

Washington State Bar Association

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Jeff Baker Receives Washington State Bar Association Local Hero Award

Klickitat County commissioner described as 'the hero that we all would want on our side'

Stevenson, WA [July 24, 2020] — The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) has named Commissioner Jeff Baker as the most recent recipient of the Local Hero Award in recognition of his generosity and kindness whether in court or out in the community.

The Local Hero Award is given to those who have made noteworthy contributions to their communities. **WSBA President Rajeev Majumdar will present the award during the virtual Board of Governors meeting on Friday, July 24.** Baker was nominated by the Klickitat-Skamania Counties Bar Association.

After nearly 30 years in private practice, Baker won the 2014 election for Klickitat County West District Court Commissioner. Klickitat and Skamania County Superior Court Judge Randall Krog, who in 2017 appointed Baker as Klickitat and Skamania County Superior Court Commissioner, said of him, "For so many, he has been the hero that we all would want on our side."

Baker served as a Trout Lake Community Councilmember for 16 years; 20 years on the board of the Trout Lake Community Foundation, for which he was a founding member; and has volunteered to help Trout Lake students in a number of ways including as a high school varsity soccer coach, co-chair of the Trout Lake School M&O Levy Committee, and other extra-curricular activities for youth in the community.

"He is one of the genuinely nicest human beings that I have had the pleasure of encountering over the past 15 years," Krog said. "He always has a smile for those who come in contact with him and is always a very willing listener, whether that is on the bench, in the office, or out in the public."

For several years Baker has mentored and sat as judge for the Columbia High School Mock Trial team in its practices ahead of the YMCA mock trial competitions. He carries over that supportive public demeanor into his official judicial role as well, presiding over numerous settlement conferences for dissolution matters while displaying patience and providing guidance that's helped opposing parties reach agreements without having to go to trial. Baker also regularly serves as judge pro tem on top of his other judicial roles.

Baker earned his J.D. from the University of Minnesota, where he graduated cum laude, and a B.A. from Lewis and Clark College. He is a member of the Minnesota, Oregon, and Washington state bars, having worked as a special assistant attorney general specializing in OSHA enforcement cases in in Minnesota, an associate at Ater Wynne LLP, partner at Annala, Carey, Baker, Thompson & VanKoten PC; and a court-appointed arbitrator more than 100 times in 20 years in Oregon's 7th Judicial District and Klickitat County Superior Court.

About the Washington State Bar Association

The WSBA operates under the delegated authority of the Washington Supreme Court to license the state's nearly 40,000 lawyers and other legal professionals. In furtherance of its obligation to protect and serve the public, the WSBA both regulates lawyers and other legal professionals and serves its members as a professional association — all without public funding. The WSBA's mission is to serve the public and the members of the Bar, to ensure the integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice. For more information, visit www.wsba.org.

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