

News & Events



Law Day 2022

Students Ava Cunningham, Emilia Gardner, Julia Schroers, and Marcus Palumbo present arguments before the Connecticut Appellate Court judges.

"Toward a More Perfect Union: The Constitution in Times of Change"

The CBA Civics Education Committee held its annual Law Day celebration at the Connecticut Appellate Court in Hartford on May 6. This year's Law Day Celebration was the first held in-person since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Law Day is a national celebration held annually to celebrate the role of law in our society and to help encourage a deeper understand of the legal profession. This year's theme was "Toward a More Perfect Union: The Constitution in Times of Change."

Chief Judge William H. Bright, Jr. of the Connecticut Appellate Court opened this year's event and welcomed guests to the Law Day celebration. CBA President Daniel J. Horgan provided brief remarks commenting on the importance of civic engagement and understanding the mechanisms of our legal system.

Retired Superior Court Judge John Boland provided the introduction for the Law Day program. This year's program consisted of a moot court appeal oral argument presented by four of Connecticut's leading debate students: Ava Cunningham and Emilia Gardner of Deep River's Valley Regional High School and Julia Schroers and Marcus Palumbo of West Hartford's Westfield Academy. The two pairs of students presented their opposing arguments in front of Connecticut's appellate court judges in a fictional case involving the issues of cyber bullying and how far students' first amendment rights extend.



CBA Civics Education Chair Jonathan Weiner presented Secretary of the State Denise Merrill with a plaque on behalf of the CBA.

This year's Law Day event also included the inaugural presentation of the Ralph J. Monaco Memorial Civics Education Award. CBA Past President Livia DeFelippis Barndollar and Ralph Monaco's wife, Dina Monaco, began the presentation of the awards, speaking about CBA Past President Ralph J. Monaco's commitment to civics education and Law Day. Civics Education Committee Chair Jonathan Weiner presented the award to three Connecticut high school students: Ava Cunningham of Valley Regional High School, James DeDenato of Xavier High School, and Mel Shkrepi of Thomaston High School.

The award was provided to these students based on their demonstration of a significant commitment to advancing civic engagement, civics education, and/or the rule of law. Along with the award, the three students each received a \$1,000 grant.

At the end of the Law Day celebration, students walked to the state office building to have lunch and meet Secretary of the State Denise Merrill. Secretary Merrill was presented with a plaque by Jonathan Weiner on behalf of the CBA in recognition of her extraordinary friendship and leadership in promoting civics education and the rule of law as a member of the Civics Education Committee of the CBA. Judge Matthew Dallas Gordon also presented Secretary Merrill with an official proclamation from Governor Ned Lamont, acknowledging her many achievements in the roles of state representative, house majority leader, and secretary of the state.

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Commercial Law and Bankruptcy Section Present 2022 CLABBY Awards

Attorneys Patrick W. Boatman and Thomas J. Welsh received CLABBY awards from the Connecticut Bar Association's Commercial Law and Bankruptcy Section on May 31. The CLABBY awards, established in 2016, are presented by the section each year to honor the professional achievements of section members.

Patrick W. Boatman received the 2022 Career Achievement Award for his professionalism and exemplary practice of commercial and bankruptcy law for over 40 years. Attorney Boatman is a founding partner of Glastonbury's Boatman Law LLC. Prior to practicing law, Boatman served in the United States Coast Guard and as an officer in the U.S. Army. He attended Boston University School of Law while continuing his military service as a member of the Massachusetts Army National Guard. He was admitted to the Connecticut State Bar in 1979 and the Federal District Court

in 1980. Early in his career, at the request of the Hartford Bankruptcy Court, Attorney Boatman served as a trustee in two large commercial cases. Over the years, he has continued to vigorously pursue his bankruptcy practice, while treating his clients, adversaries, and colleagues with dignity, good humor, and respect.

Thomas J. Welsh received the 2022 Service to the Profession Award for his section leadership, development of educational programs, and delivery of pro bono services. Attorney Welsh is currently of-counsel to Updike Kelly & Spellacy PC, having previously practiced for many years as a principal in the firm of Brown & Welsh PC. He is a member of the Connecticut Law Revision Commission, where he provided special service as co-chair of the Advisory Committee on the 2010 revisions to Article 9 of the Uniform Commercial Code. He is the former chair of the American Bar As-



2022 CLABBY Award winners Patrick W. Boatman and Thomas J. Welsh.

sociation's Joint Task Force on Alternative Dispute Resolution in Commercial Transactions. Additionally, he is a fellow and former regent of the American College of Commercial Finance Attorneys. Attorney Welsh has served as chair of the CBA Commercial Finance Section and is currently a member of the Commercial Finance, Commercial Law and Bankruptcy, and International Law Section Executive Committees.

