



Celebrate with the Stars: A Sold-out Success

By Leanna Zwiebel

Over 500 guests were in attendance at the sold-out “Celebrate with the Stars” event on April 12 at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville. The evening began with cocktails, a wine tasting, and hors d’oeuvres.

Prior to the awards presentation, members of the bar admitted in 1968 were honored for 50 years of practice with half-century pins.

The Honorable Anthony V. DeMayo Pro Bono Award was the first award of the night to be presented. The award’s namesake, Judge DeMayo, was passionate about the law and unwavering in his support of legal services for the needy. The winners of this year’s award, as selected by the Pro Bono Committee, not only exhibit commitment and dedication to pro bono service, but also serve as role models for the profession. Video testimonials were played for each award winner to give the audience members a better sense of who the winners are and their dedication to their work.

After dinner, video testimonials continued for the signature awards, which were played prior to their award acceptance, and added a personalized touch to the honor. The signature awards were presented by President Karen DeMeola, President-elect Jonathan M. Shapiro, Vice President Nidhi N. Moses, Treasurer Vincent P. Pace; YLS Chair Aidan R. Welsh presented the Young Lawyers Section Vanguard Award.

Edward F. Hennessey Professionalism Award winner James A. Wade reminisced of his time with Edward F. Hennessey, who was both his friend and colleague and the namesake of the award, sharing, “Tonight is not about me, it is about Ed Hennessey. He had my back and I had his; you will not ever see two lawyers who had more fun practicing law than Ed and me.”

Also among this year’s tremendous slate of stars were Chief Judge Janet C. Hall, former Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers, and State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier.

After asking all treasurer members in the audience to stand up and be recognized, Treasurer Nappier shared, “Public service is not only ingrained in the culture of my office, it’s in my DNA.”

John Eldred Shields Distinguished Professional Service Award winner, Chief Judge Janet C. Hall, accepted her award on behalf of the Connecticut Bar Association members, “who day in and day out contribute to the work of the courts, the legal profession, and their communities...that work is so often unappreciated and unrecognized...Yet, I don’t think I can overstate how critical you are to the proper functioning of the work of the courts, to the operation of our local governments, and to the fabric of our communities. You, the lawyers, are the unsung heroes of our profession—the true stars—and I salute you tonight.”

The final award of the evening was the Henry J. Naruk Judiciary Award, which was presented to former Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers. She began her acceptance by thanking two of the night’s awardees, Chief Judge Janet C. Hall for showing her how to try a case, and James A. Wade for his “unparalleled ability” to tell his clients’ side of the story in the courtroom. Additionally, she thanked her colleagues for helping to bring “somewhat heated debates about what to do in a particular situation back to the question of what is the right thing to do...we may not have always gotten it right, but I can assure you we tried to do the right thing.”

The evening concluded with dessert and cordial pairings, along with music and dancing. Thank you to our sponsors for helping make the fifth annual “Celebrate with the Stars” a resounding success. **CL**



Leanna Zwiebel is associate editor of *Connecticut Lawyer* and communications and editorial associate at the Connecticut Bar Association.

Photos

1. Henry J. Naruk Judiciary Award winner, former Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers.
2. YLS Executive Committee members David A. McGrath, Aidan R. Welsh, and Cindy M. Cieslak with Young Lawyers Section Vanguard Award winner Suphi A. Phillip.
3. Secretary of the State Denise Merrill and CBA Executive Director Keith J. Soressi.
4. Tapping Reeve Legal Educator Award winner Professor Kate Stith with CBA Vice President Ndidi N. Moses and CBA President Karen DeMeola.
5. John Eldred Shields Distinguished Professional Service Award winner Chief Judge Janet C. Hall with CBA leadership and Awards Committee co-chairs.
6. This year's 50-year honorees.
7. Justice Maria A. Kahn with John Eldred Shields Distinguished Professional Service Award winner Chief Judge Janet C. Hall.
8. One of The Honorable Anthony V. DeMayo Pro Bono Award winners, Michael K. Conway, with CBA leadership and Pro Bono Awards Committee chair.
9. Distinguished Public Service Award winner State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier.
10. Eversource Energy employees with Citizen of the Law Award winner Theresa Hopkins-Staten and CBA Treasurer Vincent P. Pace.
11. 2018 Celebrate with the Stars award winners.





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2018 Award Winners

Henry J. Naruk Judiciary Award
 Hon. Chase T. Rogers
Retired Chief Justice, Connecticut Supreme Court

John Eldred Shields Distinguished Professional Service Award
 Chief Judge Janet C. Hall
United States District Court for the District of Connecticut

Distinguished Public Service Award
 Hon. Denise L. Nappier
Office of the State Treasurer

Edward F. Hennessey Professionalism Award
 James A. Wade
Robinson+Cole

Tapping Reeve Legal Educator Award
 Kate Stith
Lafayette S. Foster Professor of Law, Yale Law School

Charles J. Parker Legal Services Award
 Thomas A. Behrendt
Connecticut Legal Rights Project Inc.

Citizen of the Law Award
 Theresa Hopkins-Staten
Eversource Energy

Citizen for the Law Award
 Dr. M. Saud Anwar
Mayor, Town of South Windsor

Young Lawyers Section Vanguard Award
 Suphi A. Philip
State of Connecticut Judicial Branch

The Honorable Anthony V. DeMayo Pro Bono Award
 Michael K. Conway
Law Office of Michael K. Conway

Thomas J. Farrell
Hinckley Allen

John J. Houlihan, Jr.
RisCassi & Davis PC

Kyle LaBuff
Law Offices of Lawrence M. Riefberg LLC