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For Immediate Release

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Baylor Alumni Association Honors Don Willett

Texas Supreme Court Justice Don Willett, a 1988 graduate of Baylor University, received the Price Daniel Distinguished Public Service Award from the Baylor Alumni Association in a ceremony on Jan. 27 in Waco. Former Texas governor Mark White—a 1962 Baylor graduate and 1965 law graduate—was emcee of the event.

The Price Daniel Distinguished Public Service Award, named after the former Texas governor, honors someone whose record in an elected or appointed office exemplifies the spirit of selfless dedication to public service represented by the life and career of Gov. Daniel, who was a Baylor graduate.

Willett excelled at both Baylor, earning a triple-major BBA, and Duke University, earning a JD degree with honors along with a graduate degree in political science. He will soon begin work on an LLM in judicial studies from Duke.

When Willett joined the Supreme Court in 2005, Texas' four then-living chief justices said, "Willett brings to the court one of the most varied and wide-ranging legal backgrounds in recent memory."

Before joining the High Court at age 39, Willett served as counsel to a U.S. Court of Appeals judge, a leading Texas law firm, a Texas attorney general, a Texas governor, a U.S. attorney general, and the president of the United States.

During the alumni association's 2012 Hall of Fame award event, several other awards were also presented. A full list is below. For more biographical information on Willett

and the other recipients, consult the current issue of the [*Baylor Line*](#), the magazine of the Baylor Alumni Association, beginning on page 30.

Roland Johnson, president of the BAA Board of Directors, said, “The Baylor Alumni Association celebrates extraordinary alumni every day, but this event shines a special spotlight our long-standing alumni awards program. These awards are given by peers — the recipients were chosen by committees of Baylor alumni, and that makes them highly regarded. These awards celebrate alumni who typify the best of Baylor.”

Awards list:

Distinguished Alumni Award

- Dr. David Hillis '80, Alfred W. Roark Centennial Professor, the University of Texas at Austin — Austin, Texas
- Dr. Cleophus LaRue '78, MA '82, Francis Landey Patton Professor of Homiletics, Princeton Theological Seminary — Princeton, New Jersey
- Dr. Darrell Ward '66, Co-founder and CEO, ALL In Learning — Denton, Texas

W. R. White Meritorious Service Award

- Roger Goree '89, MSED '91, Baylor Athletics, retired — Waco, Texas
- Nell Hawkins, Philanthropist — Waco, Texas

Price Daniel Distinguished Public Service Award

- Justice Don Willett '88, Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas — Austin, Texas

Abner V. McCall Religious Liberty Award

- Dr. James E. Wood Jr., Founding Director of the J. M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies, Baylor University — Yorktown, Virginia

Abner V. McCall Humanitarian Award

- Virginia Ann Dodson Pitman, Nurse Educator and Medical Missionary, retired — Walnut Creek, California (unable to attend)

George W. Truett Distinguished Church Service Award

- Drayton '58 and Elizabeth McLane, Church Leaders and Philanthropists — Temple, Texas

Herbert H. Reynolds Outstanding Young Alumni Award

- Dr. Jarett Berry '97, Physician and Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Texas Southwestern Medical School — Dallas, Texas
- Sarah Dodd '96, Founder of Dodd Communications and former award-winning broadcast journalist — Dallas, Texas

First Families of Baylor Award

- The Flook-Gillen-Patterson Family