

Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr.  
1937-2005

# The LEGACY

The Newsletter of **THE COCHRAN FIRM**

Winter 2011



## The Cochran Firm – Memphis Moves To New Location

In January, 2011, **The Cochran Firm – Memphis** moved its offices to a new location in One Commerce Square. **The Cochran Firm – Memphis** has been located in the One Commerce Square complex since the regional office was established 10 years ago. With this move, the office is enjoying renovated space on the 17th floor of the iconic downtown building.

Danese Banks has been with the Memphis office from the beginning and is the Managing Attorney for **The Cochran Firm – Memphis**. Other attorneys associated with the office are Sam Cherry, Hezekiah Sistrunk, Jock Smith and Ben Irwin. Members of the legal support staff for the Memphis office are HR/Firm

Administrator LeaRaya Cole, Angela Kelley Case Manager, Shelia Boyer, Paralegal, Angela Arrington Receptionist/Secretary, and Edward Cash, Investigator. In addition to her duties as Case Manager, Angela Kelley also handles local public relations for National Partner, Jock Smith.

In addition to their demanding legal practice, the attorneys and staff of the Memphis office keep community as a high priority by participating in area mentoring, service and volunteer programs. Recently, the office received a certificate of appreciation for participating in the Memphis Bar Association’s Summer Law Intern Program. An initiative by the Diversity Committee of the Memphis Bar Association, the program gives high school students the opportunity to experience the “real world” practice of law by working 15 hours a week during a four-week period.

Danese Banks also mentored aspiring law student, Porshe Kizer, who hopes to attend Atlanta’s John Marshall Law School. Porshe stated, “I had the absolute pleasure and privilege of completing an internship at **The Cochran Firm- Memphis** under the supervision of Attorney Danese K. Banks.” **The Cochran Firm - Memphis** sponsored Porshe’s study course for the LSAT on December 3, 2011.



Danese Banks, Sheila Boyer, Edward Cash, LeaRaya Cole, Angela Arrington, Porshe Kizer and Angela Kelley

In addition to offering leadership to young adults, the Memphis office supports community programs such as The Salvation Army Angel Tree program, Dressing Casual for St. Jude Event, AKA Scholarship Fund for high school seniors preparing for college, and The Breast Cancer Race for the Cure.

Congratulations to Angela Kelley’s daughter, Kristin Lauren Kelley,

who was selected by the University of Memphis to paint one of the 100 tiger statues celebrating the university’s centennial celebration in 2012.

For more Memphis updates, search **The Cochran Firm – Memphis** on Facebook.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**THE COCHRAN FIRM**  
ATTORNEY BUSINESS MEETING

**THE NATIONAL TRIAL LAWYERS SUMMIT**  
MARKETING & LAW FIRM MANAGEMENT

**January 22 - 25, 2010**  
**SOUTH BEACH, FLORIDA**

**Attorney Cocktail Reception**  
Sunday, January 22  
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
**Ritz Carlton**

**Seminar Meetings**  
January 23 – 25

**Networking Luncheon**  
Monday, January 23  
11:45 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.  
**Ritz Carlton**

Special Appearance:  
**Reggie Brown**  
Portraying  
**President Barack Obama**

**Attorney Cocktail Party**  
Monday, January 23  
7:00 p.m.  
**The National Hotel**

**The National Trial Lawyers Cocktail Party**  
Tuesday, January 24  
7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.  
**Delano Hotel**

Register online  
[www.NTLconferences.com](http://www.NTLconferences.com)  
Registration Code: Cochran

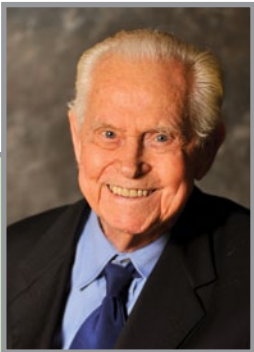
Hotel Reservations:  
Ritz Carlton • (786) 276-4000  
Group Code: The National Trial Lawyers  
For more information, call:  
Bonnie Niver • (334) 793-1555  
[bniver@cochranfirm.com](mailto:bniver@cochranfirm.com)

*CLE approval is pending from all applicable states.*



**DOING  
THE MOST  
GOOD®**

**Need knows no season!** Nationwide, the offices of **The Cochran Firm** have supported **The Salvation Army Angel Tree program** for many years. Although The Salvation Army accepts contributions throughout the year, the Angel Tree program was created by The Salvation Army to help children experience the magic of the holiday season. Offices of The Cochran Firm purchased toys and clothing which are distributed to children in the community.