CBA PAST PRESIDENTS DINNER



On May 17, CBA past presidents and current Executive Committee members gathered at Luce Restaurant in Middletown for the annual Past Presidents Dinner. Past Presidents in attendance included: Livia D. Barmdollar (2008-2009), Francis J. Brady (2009-2010), Barbara J. Collins (2001-2002), Mark A. Dubois (2014-2015), Rosemary E. Giuliano (1994-1995), Brian T. Mahon (1995-1996), Donat C. Marchand (2000-2001), Louis R. Pepe (2005-2006), Jonathan M. Shapiro (2018-2019), Deborah J. Tedford (2002-2003), and Hon. Cecil J. Thomas (2021-2022). The 2021-2022 Executive Committee members in attendance included: 2022-2023 President Daniel J. Horgan, Vice President Margaret I. Castinada, and Treasurer David M. Moore

Upcoming Education Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- 12 Addressing Bias and Stereotyping in Mediation*
- 16 Marijuana and Synthetic Cannabinoids: High-lights of the Science for Attorney
- 21 ESG for Law Firms
- 22 Winning Your Case with a Better Memory

OCTOBER

- 13 Un-Ringing the Bell: Diagnosis and Treatment in Concussion and Brain Injury
- 25 Introduction to the Practice of Criminal Law
- 26 Introduction to Mediation
- 27 Federal Practice Bench Bar Conference

NOVEMBER

- 10 2022 Bankruptcy Conference*

*Ethics credit available



State Representative
Rosa Rebimbas

YLS Hosts 2022 Annual Virtual Legislative Breakfast

The CBA Young Lawyers Section (YLS) held its annual legislative breakfast virtually over Zoom on Tuesday, April 19. Section members met with State Representative Rosa Rebimbas, who was the guest speaker for the event.

Rosa Rebimbas represents the 70th general assembly district in Naugatuck. She is a member of the Connecticut State House of Representatives' Environment, Judiciary, and Transportation Committees. She is currently serving her last term in office. At the event she spoke about the importance of using her experience as an attorney to inform her duties as part of the House's bipartisan Judiciary Committee. She explained that having a legal background provides the ability to decipher the practical implications of proposed bills that are under review, and grasp whether they may have unintended consequences beyond their original intentions. While describing the importance of legal literacy in her role, she reiterated, "There's no substitution to reading a bill. Someone can tell you what the intent of the bill is. What they're saying and what the bill is are two different things. The intent doesn't always match the application of a bill."

During a question-and-answer period held at the end of the breakfast, one YLS member asked Representative Rebimbas how she manages to balance her schedule between her cases and her duties as an elected official. She stated that it was important to be careful about taking on too many cases and that gaining the trust of colleagues, other attorneys, and judges would help to ensure that they will be understanding when special accommodations are necessary.

YLS Chair Joshua Devine ended the event by thanking Representative Rebimbas for meeting with those attending and reminded everyone of the importance of public service.

CBA Establishes Two New Committees

Legal Aid and Public Defense Committee

The mission of The Legal Aid and Public Defense Committee is to provide a forum for Connecticut's legal aid and public defense attorneys to develop a supportive network of lawyers, exchange ideas, and learn about issues of shared interest. Broadly, the Legal Aid and Public Defense Committee works to advance the promise of equal access to justice for people in Connecticut who are economically-disadvantaged. The Committee works to maintain and enhance effective civil legal aid and criminal indigent defense delivery systems by providing guidance, information, training, education, and technical assistance. This committee will be chaired by Tara C. Dugo.

Limited Scope Representation Committee

The Limited Scope Representation Committee will work to promote Limited Scope Representation ("LSR") and Unbundled Legal Services to the public and to the Connecticut bar. The LSR Committee will monitor the use of LSR within Connecticut courts, particularly in areas with significant numbers of self-represented litigants, such as residential foreclosures, family custody and dissolution, and consumer matters. The LSR committee will work to continually provide attorneys and the public with resources and education to encourage the use of LSR, and work to facilitate greater use of LSR in practice, as a means of increasing access to justice. This committee will be chaired by Margaret I. Castinado, Benedict R. Daigle, and Nilda R. Havrilla.

For more information on these committees, visit ctbar.org/committees.

