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 **PRESS RELEASE**

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**Judge Breen to Receive the 2024 Judge Pamela L. Reeves Tennessee Professionalism Award**

*Former TBA president, senior judge honored for lifetime of service*

NASHVILLE, April 30, 2024 — J. Daniel Breen, a senior judge on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee, will be honored in June with the Judge Pamela L. Reeves Tennessee Professionalism Award. The award is given jointly by the Tennessee Bar Association (TBA) and the Tennessee American Inns of Court. It will be presented at the TBA Annual Convention’s Bench Bar Luncheon June 13 in Memphis.

Breen earned his law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1975 and joined the law firm of Waldrop and Hall in Jackson. He served there for more than 16 years before being appointed a United States Magistrate Judge on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee in 1991. For the 12 years he served in that role, he was assigned to the Memphis and Jackson divisions and became an early proponent of alternative dispute resolution in the region. He presided over hundreds of judicial settlement conferences and authored "Mediation and the Magistrate Judge," published in the University of *Memphis Law Review* to help other judges interested in implementing mediation programs and inform lawyers about the value of mediation as an alternative to trial.

Breen was appointed as a U.S. District Judge in 2003. He served as chief judge from 2013 until taking senior status in 2017. Now, as a senior judge, he remains an integral part of the court. He maintains a significant case load, serves on the Civic Outreach Committee and heads the Facility Security Committee for the court’s Eastern Division. He also chairs the Pattern Criminal Jury Instruction Committee for the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Breen has been an active member of several bar associations. For the TBA, he served on the Board of Governors from 1986 to 1994, as a member of the House of Delegates from 1983 to 1987, as chair of the General Practice Section, and as president of the association from 1996-1997. He also is a past president of the Jackson-Madison County Bar Association, past chair of the Tennessee Bar Foundation and past chair of the American Bar Association’s National Conference of Federal Trial Judges.

Breen also has been a longtime supporter of the American Inns of Court organization. He co-founded the Howell Edmunds-Jackson American Inns of Court Chapter and served as its president from 2019-2020. In a letter nominating Breen for this award, Jackson lawyer Sarah Barnett, vice president of the Jackson chapter wrote: “Judge Breen is the embodiment of legal professionalism and outstanding character, as evidenced by his dedication and service to the federal judiciary, the Tennessee Bar, and his community of Jackson, Tennessee.” Other letters submitted in support of the nomination praised Breen for his mentorship of younger lawyers and new judges, and his support for colleagues rising to leadership roles.

In the community, Breen has been involved with the West Tennessee Council Boy Scouts of America, West Tennessee Cerebral Palsy Center, Jackson Arts Council, Habitat for Humanity, the Exchange Club Carl Perkins Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse and St. Mary’s Catholic School, often inviting students to visit the courthouse to make the federal judiciary more understandable and accessible.

TBA President Jim Barry praised Breen’s selection as this year’s award recipient. “Judge J. Daniel Breen exemplifies the ideals of the Tennessee Professionalism Award. His service to the judiciary and the legal profession reflects the highest standards of the rule of law and the legal profession in Tennessee.”

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The Tennessee Professionalism Award is named in honor of the late Judge Pamela L. Reeves, former chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee and the first recipient of the award. She was an active leader in both the American Inns of Court and the Tennessee Bar Association, where she was elected the first female president in 1988. The award is given jointly by the TBA and The American Inns of Court. Learn more and see a list of past recipients at <https://www.tba.org/professionalism_award>.

The Tennessee Bar Association (TBA) is the largest professional association in Tennessee with nearly 14,000 members. Founded in 1881, the TBA represents the entire spectrum of the legal profession in Tennessee and beyond, and is dedicated to enhancing fellowship and professionalism among the members of Tennessee’s legal community.

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