## In Memory of J.B. Spence (1922-2011)

J.B. Spence was one of Florida's best known trial attorneys for 60 years. He was born in

Oklahoma City and grew up during the Great Depression, spending most of his boyhood in Alabama and the panhandle of Florida. At the age of 18, J.B. enlisted in the Navy and served for six years during World War II, in both the Atlantic and the Pacific theaters. At the coaxing of a friend, J.B. went to law school after returning from the war. In 1951, he obtained his Juris Doctor from the University of Miami School of Law, graduating summa cum laude.

After graduating from law school, J.B. worked with Perry Nichols, a well-known and prestigious Florida attorney. J.B. credits Mr. Nichols as being instrumental in guiding his professional career. J.B. went on to serve as Assistant Attorney General of Florida under the Honorable Richard W. Erwin. Returning to private practice in 1967, J.B. founded the law firm of Spence, Payne & Masington, and he quickly became known as a skillful and successful litigator. That same year, J.B. became the first attorney in the state of Florida to obtain a million dollar verdict for a client. Later nicknamed the "Dean of Torts," he was credited with obtaining more than one hundred million-dollar verdicts for his clients during his legal career.

J.B. had extensive experience in cases involving aircraft and airline disasters, arguing these cases in Florida and other states, as well as the



**Ibiere Seck**, attorney with **The Cochran Firm – Los Angeles**, was awarded the 2011 CAOC Community Service Award by

the Consumer Attorneys of California. This was the first time the award has been presented, and Ms. Seck was recognized by the CAOC for using her legal skills and training to benefit the community on a volunteer basis. Ms. Seck received this honor at the CAOC's 50th Annual Convention in San Francisco.



**Joseph Barrett**, attorney with **The Cochran Firm – Los Angeles**, also was honored with the Presidential Award of

Merit by CAOC President, John Montevideo. The award was given to Mr. Barrett for his leadership in the Los Angeles area.

**Ibiere Seck** and **Joseph Barrett** (Los Angeles) also will serve on the 2012 Consumer Attorneys Association of California Board of Governors. Mr. Barrett was re-elected and Ms. Seck was re-appointed as an at-large member. Mr. Barrett serves on the Executive Committee for CAALA and will serve as President for the organization in 2015.



**Jamon Hicks**, attorney with **The Cochran Firm – Los Angeles**, served as a judge in the semi-final round of the Loyola Law School, Los Angeles 10th

Annual National Civil Trial Competition. With more than 50 accredited law schools applying, 16 law schools were chosen for invitational tournament this year. After three days of intense mock trial competition, Pepperdine University School of Law was announced as the champion of the tournament.

U.S. Supreme Court. He was recognized for his distinguished legal career in *The Wall Street Journal* and was listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*.

A frequent lecturer and author of two books, J.B. was an associate professor at the University of Miami School of Law. He was a member of the Academy of Florida Trial Lawyers, the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, and the Inner Circle of Advocates. In 1987, J.B. was awarded the Perry Nichols Award, the highest honor bestowed by the Academy of Florida Trial Lawyers. In 2010, J.B. was inducted into the prestigious Trial Lawyer Hall of Fame.

A distinguished, dedicated and remarkable man, J.B. Spence worked at several different jobs since the age of twelve. JB was a revered member of The Cochran Firm South Florida and he continued to work there until his passing.