NEW ATTORNEYS SWORN INTO THE CONNECTICUT BAR

Twenty-five new attorneys were sworn in to the Connecticut bar at the Connecticut Supreme Court on May 20. Connecticut Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson, Justice Joan K. Alexander,

opening remarks provided by Chief Justice Robinson and a special recognition provided to the attorneys by Justice Alexander, who was recently appointed to the Connecticut Supreme Court by Governor Ned Lamont last month. Justice Alexander encouraged the new attorneys to participate in pro bono work and to always remain professional and respectful

towards the attorneys they oppose in cases.

Following the administration of the oath of attorney, CBA President Daniel J. Horgan provided a welcome to those inducted. He informed the new attorneys of their complimentary year of bar association membership with the CBA and extolled



The new attorneys sworn in to the Connecticut State Bar.

Justice Gregory T. D'Auria, Justice Steven D. Ecker, Justice Maria Aruajo Kahn, Justice Andrew J. McDonald, and Justice Raheem L. Mullins were in attendance.

The morning ceremony began with

the various benefits he has experienced personally through the association. He welcomed the inductees to what he referred to as "the greatest profession in the world."

CBA Hosts Managing Partners Breakfast

On May 13, the Connecticut Bar Association held its Managing Partners Breakfast at the Graduate Club in New Haven. This year marks the first time the event has been held in person



since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Attendees were joined by President Daniel J. Horgan, Executive Director Keith J. Soressi, and special guest, Connecticut Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson, who engaged in a discussion with the firm partners. The Connecticut Bar Association thanks all those who attended and the firms that provide support to the association.

IN MEMORIAM



C. Harold Schwartz passed away on February 2 at the age of 93. He practiced law for 36 years at the firm of Goldstein & Peck in Bridgeport and Westport and was president at his retirement. He graduated from Stetson University and NYU Law School. Attorney Schwartz was an accomplished attorney, mediator, arbitrator, pro-bono parajudicial officer (in retirement), and was known as a “lawyer’s lawyer,” respected for his intellect, imagination, impeccable work ethic, integrity, kindness, and his appreciation of artistic qualities in others.



Joseph J. Toohar, Jr. passed away on April 1 at the age of 91. He attended Stamford public schools and attended the University of Connecticut for both his under-

graduate and JD. After being discharged from the Army, Attorney Toohar commenced work at the law firm of Moore & Epifanio. He became a prosecutor for the Stamford Municipal Court and an assistant prosecutor in the new Circuit Court. Shortly thereafter, he became a partner in the law firm of Moore Epifanio & Toohar; he was a founding partner in the law firm of Toohar Wocl & Leydon and was “of counsel” to the succeeding law firm of Wocl Leydon. Attorney Toohar served as chairman of the Stamford Democratic Party and was appointed chief counsel to the Joint Senate House Judiciary Committee of the Connecticut State Legislature, where he had a significant part of the drafting of the Model Penal Code and the Connecticut Wire Tapping Law.



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Lawyer Well-Being Week 2022

During the first week of May, to celebrate Lawyer Well-Being Week, the CBA Lawyer Well-Being Committee hosted a series of free events for CBA members that took place on each weekday between noon and 1:00 p.m.

Well-Being Week commenced on Monday, May 2, with a meditation session hosted by instructor Siena Loprinzi, a lifelong yoga practitioner, ayurvedic yoga therapist, herbalist, and yin yoga and meditation teacher.

On Tuesday, May 3, Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers (LCL) Executive Director David Williams provided an overview of the substance abuse issues facing the legal community. He discussed common signs of impairment and the challenges attorneys face when they consider seeking help. Attorney Williams emphasized that LCL provides free and confidential support for attorneys seeking aid with substance abuse issues.

Khemara Sical hosted “Unlocking High Performance: Cultivate Employee Wellbeing, Increase Energy and Resilience” on Wednesday, May 4. Sical’s presentation focused on managing

stress and burnout through well-being practices. She taught attendees how to recognize the five signs that your body needs an energy boost, learn quick fixes to raise energy levels when working on a deadline, create boundaries to help increase mental and physical energy, and to regularly include self-care time into a schedule.

On Thursday, May 5, Siena Loprinzi followed up on her meditation session from earlier in the week by returning to lead participants in a one-hour yoga session.

The last event of Lawyer Well-Being Week, which took place on

Friday, May 6, focused on the importance of proper nutrition in healthy living and was led by registered dietician Sara Soyeju. Soyeju’s presentation centered on building sustainable healthy behaviors and utilizing positive psychology to gain long-term success in improving diet and overall well-being. We thank everyone who participated in these events and helped to make this year’s Lawyer Well-Being Week a success.

