

The COMMISSION QUARTERLY

News from the New Jersey Commission on Professionalism in the Law

Award Winners Saluted at Law Center Ceremony

On October 3, the Commission held its annual Professionalism Awards Luncheon honoring over two dozen lawyers selected by their colleagues for having outstanding character and commitment to the highest professional values. Heading the list of honorees was Jay H. Greenblatt of Vineland who was chosen by the Commission to receive the 2003 Daniel J. O'Hern Award. This special award recognizes career commitment to professionalism, career achievement, and service to the bar and community. Greenblatt is a noted trial lawyer and past president of the New Jersey State Bar Association and Cumberland County Bar Association. He is a Fellow of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers and the American College of Trial Lawyers. The award is named for retired Justice Daniel J. O'Hern who was on hand to present it to Jay Greenblatt. Justice O'Hern has served as an adviser to the Commission and an inspiration to many members of the bar.

Professional Lawyer of the Year awards were presented to lawyers selected by bar associations from across the state, including county bar associations, minority bar associations and the New Jersey State Bar Association. The awards have been presented annually by the Commission and participating bar associations since 1997 as a means of recognizing deserving lawyers and calling attention to the positive contributions lawyers

Professional Lawyer of the Year Awards — 2003

<i>ATLANTIC COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Mark E. Roddy	<i>HUNTERDON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Joseph S. Novak	<i>SUSSEX COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> William M. Cox
<i>BERGEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Dennis P. LaHiff	<i>MERCER COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Hon. Anne E. Thompson	<i>UNION COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Stanley A. Fink
<i>BURLINGTON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> John F. Kearney III	<i>MIDDLESEX COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Warren W. Wilentz	<i>ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION</i> Amrita Master Dalal
<i>CAMDEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Gladys E. Rodriguez	<i>MONMOUTH BAR ASSOCIATION</i> H. Frank Carpentier	<i>ASSOCIATION OF BLACK WOMEN LAWYERS OF NJ</i> Paulette Brown
<i>CAPE MAY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> George B. Neidig Jr.	<i>MORRIS COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Thomas R. Curtin	<i>ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYERS</i> Warren W. Wilentz
<i>CUMBERLAND COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Jay H. Greenblatt	<i>OCEAN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Eugene M. Mulvaney	<i>GARDEN STATE BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Dean L. Burrell
<i>ESSEX COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> John P. McGee	<i>PASSAIC COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Robert L. Stober	<i>HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Ramon de la Cruz
<i>GLOUCESTER COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Kenneth A. DiMuzio	<i>SALEM COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> William L. Horner	<i>NEW JERSEY STATE BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Thomas R. Curtin
<i>HUDSON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Seymour Margulies	<i>SOMERSET COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION</i> Richard A. Norris	<i>NEW JERSEY WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION</i> Ruth Rabstein

make to the society and the profession.

Many of the award winners brought spouses and family members to join in the celebration so that there was an overflow crowd in the Law Center auditorium. The

awards were distributed by Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz of the New Jersey Supreme Court and Chief Judge John W. Bissell of the United States District Court. This year's award winners are a real cross section of the bar, including four practitioners who were admitted to practice over 50 years ago, public sector lawyers, solo practitioners and partners from large firms. Regardless of age or experience, these lawyers share one common trait — they are highly respected by colleagues and are examples of what it means to be a true professional. In his opening remarks, Commission Chair Richard J. Badolato characterized the award winners as "positive role models for younger colleagues whose achievements serve to focus favorable public attention on the bar." ☞

New Chair Takes the Reins

Richard J. Badolato, a partner in the law firm of Connell Foley in Roseland, has succeeded Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz as chair of the Commission. Badolato is a past president of the New Jersey State Bar Association and Essex County Bar Association.