Scott Leeds, managing partner with The Cochran Firm South Florida in Miami, remembers J.B. fondly, "When considering the achievements earned by J.B. Spence over his lifetime, I am reminded of his book which he originally wanted to title *Chocolate Cake*. J.B. believed that if most people's lives could be equated to a slice of cake, he felt that his life had been blessed with an entire chocolate cake."

J.B. approached both life and his legal career with great enthusiasm. He knew that motivation was the key to success. J.B.'s passion for those in need was never ending. His dedication to the less fortunate of our society is what fueled his pursuit of justice for all.



Hezekiah Sistrunk, Jr.

## Legal Titan Inducted into the Gate City Bar Association 2011 Hall of Fame

by Tiffany Cochran Edwards

**The Cochran Firm - Atlanta** is proud

to announce that National Partner, Attorney Hezekiah Sistrunk, Jr., is now a distinguished member of the Gate City Bar Association Hall of Fame. Induction into the Hall of Fame is the highest honor awarded by the Gate City Bar Association. Mr. Sistrunk was inducted during a lavish ceremony on November 5, 2011, at The Grand Hyatt Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. The Honorable Cory Booker, Mayor of the City of Newark, served as keynote speaker.

Founded in 1948, the Gate City Bar Association (GCBA) is the oldest African-American Bar Association in the State of Georgia. The organization is committed to creating a practical appreciation for the legal profession in the African-American community and to uphold and protect the principals of justice in American life. This year's theme, "Embracing Our Past, Uplifting Our Communities, and Serving Tomorrow's Leaders Today," is consistent with Mr. Sistrunk's personal convictions and his professional accomplishments.

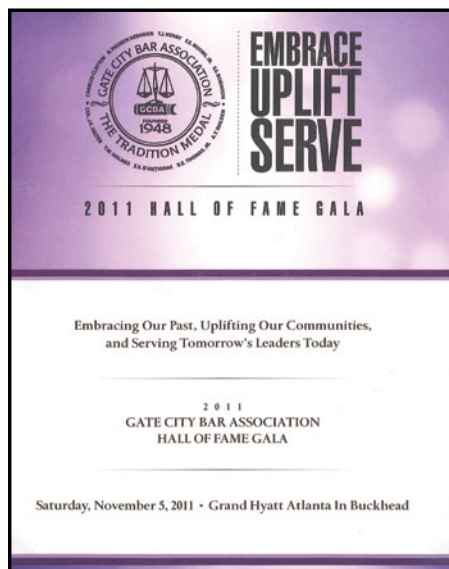
In selecting Mr. Sistrunk, The GCBA recognized a legal legend who has spent his illustrious 30 year career first as a defense attorney, then transitioning to representing plaintiffs. First and foremost, Mr. Sistrunk considers himself a community servant – dedicated to fighting for a measure of justice for injured and fractured families throughout the State of Georgia.

In accepting his award Saturday evening, Mr. Sistrunk told the audience, "I never expected to receive an honor like this in my career. I am both thankful and humbled by my induction into The Gate City Bar Association's Hall of Fame. After many years of trial practice, pursuing the rights of the aggrieved, and

advocating the right to jury trials, I'm grateful that my peers have recognized and acknowledged my efforts to protect the rule of law. I'm truly honored to be inducted into the Hall of Fame which includes many of my legal heroes, including Donald Hollowell, Judge Horace Ward, and Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr., founding partner of my law firm." A scholarship in The Cochran Firm's name has also been established in connection with this award.

Mr. Sistrunk has been honored numerous times by his professional peers. Recently, he was appointed to the Discovery Committee in the DePuy ASR hip implant mass tort multi-district litigation. The National Trial Lawyers Association designated him one of the "Top 100 Lawyers" in the State of Georgia, and he serves on the editorial board for The Trial Lawyer, the most important publication in the legal field.

Additional past Hall of Fame Inductees include the Honorable Maynard H. Jackson (2002), The Honorable Thurbert E. Baker (2004), Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears (2005), and of course, the legendary attorney, Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. (posthumously in 2006). Hezekiah Sistrunk, Jr. is indeed in good company.



