

Bernstein and Knox receive distinguished service awards

The Law School Association presented its highest honor, the Distinguished Service Scroll Award, to B.J. Bernstein (J.D.'87) and Ruth A. Knox (J.D.'78) in June.

The award is given annually to individuals whose dedication and service to the legal profession and the law school deserves special recognition. The awards were presented during the LSA's annual breakfast held in conjunction with the State Bar of Georgia's Annual Meeting.

Bernstein's award was presented by School of Law Associate Dean Paul M. Kurtz, who also used to be one of Bernstein's law professors. "I'm proud to say that while I began her education in criminal law a long time ago, she has spent 20 years since her graduation teaching me and others how to practice criminal law," Kurtz said.

Upon receiving the award, Bernstein talked about her decision to attend the School of Law, the community that still exists today among Georgia Law graduates and how much that community of support means to her personally. She shared a quote to sum up what the law school means to her saying, "Individuals can resist injustice but only a community can do justice." She also said she was "very humbled" to receive the award. "This means a great deal to me," Bernstein added.

In 1984, Bernstein graduated from Emory University with a bachelor's degree in history. She then attended Georgia Law where she served as chief justice of the Honor Court and as research editor of the *Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law*, graduating in 1987.

Bernstein went on to serve as an assistant district attorney in the Piedmont and Gwinnett judicial circuits for six years before entering private practice. Currently, she is a criminal defense lawyer with her own law office, The Bernstein Firm.

As an attorney, Bernstein has handled a number of high profile cases. She has represented Genarlow Wilson, the rapper DaBrat and one of the Gold Club defendants. She also assisted in the Marcus Dixon case.

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— Award presenter and Associate Dean Paul Kurtz

Her many accomplishments include being recognized in *Atlanta Magazine's* Super Lawyer Issue as one of the top 100 lawyers in Georgia and as one of the top 50 female lawyers in Georgia. She has also been named in *Georgia Trend's* Legal Elite List and its "40 under 40" list in 2001. Bernstein regularly provides commentary for the media on legal issues and has appeared on CNN, CNN International, FOX News, MSNBC, CBS, ABC, NBC, NPR and Court TV.

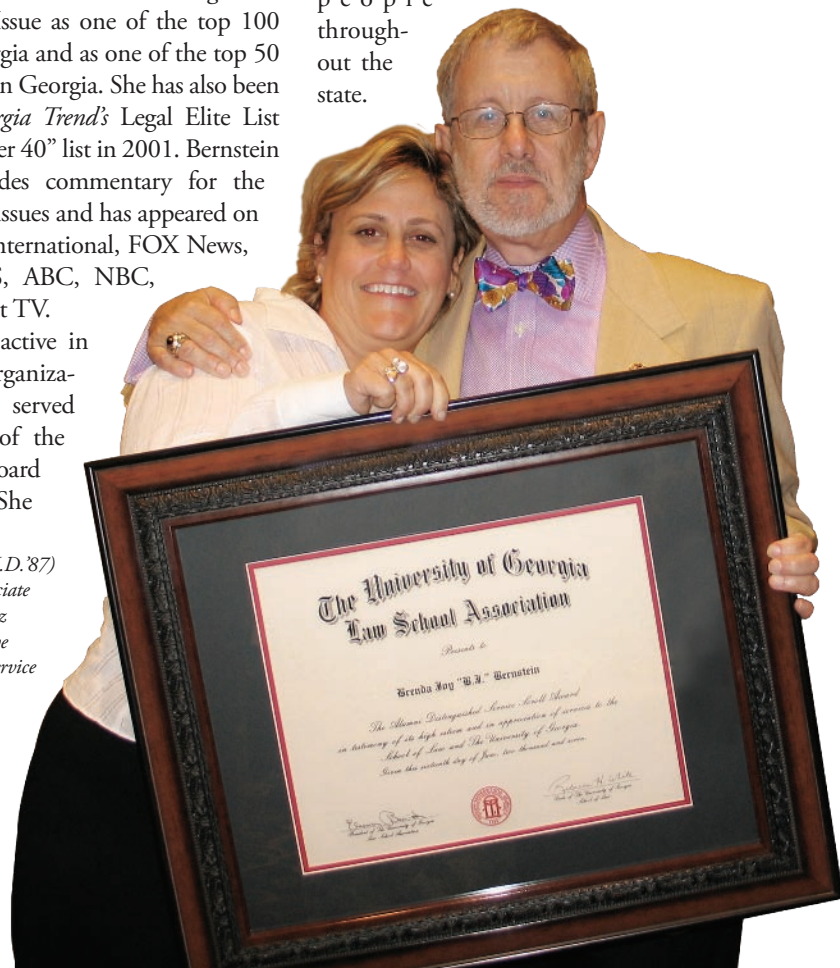
Bernstein is active in many legal organizations and has served as a member of the law school's Board of Visitors. She

B.J. Bernstein (J.D.'87) smiles with Associate Dean Paul Kurtz after receiving the Distinguished Service Scroll Award.

says philanthropy is a huge part of her life, and her newest endeavor is the founding and launching of "My5th," a nonprofit organization devoted to informing youth under the age of 21 about what laws apply to them.

