to elevate solutions for food insecurity and chronic malnutrition.

Her distinguished career includes more than 25 years of national and international nonprofit, government and corporate leadership experience.

Cousin has received numerous recognitions for her community service efforts. She was ranked 48th on *Forbes* magazine's 2016 list of the World's 100 Most Powerful Women, and she was acknowledged as one of *TIME* magazine's 2014 Most Influential People. In 2013, Cousin was honored with the University of Illinois Alumni Achievement Award. She earned her bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of Illinois before attending Georgia Law.

Cousin's Distinguished Service Scroll Award was presented by Georgia Law alumna Janice L. Mathis (J.D.'82). Mathis is the executive director of the National Council of Negro Women, a nonprofit organization with a mission to advance the opportunities and the quality of life for African-American women, their families and communities.

Stembler, a native of Atlanta, graduated from the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Science in business administration in 1968 before attending Georgia Law.

Today, he is the chairman and chief executive officer of the Georgia Theatre Company-II. Founded in 1991, the company is headquartered in Coastal Georgia, employs approximately 1,000 people and operates 260 screens in four southeastern states.

Previously, Stembler worked with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission as an enforcement attorney for two years. He then joined his family's business, the original Georgia Theatre Company, and he became



From top: Distinguished Service Scroll Award recipient Ertharin Cousin (J.D.'82) (left) shares a moment with fellow alumna Janice Mathis (J.D.'82), who presented her with her honor. Bill Stembler (J.D.'71) (left) received his award from former U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss. Alumna Kathelen Amos (J.D.'82) (left) presented a DSS Award to Audrey Boone Tillman (J.D.'89). Photos by Ian McFarlane.



the organization's president 10 years later. In 1986, Stembler sold the company, but he later created the present-day Georgia Theatre Company-II.

Stembler is a past recipient of the highest annual award given by the National Association of Theatre Owners. Notably, he co-chaired the association's establishment in 2010 of CinemaCon, which is the world's largest and most important gathering for the worldwide motion picture theater industry.

Stembler's award was presented by former U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss.

Tillman earned her bachelor's degree in political science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

She currently serves as executive vice president and general counsel at Aflac. There, she directs Aflac's legal division and its office of the corporate secretary. She is primarily responsible for overseeing the functions of the general counsel and compliance offices of Aflac Japan, where the company earns more than 75 percent of its revenues. In her position, she also directs Aflac's legal division and functions related to corporate communications, government relations, federal relations and global cybersecurity.

Previously, Tillman worked as an associate law professor at North Carolina Central University. She also was a judicial clerk for Judge Richard C. Erwin of the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina.

In 2015, Tillman was the first woman to receive the Chattahoochee Council's Boy Scouts of America Distinguished Citizen Award. She also received the Columbus, Georgia, Chamber of Commerce Chairman's Award. In 2016, she was named to *The National Law Journal's* 50 Outstanding General Counsel list and was presented with the Diamond Award, which is the highest honor given by the Corporate Counsel Women of Color Association.

Tillman's award was presented by Georgia Law alumna Kathelen V. Amos (J.D.'82), who is president of the Aflac Foundation.

—Emily Johnson

Bersinger receives Young Alumni/ Alumnae of Excellence Award



Young Alumni/ Alumnae of Excellence Award recipient Amanda Bersinger (J.D.'12) (right) received her honor from alumnus Matthew Wilson (J.D.'14). Photo by Ian McFarlane.

The inaugural Young Alumni/Alumnae of Excellence Award was presented to Amanda S. Bersinger (J.D.'12).

Created by the law school's Young Alumni/Alumnae Committee, this award recognizes an outstanding young graduate of the law school who gives gifts of time or talent to the law school community or the community at large.

Bersinger's award was presented by law school alumnus W. Matthew Wilson (J.D.'14), a trial attorney at Akin & Tate in Atlanta.

Bersinger was recognized for her pro bono work, having represented inmates in Florida and Georgia as well as military veterans. In early 2017, she engaged in rallying support for the transgender community and was recognized in *The Georgia Voice* for gathering more than 40 lawyers from some of Atlanta's top firms to provide free legal services to meet the needs of this population.

Bersinger is an associate at Bondurant Mixson & Elmore, where she represents plaintiffs and defendants in complex trial and appellate litigation.

Previously, she served as a judicial clerk to Judge Joel F. Dubina of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit and Chief Judge W. Keith Watkins of the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama.

Bersinger is a member of the 2017 LEAD Atlanta class, which is an intensive eight-month leadership development and community education program that strives to create effective leaders committed to the common good.

Her law school honors include: induction into the Order of the Coif, service as the executive articles editor of the *Georgia Law Review*, winning the law school's Best Note Competition and recognition as an outstanding moot court advocate. Additionally, she was a pupil in the Joseph Henry Lumpkin American Inn of Court.

—Emily Johnson