Access the CBA’s full list of well-being resources at ctbar.org/Wellness.



Lawyer Well-Being Week | May 1 – 7

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5th Annual
Connecticut
**Bankruptcy
Conference**

Thursday, November 10

**St. Clements Castle
Portland, CT**

CBA Members Confirmed and Sworn in as Connecticut Superior Court Judges

Sixteen CBA members were confirmed and sworn in as superior court judges earlier this spring by the Connecticut legislature after being nominated by Governor Ned Lamont:

- Hon. Alyce Alfano
- Hon. Victoria W. Chavey
- Hon. Eric Daniels
- Hon. Tamar Esperance-Smith
- Hon. Robert G. Golger
- Hon. Wendy Grispin
- Hon. Jassette Ann-Marie Henry
- Hon. Steven D. Jacobs
- Hon. Tara L. Knight
- Hon. Cherie Phoenix-Sharpe
- Hon. Christine P. Rapillo
- Hon. Charles P. Reed
- Hon. Kevin M. Shay
- Hon. Cecil J. Thomas (2021-2022 CBA President)
- Hon. Neeta Vatti
- Hon. Matthew A. Weiner

Those sworn in are now in the process of completing training for their role as judges, after which they will receive their assignments.

CBA CLE Programming

Whether you prefer to attend in-person or from the comfort of home, with the CBA you can access high-quality CLE seminars covering the latest updates in numerous areas of legal practice.

Visit ctbar.org/CLE to learn more.



PEERS AND CHEERS

Louden Katz & McGrath LLC, a family law firm in Hartford, is pleased to announce the addition of **Kayleigh E.**

Bowman as an associate. She is a 2018 magna cum laude graduate of Quinnipiac Law School and was named by *Connecticut Magazine* to “Top Attorneys in Connecticut” (2020-2021).

Britt-Marie K. Cole-Johnson of Robinson+Cole has been elected by the firm’s partners to serve on its Managing Committee. As a member of Robinson+Cole’s Managing Committee, the firm’s main governing body, Cole-Johnson participates in decisions related to strategic planning development and execution of firm policies, finance, talent management and practice planning. Additionally, she was also recently appointed by Governor Ned Lamont to serve on the board of the Connecticut Paid Leave Authority and elected to the UConn Health Board of Directors.

Cynthia Johnson, deputy director of the Connecticut Veterans Legal Center, was selected to receive the Hartford County Bar Association Liberty Bell Award for her commitment to advocacy on behalf of low-income veterans facing homelessness and struggling with mental illness linked to their military service. The honor is given to lawyers and judges who have strengthened the American system of freedom under the law, encouraged respect for law and the courts, stimulated civic responsibility and contributed to good government.

Daniel Krisch, a partner at the law firm of **Halloran Sage** and chair of the firm’s Appellate Law and Advocacy Practice Group, was elected to be a member of the American Academy of Appellate Lawyers. The academy recognizes outstanding appellate lawyers and promotes the improvement of appellate

advocacy and the administration of the appellate courts.

Keisha S. Palmer, Robinson+Cole Public Finance Group lawyer and partner in charge of the firm’s Hartford office, was selected by the *Hartford Business Journal* for inclusion in its 2022 “Women in Business” recognition. She is among 25 honorees who demonstrate business savvy, confidence in themselves and their organizations, and a strong track record of professional leadership. Attorney Palmer advises state, municipal and Indian tribal governments as well as quasi-government agencies on all aspects of the issuance of tax-exempt and taxable bonds and other debt.

Murtha Cullina LLP has named **Nicholas W. Vitti, Jr.** the chair of the Firm’s Real Estate Practice Group, which encompasses all aspects of real estate development and finance, with emphasis on retail developments, leasing, housing, tax credit syndication, office and business park developments, and assisted living and healthcare facilities. Attorney Vitti has extensive experience in the area of commercial real estate and land use development.

McCarter & English LLP has elevated **Shawn Smith** to partner in the firm’s Hartford office. He focuses his practice on a broad range of complex civil and commercial litigation, often involving partnership and business disputes, unfair competition, environmental, commercial real estate, bankruptcy, and insurance related matters.

Andrew L. Wizner, whose practice is limited to immigration law, launched **Wizner Law PLLC**, on April 1. Attorney Pamela D. Lucas joined Wizner Law PLLC as Counsel. Attorneys Wizner and Lucas were previously with Leete Kosto & Wizner LLP. ■

PEERS and CHEERS SUBMISSIONS
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