Fellow Georgia Law alumnus and lifelong friend William D. "Bill" Barwick (J.D.'74) presented Knox her award with "great personal pride and happiness," saying "[Ruth] is one of those great and true people who believes in giving back to the community. ... It seems as though she was destined for an excellent and wonderful and prosperous career in the practice of law."

Knox said she was grateful to past winners of this award for their "inspiring examples of leadership and service" and is "thrilled and deeply honored" to receive this award from the LSA. "I am truly in awe of the distinguished company of previous recipients," she said. She also thanked those present for their service to the profession and to the public and for the examples they set for young people throughout the state.





Distinguished Service Scroll recipient Ruth Knox (J.D.'78) was presented with her award by fellow Georgia Law alumnus and lifelong friend Bill Barwick (J.D.'74).

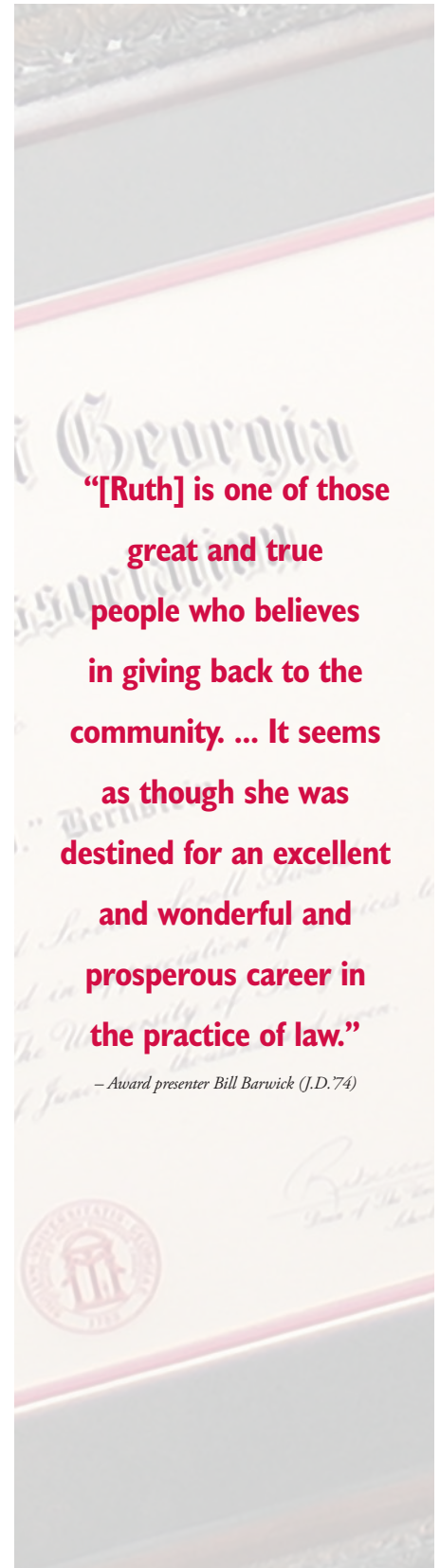
Knox graduated *magna cum laude* from Wesleyan College in 1975 with a bachelor's degree in English. She went on to attend Georgia Law, where she graduated *magna cum laude* in 1978, served as a notes editor of the *Georgia Law Review* and was inducted into the Order of the Coif.

After graduating, Knox began working for Kutak Rock, a national law firm specializing in commercial real estate and public finance transactions. She worked there as both an associate and partner until opening her own practice in 1990. During this time, Knox continued her real estate specialty while expanding into estate planning and corporate work.

Over the years, Knox maintained her connection to Wesleyan College. She served on the Board of Managers of the Alumnae Association for nine years, three of those as president, and then from 1990 to 1993 she chaired the Alumnae Campaign to fund pro-

fessorial positions to advance the academic program of the college. In 1993, she was named a member of the Board of Trustees and became its chairman in 1994, a role she held until 2002 when she was appointed acting president of the college. Knox became the 24th president of Wesleyan in January 2003 and was the first alumna in the history of the college to hold that position. That same year, she was also awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws from Ulyanovsk State University in Ulyanovsk, Russia.

Despite her busy schedule, Knox has remained involved in her local community through a wide variety of civic and volunteer opportunities. She is a member of the Rotary Club of Macon, serves on numerous professional and regional community boards and serves on several national boards. She has also served on the law school's Board of Visitors. Recently, Knox was named to *Georgia Trend's* "100 Most Influential Georgians" list.



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