

BARNETTE RECEIVES 2006 ERNEST F. HOLLINGS FOR EXCELLENCE IN STATE PROSECUTION

Principal Deputy Solicitor Barry Barnette is the 2006 winner of the Ernest F. Hollings Award for Excellence in state prosecution.

The veteran prosecutor received his profession's top honor at a statewide meeting of his peers in Myrtle Beach last night. Fellow prosecutors, victim advocates and law enforcement officials served on the selection committee.

"Being a prosecutor is more than a profession for Barry," Solicitor Trey Gowdy said. "It is a way of life. He is one of the first employees in the office and the last to leave at the end of the day. He is a mentor for younger attorneys and a valuable legal resource for police officers with pressing legal questions."

Barnette's 15-year legal career in Spartanburg and Cherokee counties includes five years of service as an assistant solicitor, a county magistrate and his current duty. He has prosecuted hundreds of cases and recorded more than 100 trial wins on crimes ranging from driving offenses to death penalty cases. His record over the past five years includes 3 capital case convictions, 13 guilty verdicts on challenging felony driving the influence cases and nearly two dozen prison sentences of more than 30 years.

Barnette has led numerous classes, seminars and presentations around the state and the southeast. His educational portfolio includes the South Carolina Magistrate Court Orientation School, the South Carolina Solicitor's Conference classes, and a multi-state training program in Lawrenceburg, Tenn. Barnette is a contributing author to the South Carolina Highway Patrol's protocol for the handling of traffic cases. He has been recognized by Mothers Against Drunk Driving and the National Association of Prosecution Coordinators.

Supporters on Barnette's bid for the Hollings' Award included former 10th Circuit Solicitor Druanne White.

"When I was contacted about this matter, I was shocked that Barry had not already received this award," White wrote in a letter of recommendation. "In my opinion, he should have received it years ago. I can think of no one who is more deserving."

A native of Point Pleasant, W. Va, Barnette earned his law degree from West Virginia University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Marshall University.

Barnette is the second local prosecutor in three years to receive statewide recognition. Assistant Solicitor Erika McJimpsey received the 2004 Ernest F. Hollings Award for her work on the juvenile caseload in Family Court.

"Awards like this are not won by individuals, they are won because many people go about their jobs in excellent and understated way," Gowdy said. "I'm fortunate to have a great team and I'm honored to see people from all walks of life recognize their success."