

The Council on Litigation Management announces Doug and Denise Thornton as the 2011 CLM Professionalism Award recipients; pledges hundreds of volunteer hours and thousands of dollars for the Beacon of Hope.

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New York, NY – (PR.COM) – 12/10/10 – The Council on Litigation Management (CLM) announced today Doug and Denise Thornton as its 2011 Professionalism Award recipients. CLM will present the Thorntons with the award at the CLM Annual Conference on March 25, 2011.

The Council further announces it has designated its golf outing, occurring during its annual conference on March 23, 2011 at TPC Louisiana, as the *Beacon of Hope Open* with all proceeds going to the organization. Additionally conference participants will donate hundreds of volunteer hours to the Beacon of Hope, working in hurricane damaged homes helping homeowners with painting, landscaping, minor demolition, clearing overgrown properties, and rebuilding.

“We are honored to recognize these true American heroes,” said Adam Potter, Executive Director of the Council on Litigation Management. “Denise’s organization not only rebuilt homes, but brought the community back to New Orleans. Doug led the return of the New Orleans Saints and inspired the revitalization of the city’s economy.” Included below is a full description of their significant accomplishments.

CLM Professionalism Award

The Council on Litigation Management’s Professionalism Award is the Council’s highest honor. It recognizes and commemorates an individual who has demonstrated the unique ability to lead others by example in the highest standard of their profession. Honorees adhere to superior ethical standards, actively advance education, and foster cooperation among all elements of their profession and beyond. The CLM Professionalism Award winner is the embodiment of the American spirit whose positive impact in one or more ways advances the evolution of his or her chosen field and the common goals shared by Fellows and Members of the organization.

About the Council on Litigation Management

The Council is the largest fully inclusive defense organization, comprised of thousands of insurance companies, corporations, corporate counsel, risk managers, insurance professionals, claims adjusters and attorneys. Through education and collaboration, its goals are to promote and further the highest standards of litigation management in pursuit of client defense. The Council sponsors educational programs, provides resources, fosters communication, and recognizes lawyers who meet high standards. To learn more about the Council, please visit www.litmgmt.org.

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Denise Thornton

After spending 5 days in the Louisiana Superdome as a volunteer evacuee Denise returned to her flooded home and began the work of rebuilding while her husband worked on the restoration of the dome. On February 14, 2006, just six months following the storm Denise & Doug Thornton opened their partially rebuilt home as a respite for their weary neighbors who were facing decisions without information or government guidance. Taking proactive measures, Denise formed a grassroots nonprofit organization and called it the Beacon of Hope.

The Beacon of Hope provides a model for recovery in neighborhoods devastated by Hurricane Katrina, as well as other areas affected by disaster. Encouraging civic action, fostering repopulation, providing information and resources is the foundation on which it builds. Beacon of Hope empowers residents to facilitate their own recovery while providing a hub of resident driven activities and a safe environment to create the synergy essential for restoring viable neighborhoods and improve the overall quality of life for residents. Beacon of Hope has given birth to programs that build community and stimulate economic growth.

The Beacon evolved into a model which could be tailored specifically for each geographic location it would serve and leaders emerged, thus creating a model that could and is being used citywide. By the end of its first year, the Beacon had a total of eight resource centers servicing eight neighborhoods. Today there are 19 resource centers throughout Gentilly, Lakeview, Lakewood, Hollygrove-Dixon and Carrollton-Riverbend. Community leaders from around the world have been trained and counseled on the Beacon's M.O.D.E.L in rebuilding their communities after disaster.

On a state level, Denise has served as Executive Secretary for the LaServe Commission since 2007. Denise is also a Fleur-de-Lis Ambassador and is a member of the New Orleans Crime Coalition. She is a founding member of the New Orleans Institute and also serves on the board of Lakewood Property Owners Association.

Despite not having a history as a civic activist prior to Hurricane Katrina, Thornton has been widely recognized for her contributions to the rebuilding of her city. She has been featured on several national news programs and publications such as CNN, Good Morning America, Washington Post, Sports Illustrated, the Wall Street Journal, USA Today and the LA Times.

Doug Thornton

Doug is a Senior Vice President for SMG, the management company that operates the Louisiana Superdome and the New Orleans Arena. In his current position, he currently oversees the operation of several SMG facilities in the Gulf Coast region.

Doug's greatest accomplishment came in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, when he spearheaded the remarkable rebuilding of the Superdome. Viewed as the largest stadium reconstruction project in American history, Thornton oversaw a \$197 renovation that led to the return of the Saints, inspired New Orleanians and helped revitalize the local economy. The recovery project was completed within one year and in time for the Dome to reopen to a national television audience on September 25, 2006.

Under Thornton's direction, the Superdome has continued move into the future, with additional improvements and features allow it remain competitive with newer stadiums recently constructed throughout the country. The effort has paid dividends as the Dome recently won bids to host the 2012 BCS College Football Championship, 2012 Men's Final Four and the 2013 Super Bowl. Thornton is also actively involved in local tourism efforts, having recently co-chaired the New Orleans Hospitality Strategic Task Force's development of a comprehensive Master Plan for the Tourism industry.

Thornton is a member of the New Orleans Aviation Board, the Board of the New Orleans Convention and Visitor's Bureau, New Orleans Sports Foundation and Tipitina's Music Foundation.

He has received numerous honors and awards for his work in the industry, including the New Orleans Chamber "Vision of Excellence" Award and "New Orleanian of the Year" by Gambit Newspaper in 2002. He was named a Sports Business Journal "headliner" in 2006 and received the Dave Dixon Sports Leadership Award from the Louisiana Sports Writers Association in 2007. Thornton and the SMG Staff were presented a 2007 Sugar Bowl Hall of Fame Award for their efforts in the Superdome's recovery from Hurricane Katrina. The New Orleans Public Relations Society of America named Thornton and his wife, Denise, their 2008 "Hornblower Award" recipients. The New Orleans Chapter of the National Football Foundation presented Thornton its' "Distinguished American" Award in 2009.