Badolato said that he "is honored to have been chosen and I look forward to exploring innovative ways to promote professionalism

within the bar, among judges, and in the law schools, particularly through programs aimed at bolstering the important values that have long defined the legal profession. I will continue the efforts of my predecessors to reach out to all segments of the legal community to raise awareness about professionalism and encourage lawyers and judges, by their own actions and conduct, to set an example for others to follow." ☞

Advice to Judges: Act Promptly When Lawyers Cross the Line

Commission representatives had the pleasure of participating in the 2003 Judicial College held at the Glenpointe Hotel in Teaneck. The two-and-a-half-day event is a required outing for Superior Court and Tax Court judges, and justices of the Supreme Court. A seminar titled Order in the Court was presented, and attracted approximately 125 judges.

The focus of the seminar was to impress upon judges their responsibility for promoting professionalism through their own con-

duct and demeanor, and addressing instances of unprofessional lawyer behavior. Hypothetical discussion problems were used to facilitate audience discussion, all based on recent reported opinions. The panel examined applicable court rules, statutes, and codes of professionalism, and discussed various options available to judges, including in-chambers counseling, sidebars and sanctions, which all agreed should be used as a last resort. The panelists were unanimous in concluding that

the most effective judges are those who set an example for lawyers by their own conduct, lay down unambiguous ground rules, and deal quickly with lawyers who create problems.

The panel consisted of Commission Chair Richard J. Badolato, and Commission members Ronald J. Riccio and Judge Rudy B. Coleman. In addition, the panel included Appellate Division Judge Jack L. Lintner, Assignment Judge Linda R. Feinberg, Stephen M. Orlofsky and Justin P. Walder. ☞

New Jersey Commission on Professionalism in the Law

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Good Sportsmanship Translates Into Civility

Chief Judge John W. Bissell of the United States District Court brought to the bench not only years of experience as a lawyer, but also decades of ice time as a hockey referee. Speaking at the Professionalism Awards luncheon, he stated that he sees many parallels between the good sportsmanship encouraged in interscholastic athletics and the civility and respect that judges ask for from the members of the bar. The judge firmly believes that those who exhibit good or poor behavior later in life are likely to have either learned from, or ignored, lessons of sportsmanship on the athletic field.

He noted that "the primary mission of interscholastic sports is to develop an appreciation for good sportsmanship, respect for your fellow man and civility to others in years ahead." Unfortunately, the judge sees the breakdown of that mission in the courtroom – a violent criminal with no respect for

others, an embezzler with a "me first" attitude, or the "smash mouth" lawyer who abuses colleagues, the courts and witnesses.

Even though bar associations, law schools and others are doing much to instill professionalism, Judge Bissell believes more can be done to reach children "through an emphasis on sportsmanship and respect on the athletic field, where the lessons of life are learned." He asked the audience to reflect on their athletic experiences and the lessons of good sportsmanship. Have these lessons been used or forgotten? Has civility and the golden rule been compromised in an effort to win at all costs? The judge's recommendation is that all of us apply to our professional lives the values of civility and respect that we learned years ago, and that we frequently remind one another that sportsmanship really is the name of the game. ☞

January ICLE Seminar Will Offer CLE Credits

The Commission will co-sponsor an ethics and professionalism seminar with the Institute for Continuing Legal Education on January 17 at the Law Center in New Brunswick, from 9 a.m. to noon. This is the third year the Commission and ICLE have offered *Playing by the Rules*, which broadly examines a lawyers professional obligations, not only under the Rules of Professional Conduct, but also in the context of accepted standards of professionalism. The core of the seminar is an interactive discussion of hypothetical problems of

the type that may confront a practitioner on a daily basis. Because of changes in the RPCs that will become effective on January 1, this year's seminar will also include a panel discussion of the major rule changes.

Panelists include Appellate Division Judge Edith Payne, David H. Dugan III, Kevin H. Michels and Ellen O'Connell. The moderator will be Charles J. Hollenbeck, the Commission's Executive Director. New York and Pennsylvania CLE credits will be available for both ethics and professionalism requirements. ☞