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State's Top Lawyers Named by Peer Voting
Legal Elite results published in *FLORIDA TREND* special report

ST. PETERSBURG, FLA. (June 27, 2008) – Florida's top lawyers are recognized in the 2008 edition of **FLORIDA TREND'S** *Florida Legal Elite*[™]. The special report, developed from voting by Florida lawyers who are members of The Florida Bar, is part of the July issue of **FLORIDA TREND** magazine.

"*Florida Legal Elite* is an important resource for letting our readers, the business leaders in Florida, know who lawyers say are the best in the state," said **FLORIDA TREND** publisher Lynda Kever. "The 11% increase in votes from last year to this year indicates that our annual report is gaining recognition and that lawyers are eager to participate."

The list of 949 Legal Elite honorees includes attorneys in private practice as well as prosecutors, public-service attorneys and law school professors. Attorneys were asked to name the attorneys that they hold in highest regard as professionals – lawyers with whom they have personally worked and would recommend to others.

As part of the balloting, attorneys were asked to name the best "Up & Coming Attorney." The top 159 vote-getters in the category (in practice 10 years or less) are to be featured in the listing.

Recently-installed Florida Bar President John G. "Jay" White, III, finds that a peer-determined list of lawyers is an excellent research tool for people selecting legal counsel.

"Good referrals often come from friends or co-workers, but *Florida Legal Elite* provides an additional nod of approval from those who know the attorney's skills the best," White said.

Lawyers on the list are based in 55 Florida cities. They represent 378 different law firms and have been practicing law an average of 24 years. Commercial litigation and civil trial are the most common practice areas. A separate list of 62 top government attorneys is included in the special report.

According to Keever, “The process of selecting the *Legal Elite* began last fall when FLORIDA TREND invited all in-state members of The Florida Bar to participate. This year 199 of our honorees was first-time winners.”

Each lawyer could submit only one ballot with votes for a maximum of 10 attorneys. Attorneys were not allowed to vote for themselves. Ballots were received online and processed by Outsource America Inc. of Bradenton, Fla. St. Petersburg-based Suncoast Opinion Surveys checked, scored and tabulated the votes.

The Florida Bar provided information on each lawyer’s membership status. As a final step, a Blue Ribbon Panel of Florida attorneys representing different practice areas and cities across the state reviewed the selection process and the list of finalists.

The entire *Legal Elite* report can be viewed online at www.FloridaTrend.com/LegalElite.

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