

## JOHN R. “JACK” MARTZELL PROFESSIONALISM AWARD



*This award is named in honor of the late John R. “Jack” Martzell. Mr. Martzell practiced in New Orleans with the firm of Martzell & Bickford and served as law clerk to the Honorable J. Skelly Wright, U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana. Mr. Martzell served as Director of the Louisiana Commission on Human Relations, Rights and Responsibilities for six years, President of the Louisiana Trial Lawyers Association, and as Chairman of the Department of Public Affairs with the Association of Trial Lawyers of America. The John R. “Jack” Martzell Professionalism Award recognizes the attorney who best exemplifies outstanding professionalism in the practice of law.*

This year’s recipient is R. Patrick “Pat” Vance of Jones Walker, LLP. Pat is a nationally-recognized expert and leader in commercial litigation, banking, and bankruptcy law and is one of only two lawyers in the United States who is a member of both the American College of Trial Lawyers and the American College of Bankruptcy. He is also a life member of the American Law Institute. Pat has served his law firm for over 20 years as the Practice Group Leader of the Commercial Litigation Section and three times as Executive Committee Chairman. His 48-year legal career has yielded 170 reported decisions in which he was usually lead counsel at trial or in the appellate court.

Pat has dedicated countless hours to improving the practice of law in New Orleans and Louisiana. He served for many years on the board of the New Orleans Bar Association, including as its Treasurer, Vice-President, President-Elect, and President. In recognition of his service, he received NOBA’s President’s award in 2016. Pat also has chaired several committees for the Louisiana State Bar Association.

Pat is a proud graduate of Louisiana State University, receiving his B.A. (1970) with highest college Honors and his J.D. (1975) from its Paul M. Hebert Law Center, where he was a member of the Louisiana Law Review. He has given his time and energy in support of his alma mater, receiving Distinguished Achievement Awards for his service on the Honors College Advisory Counsel, as well as the Law Center’s Alumni Board of Trustees and Chancellor’s Council.

Pat has earned the respect of peers and opponents alike, demonstrating throughout his career not only his razor-sharp intellect, but also his courtesy, respectfulness, and willingness to mentor. Jan Hayden, a colleague and one-time opponent who has known Pat for 40 years, describes him as “a brilliant lawyer both in and out of the courtroom” who “always treated his opponents and co-counsel with the utmost courtesy and deference.” She has been “enriched by the experience” of practicing with Pat.

Judy Barrasso, another colleague who has known Pat for more than 40 years and had the opportunity to litigate against him, offers that “Patrick’s mode of practice is one to which every lawyer should aspire.” She has been “consistently impressed” with Pat’s “civility and professionalism,” noting that “when Patrick gave you his word, you could count on it.”

Christopher Ralston, who served with Pat on several nonprofit boards, including Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, observes that Pat “comes at the role totally determined to leave the organization, its staff and its membership / beneficiaries better off than they were when he arrived.” He describes Pat as both “a fierce advocate” and “a gentleman.” In short, Pat is “a remarkable individual and an extraordinary lawyer.”