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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - May 16, 2011**

**D. Augustus Straker Bar Association's Trailblazers Award and Scholarship Dinner**

*Investigative Reporter Bill Proctor to Emcee and Assist in Honoring the Honorable Isidore Torres (retired), State Bar of Michigan President W. Anthony Jenkins, and Angelique Strong Marks, Esq. for Years of Excellent Service to Bar and Bench*

**SOUTHFIELD, Michigan – May 16, 2011** –The D. Augustus Straker Bar Association is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (1990-2010) this bar year. As our final celebration of the bar year, we will recognize the following honorees with the Trailblazers Award on June 16, 2011 at the Pi Banquet Hall in Southfield beginning with cocktails at 6:00 p.m. and followed by a dinner program at 7:00 p.m.:

**The Honorable Isidore Torres (retired)** is a former Wayne County Circuit Court Judge, having retired after 27 years of service. He previously served on the 36<sup>th</sup> District Court, on the City of Detroit Recorder's Court, and as a Visiting Judge on the Michigan Court of Appeals. Judge Torres is a Past-President of the Hispanic Judges Association and a founding member of the Hispanic Bar Association of Michigan. He is a dedicated, long-standing member of several organizations including the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section of the State Bar of Michigan, the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association, and the NAACP. Currently, Judge Torres operates I.B. Torres, PLLC, a firm specializing in alternative dispute resolution and is of counsel to the law firm of Ishbia & Gaglead.

**W. Anthony Jenkins, Esq.** is the 2010-2011 President of the State Bar of Michigan – a culmination of his service and commitment to the State of Michigan. He is a Member and Chief Diversity Officer at Dickinson Wright PLLC. Mr. Jenkins has been active in the American Bar Association, presently serving as a member of the ABA Federal Judiciary Committee and a past member of the ABA Board of Governors and ABA House of Delegates. He serves or has served on several Detroit area civic and charitable boards, including the Elected Officials Compensation Commission, the Board of Police Commissioners, the Advisory Board to the Founders Society of the Detroit Institute of Arts, and the Detroit Medical Center.

**Angelique Strong Marks, Esq.** is the General Counsel and Corporate Secretary at Behr America, Inc. Previously, she served as Chief Legal Counsel for Frank's Nursery & Crafts, Inc., Senior Counsel at CMS Energy, and Senior Counsel at DTE Energy. Notably, Ms. Strong Marks was the first African-American General Counsel at a publicly traded company in the State of Michigan during her tenure at the Handleman Company. Ms. Strong Marks is a driven leader and currently serves on the State Bar of Michigan Board of Commissioners. She has also served as an American Bar Association Business Law Section Ambassador, Chairperson of the Save Kids of Incarcerated Parents Advisory Board, a member of Michigan Lawyers Weekly Board of Editors, Chairperson of the State Bar of Michigan Young Lawyers Section, a Michigan delegate to the American Bar Association House of Delegates, and Past-President of the D. Augustus Straker Bar Association.

Now in its eighteenth year, the Trailblazers Award recognizes pioneers in the legal community based upon their continuous individual contributions to the betterment of the legal profession. Past honorees include the Honorable Dennis Archer Sr., Cornelius Pitts, Esq., and the Honorable Damon Keith. In addition to the 2011 Trailblazers Award honorees, the dinner also awards several scholarships to law students and provides networking and advertising opportunities for all those with interest in the underserved legal community.

Sponsorships for the Trailblazers Dinner and advertising space in the souvenir booklet are still available, and range from \$1,500 to \$5,000, which includes a dinner table for ten as well as special acknowledgment and advertising space in the souvenir booklet. Individual tickets for the dinner are \$65.00 per person.

The Pi Banquet Hall is located at 28847 Franklin Road in Southfield, MI. For more information, please contact Stephanie Jones, President-Elect, D. Augustus Straker Bar Association, at (248) 641-1274 or [sjones@hdp.com](mailto:sjones@hdp.com).

The D. Augustus Straker Bar Association was founded in 1990 by a group of African-American lawyers in Oakland County with a mission to increase minority representation in the legal profession, support and encourage legal practice opportunities for minorities, and facilitate equal justice for underserved members of the Oakland County community. Its address is 19785 W. 12 Mile Road, #176, Southfield, Michigan 48076.