## UPDATES

### THE COCHRAN FIRM SOUTH FLORIDA FORECLOSURE DIVISION

The Cochran Firm - South Florida announces the formation of its new Foreclosure Defense/Mortgage Modification Division based in Palm Beach, Florida. With the Foreclosure Division, The Cochran Firm - South Florida has a highly experienced team dedicated to helping Florida's homeowners dealing with mortgage payments problems and possible foreclosure. Carol Anne Plowman and Jeff Eannarino are well experienced in foreclosure and related matters. They have helped thousands of homeowners in Florida stop foreclosure and understand their options in meeting long-term financial goals.

#### ADDRESS CHANGES:

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## THE COCHRAN FIRM

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If you would like your office featured in the next issue of *The Legacy*, Please email your events, awards, & community involvement to **Libby Planz** at [lplanz@us-legal.com](mailto:lplanz@us-legal.com)

## Internet Marketing Update from Page 1 Solutions

This web marketing update covers three trending areas: 1.) Social media continues to drive huge volumes of traffic through Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. Recently, Google has re-entered the social media fray with Google+. 2.) Mobile browsing with iPads, iPhones, Androids and other smart phones is a fast-growing trend. Your site should work properly on mobile browsers, or you will lose potential clients. 3.) Law firms that have incorporated online chat into their websites have significantly increased both the volume and quantity of leads generated through their sites.

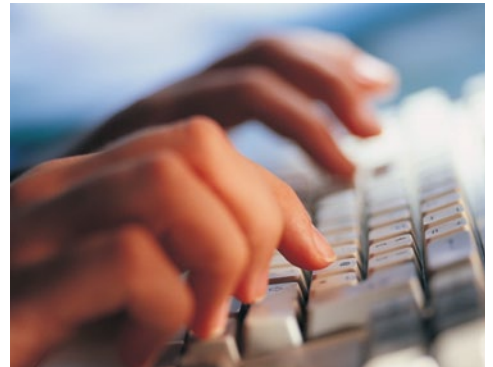
**Social Media:** Social media is changing how consumers interact online. What was once a one-way conversation is now two-way. Consumers have a bullhorn in social media to complain about perceived bad service, making it even more important to ensure you provide first rate client service. While we have not seen social media generate a significant volume of cases for our clients, social media should be part of your online marketing strategy as an effective way to communicate with your current and prospective clients. First, build up your online community – your fan base (Facebook), your followers (Twitter), and your circles (Google+). (Without a fan base or followers, you can't make much of an impact.) Once you develop a fan base/following in your community, you must provide a steady stream of useful and engaging information to develop your brand, generate goodwill, and attract clients.

**Mobile Websites:** Because so many people now access the web through smart phones, it is becoming essential to develop a mobile website. We have seen a huge increase in traffic to our clients' websites from mobile browsers in the last year and expect that trend to continue. Mobile browser visitor traffic to [www.CochranFirm.com](http://www.CochranFirm.com) has increased six-fold since January 2010 and now represents more than 16% of total visitor traffic.

You can create a mobile website on a subdomain (e.g., [m.cochranfirm.com](http://m.cochranfirm.com)) or use a separate domain specifically for mobile browsers (e.g., [www.cochranfirm.mobi](http://www.cochranfirm.mobi)). No matter which domain option you choose, keep your mobile website simple. Give basic information about your services, make it easy to contact you, and provide clear directions to your office. It should be programmed to work on iPhone, iPads and Android devices.

**Online Chat:** In part because of the ubiquity of social media, consumers are becoming more comfortable engaging in an online conversation. Since we started offering online chat to our clients, we have seen a significant increase in conversions (lead generation) from our clients' websites. Moreover, our clients have reported that the quality of the chat leads is significantly better than leads generated through traditional web contact forms. The bottom line: If your website does not have online chat, you are missing out on a lot of quality leads.

For more information on video and online reviews, please contact Dan Goldstein at 303-910-7729 or [DanG@Page1Solutions.com](mailto:DanG@Page1Solutions.com).



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