



Celebrate with the STARS!

A Night of Honor and Inspiration

2022



The hosts of this year's Celebrate with the Stars: 2021-2022 President, Hon. Cecil J. Thomas; then Vice President Margaret I. Castinado; and then President-Elect Daniel J. Horgan.

Over 260 legal professionals, community members, families, and friends attended the ninth annual "Celebrate with the Stars" event on April 20 at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville to honor 12 individuals and 16 attorneys observing 50 years of practice. Then president, Hon. Cecil J. Thomas, opened the event by welcoming attendees to the first "Celebrate with the Stars" held in-person since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. US Senator Richard Blumenthal took the stage and thanked the attorneys present for their work during the past few difficult years and specifically congratulated those receiving awards.

The first recognition of the evening was for members of the bar admitted in 1972, who were honored for their 50 years of practice with half-century pins.

The awards presentation began with The Honorable Anthony V. DeMayo Pro Bono Award. The winners of this award, as selected by the Pro Bono Committee, exhibit commitment to pro bono service and serve as role models for the profession. This year's winners included: Bruce E. Bergman, Sarah E. Dlugoszewski, Charles D. Ray, and Dale C. Roberson.

Young Lawyers Section (YLS) Chair Joshua Devine presented the Young Lawyers Section Vanguard Award to Logan A. Carducci. She was recognized for her longtime commitment to the YLS, including coordinating some of the section's largest and most complicated events. Attorney Carducci expressed her appreciation to the YLS, stating "I have been a member for seven years. I have gained invaluable friendships and opportunities I wouldn't have had if not for my membership."

After dinner, the signature awards were presented by 2021-2022 President, Hon. Cecil J. Thomas; then Vice President Margaret I. Castinado; and then President-Elect Daniel J. Horgan.

The first signature award, the Charles J. Parker Legal Services Award, was presented to Mary-Christy Fisher for her dedication to the delivery of legal services to the disadvantaged of Connecticut. Attorney Fisher spoke about her work with the Connecticut Veterans Legal Center. "It is those veterans, those clients, who have also given me life without their even knowing it. And in the process, they have allowed me to be the kind of attorney that I understand Charles Parker was."

The Citizen for the Law Award was posthumously bestowed to Shawn M. Lang for her tireless advocacy for the LGBTQ+ community, the HIV positive and those affected by AIDS, opioid addiction sufferers, and people experiencing homelessness. Lang's friend Vicki Veltri accepted the award on behalf of Lang, stating, "when she was there, you knew to take her seriously. She knew her stuff. She may not have been a lawyer, but she knew the law." Veltri later added, "She always took it upon herself to make sure that state leaders would talk to the next generation of LGBTQ+ students and professionals so that they knew they could make it and they could succeed in life."

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Professor J. L. Pottenger received the Tapping Reeve Legal Educator Award for his commitment to legal education in the state. Professor Pottenger noted that receiving the Tapping Reeve Legal Educator Award was especially significant to him due to his personal relationships with past recipients of the award, Quintin Johnstone, Kate Stith, and Jon Bauer.

The Citizen of the Law Award was presented to Sara Bronin for her work as an advocate for the reform of discriminatory land use and zoning laws and particularly for founding DesegregateCT, a pro-homes grassroots coalition made up of 70 nonprofit organizations and thousands of equitable, affordable, and environmentally sustainable land use policies in Connecticut. She put out a call for attendees to speak up on equity in housing and “to not stay silent when there’s a development project that will be really good for your community,” stating, “Affordable housing and multifamily housing actually add tremendous value to Connecticut, and we don’t have enough of them.”

Daniel A. Schwartz received the John Eldred Shields Distinguished Professional Service Award for his years of service to the Connecticut Bar Association for the benefit of the legal community. Attorney Schwartz stated, “This is an incredibly meaningful award to me. I look at the list of past awardees and they’re all people I admire greatly and who I try to model myself after.” He spoke about the difficulties that the pandemic has posed for new attorneys in finding their place in the field. He encouraged those attending to “reach out to those young lawyers and ensure that they know what a great profession this is and that they’ve made the right choice in this profession.”

The Edward F. Hennessey Professionalism Award was bestowed on Ernest J. Mattei for his decades-long career in which he exhibited the highest standards of passion and professionalism. “One group I want to thank are the lawyers with whom I had cases. I learned that you had to respect all of these lawyers and you can never underestimate any of them.” He credited his colleagues with teaching him new skills over the years and the judges that oversaw the cases he tried for setting high expectations that he determined to meet.

The final award of the evening was the Henry J. Naruk Judiciary Award, presented to The Honorable Bernadette Conway for her substantial contributions to the administration of justice in Connecticut. Judge Conway praised her mentor, Justice Christine E. Keller, for encouraging her to take a juvenile court assignment when she was a newly appointed judge. She also took a moment to recognize the hard work of the lawyers who practice in the state’s juvenile courts.

The evening concluded with dessert cordials being served, music, and dancing.



CBA Leadership with the 2022 award winners: (Top Row, L to R) Daniel J. Horgan, Sara C. Bronin, Daniel A. Schwartz, Sarah E. Dlugoszewski, Hon. Cecil J. Thomas, Ernest J. Mattei, Bruce E. Bergman; (Bottom Row, L to R) Logan A. Carducci, Mary-Christy Fisher, J.L. Pottenger, Jr., Hon. Bernadette Conway, Dale C. Roberson

50-Year Awardees

These CBA member attorneys are observing the 50th anniversary of their admission to practice in Connecticut:

William Breslau

Hon. Robert K. Killian, Jr.

Hon. Sydney W. Elkin

Glenn M. Messemer

Victor M. Ferrante

James M. Moher

Louis W. Flynn, Jr.

Franklin G. Pilicy

C. Thomas Furniss

Joan L. Saglio

Steven Grushkin

Barry Scheinberg

Peter D. Hershman

Hon. Karen N. Sequino

Edward S. Hill

John F. Shaw



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