

## 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.*

Our 2022 recipient is Dawn M. Barrios of Barrios, Kingsdorf & Casteix, L.L.P. A lawyer well-respected by both fellow attorneys and judges alike, Dawn Barrios is a graduate of Newcomb College and Tulane University School of Law. Following law school, she clerked for Chief Justice Joe W. Sanders at the Louisiana Supreme Court for three years. Upon leaving the Court, she entered private practice where she quickly made partner before leaving to found her own firm in 1995.

For the last 25 years or so, she has concentrated her practice on plaintiffs’ complex litigation, class actions and multi-district litigation. Dawn’s first foray into the mass tort practice started with her appointment in both the state and national breast implant product liability litigation in the mid-90s when she was appointed to the Louisiana Plaintiffs’ Steering Committee. Since then, she has been appointed by several federal judges to almost every leadership position within these complex cases, such as MDL Lead Counsel, member of Executive Committees, member of Plaintiffs’ Steering Committees and Chair of Federal-State Liaison Committees. Her reputation, demeanor and experience have led her to be selected by Plaintiffs’ Steering Committees to serve on several Common Benefit Fee committees, a difficult role requiring tact and patience. She currently serves as Co-Liaison Counsel in the Taxotere MDL in the Eastern District of Louisiana. Dawn’s work in these complex multi-district litigation cases has not only taken place here in Louisiana but across the country in other federal and state courts.

The Honorable Eldon Fallon said “I have had occasions to work with Dawn Barrios on several MDL cases. I have found her to be very knowledgeable, reliable, and professional. She is well-respected by her colleagues and courts. She has command of both the telescope and the microscope. That is to say she is able to see the big picture and at the same time finds detail interesting and intriguing.”

Recognizing her commitment to the profession, the judges of the Eastern District of Louisiana selected Dawn to serve on its inaugural Lawyer Disciplinary Committee on which she served from 2011 through 2016. Dawn was awarded the Professionalism Award by the New Orleans Bar Association in 2014 and has held board positions with both the New Orleans Bar Association and the New Orleans Bar Foundation. She also serves as a board member of the Institute for Complex Litigation and Mass Claims at Emory Law School where she has developed innovative ideas and procedures concerning complex litigation.

Dawn has long served as a mentor and role model to women lawyers. After graduating in a law school class comprised of only 15% women, Dawn has never passed on an opportunity to elevate women in the profession. In this regard, Judge Robin Giarrusso had the following to say, “Dawn Barrios has been a super star since I first met her. She possesses all the qualities of a lawyer who practices law with professionalism: integrity, honesty, civility, and cooperation. What has always impressed me most about Dawn, and what distinguishes her from others, is her willingness to mentor younger lawyers. While it would be easier to do the work herself, she has unselfishly helped and encouraged less experienced attorneys teaching them with patience and understanding.”