



With Laura Boeckman, holding plaque in the center, are, from left to right, her husband, Cecil Boeckman, Gov. Rick Scott, Attorney General Pam Bondi, Agriculture Secretary Adam Putnam and Florida CFO Jeff Atwater. In the front row are her children Alex, Ella, Abbey and Helen. The award was presented to Boeckman Sept. 1 during a Cabinet meeting in St. Augustine./Photo courtesy Attorney General's Office

Boeckman is 2015 Consumer Protection Lawyer of the Year

Laura Boeckman, North Florida bureau chief for the Consumer Protection Division of the Florida Attorney General's office, is the 2015 Consumer Protection Lawyer of the Year.

She received the award Sept. 1 from Attorney General Pam Bondi in a ceremony while the Florida Cabinet met in St. Augustine. The award is given annually by The Florida Bar's Consumer Protection Law Committee.

Bondi said of Boeckman in presenting the award:

"With over 12 years as a consumer protection lawyer, her unflagging mission has been to protect victims from deceptive and unfair trade practices, to advocate for those who have no legal representative, to educate the public about dangers in the marketplace and to manage and mentor her team of consumer protection lawyers and investigators.

"In the short time that she has been with the office, she and her staff have obtained nearly \$15 million in restitution for Florida consumers by successfully settling or litigating over 20 cases. . . .

"In addition to her work as the Consumer Protection bureau chief," Bondi continued, "Laura is also very active in pro bono work, having won an Outstanding Pro Bono Attorney award from Jacksonville Area Legal Aid in 2014 for her representation of clients in consumer protection cases who would have otherwise been without a legal advocate."

In her job, which she began in 2013, Boeckman supervises the Tallahassee and Jacksonville Consumer Protection offices of the Attorney General's Office and investigates and litigates complaints of unfair and deceptive trade practices in Florida that affect consumers.

Before working at the Attorney General's Office, Boeckman taught the Consumer Law Clinic at Florida Coastal School of Law for eight years. She came to the law school after working in the Predatory Lending Unit of Jacksonville Area Legal Aid for two years.

Her nominator wrote of Boeckman:

"Laura's advocacy skills, litigation success rate and influential leadership testify to her passionate and persistent representation of her clients and her commitment to public service. . . . Laura is a steadfast believer that justice should not just be for the wealthy and that the indigent need to be especially protected from those who engage in deceptive practices . . .

"As a clinical professor, she led the Consumer Law Clinic at Florida Coastal School of Law, where she supervised students working on consumer protection cases for indigent clients. Laura partnered with JALA to record webinars to train lawyers."

Boeckman is active with The Florida Bar as well. She served as chair of the Consumer Protection Law Committee in 2007–2008, and just recently chaired the Public Interest Law Section from 2014–2015. In 2008, she started the Consumer Protection Committee within the Public Interest Law Section, too. She also is active in organizing and presenting in Bar CLE programs to educate consumer attorneys.

Boeckman is a 2001 graduate of the Indiana University School of Law Bloomington.

On receiving the award, Boeckman said:

"It is an incredible honor to receive this award and to be considered among the ranks of the previous winners of this award. I also owe a special thanks to my family for allowing me the time away from them to do this important work."

The Consumer Protection Lawyer of the Year Award is presented annually (since 2011) by The Florida Bar's Consumer Protection Law Committee to a Florida lawyer in recognition of excellence, character and commitment to the practice of consumer protection law. The committee will put out a call for nominees for the 2016 award early next year.