



Washington State Bar Association

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Jack Hamann Receives WSBA Excellence in Legal Journalism Award

(SEATTLE) — The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) announces that **Jack Hamann** will be honored with the 2008 Excellence in Legal Journalism Award. This award is given to the journalist and his/her organization that has set the standard for relevance, clarity, accuracy, and understanding in news reporting. The award recognizes describing the context, facts, and players involved in the legal system with fairness and sensitivity requires intelligence, knowledge, dedication, and skill. WSBA President **Stan Bastian** will present the award at the WSBA Annual Awards Dinner, to be held on September 18, 2008, at the Grand Hyatt Seattle Hotel.

Hamann lives in Seattle, where he is an author and journalist. He received a bachelor's degree in economics from UCLA and his law degree from the University of Oregon School of Law. His career spans twenty-eight years, including a decade as a network correspondent and documentary producer for CNN and PBS. His work has earned dozens of journalism honors, including ten regional Emmy awards. Hamann and his work also received the 2005 Investigative Book of the Year award from Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE).

Hamann, along with his wife, Leslie, as a researcher, wrote *On American Soil: How Justice Became a Casualty of WWII* (Algonquin Books, 2005; University of Washington Press, 2007), an investigation into details surrounding a 1944 riot and lynching at the U.S. Army's Fort Lawton, located in Seattle. The incident received widespread attention at the time, and resulted in 43 African-American soldiers being charged with various crimes. Twenty-eight soldiers went to prison. The book uncovered deep flaws during the court martial proceedings, prompting Congress to order the U.S. Army to reopen the case more than sixty years after its initial conclusion. Following its investigation, the U.S. Army Board for Correction of Military Records overturned the verdicts, and on July 26, 2008, formally apologized to the soldiers' families.

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“Mr. Hamann's research and efforts resulted in the Army recently voiding the convictions and awarding honorable discharges and compensation to the victims and survivors [of the Ft. Lawton court-martial],” wrote Spokane attorney **Frank H. Johnson** in his nomination letter. “[I] suggest that the Bar consider an award to journalist Jack Hamann for his work in correcting a grave injustice in military law.”

About the Washington State Bar Association

The WSBA is part of the judicial branch, exercising a governmental function authorized by the Washington State Supreme Court to license the state’s 32,600 lawyers. The WSBA both regulates lawyers under the authority of the Court and serves its members as a professional association — all without public funding. As a regulatory agency, the WSBA administers the bar admission process, including the bar exam; provides record-keeping and licensing functions; and administers the lawyer-discipline system. As a professional association, the WSBA provides continuing legal education for attorneys, in addition to numerous other educational and member-service activities.

The governance of the WSBA is vested in its 14-person Board of Governors. There are three governors from the seventh congressional district; one from each of the other eight districts; and three at-large members, one of whom represents the Young Lawyers Division. The 2007-2008 president is **Stanley A. Bastian**, of Wenatchee. The 2007-2008 president-elect is **Mark A. Johnson**, of Seattle, the immediate past-president is **Ellen Conedera Dial**, of Seattle, and the 2008-09 president-elect is **Salvador A. Mungia**, of Tacoma. The Board meets regularly (every six weeks) at various locations around the state, and its meetings are open to the public. Much of the work of the Bar is carried out through numerous standing committees; 26 sections; and a Young Lawyers Division, with its many committees.

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