

Court Information Release



United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

Release Date:
April 19, 2019

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TWENTIETH ANNUAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN PRO BONO AND PUBLIC INTEREST SERVICE

CHICAGO – The United States District Court’s Twentieth Annual Awards for Excellence in Pro Bono and Public Interest Service is scheduled to begin at 1:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 1, 2019, in the James Benton Parsons Memorial Courtroom (2525) of the Everett McKinley Dirksen United States Courthouse at 219 South Dearborn Street in Chicago, Illinois. These awards will honor attorneys for their contributions in helping people most in need of assistance before the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. The program is open to all attorneys and those interested in pro bono and public interest law and is free of charge.

This annual ceremony recognizing pro bono and public interest service before the Court is sponsored jointly by the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. **Maria Z. Vathis**, the National President of the Federal Bar Association, will be the keynote speaker.

Maria Vathis earned her undergraduate degree from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and her law degree from DePaul University College of Law. Ms. Vathis is an attorney at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP where she litigates on behalf of corporate clients in business disputes and class actions. She represents Fortune 500 companies and retailers in the U.S. and Europe. In September 2018, she was installed as national president of the Federal Bar Association.

Maria Vathis has been an active member of the FBA since the beginning of her legal career. In 2002, she became a member of the Chicago Chapter’s Board of Directors. In 2004, she received the “Outstanding Service and Dedication Award” from the local chapter, and she served as editor of the Chicago Chapter’s newsletter, which won an award from FBA National in 2005 for “Outstanding Newsletter.”

In 2006, she was elected Treasurer of the Chicago Chapter, and, in successive years, served as Secretary, Second Vice President, and First Vice President. In 2010, she had the honor of becoming the youngest person to serve as President of the Chicago Chapter. Ms. Vathis’ service to the FBA includes serving as a Board Member from 2012-2015, serving two terms as one of the Vice Presidents of the Seventh Circuit, chairing the National Essay Contest for the last two years, chairing the Audit Committee and Convention

Committee, and being an active member of the Second Annual Women in the Law Planning Committee, the Nominations and Elections Committee, the 100-Year Anniversary Planning Committee, the Bench/Bar Committee, and the Task Force on Conventions.

The awards program will also feature comments and introductions by **Chief Judge Rubén Castillo** and **Michael I. Rothstein**, President of the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association proudly recognize the following award winners who will all be publicly recognized at the May 1 ceremony:

Awards for “Excellence in Public Interest Service”

Matthew T. Gensburg of Gensburg, Calandriello & Kanter, P.C., William J. Barrett of Barack Ferrazzano Kirschbaum & Nagelberg LLP, and Catherine L. Steege of Jenner & Block

Awards for “Excellence in Pro Bono Service”

Lee N. Abrams, Marc R. Kadish, Benjamin A. Shoemaker, and Priya A. Desai of Mayer Brown LLP
Paul R. Steadman, Shuzo Maruyama, and Stephanie H. Lim of DLA Piper LLP

Robert (Rudy) Radasevich and Collette A. Woghiren of Neal, Gerber & Eisenberg LLP

Paula E. Litt of Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn LLP

Stephen H. Pugh of Pugh, Jones & Johnson, P.C.

Jonathan S. Bedi and Dena M. Singer of Bedi & Singer LLP

Karen Hoffman and Bridget Cambria of Aldea – The People’s Justice Center; Amy Maldonado of Law Office of Amy Maldonado; Amy M. Rubenstein, John R. Wellschlager, Peter J. Farrell, Katrina A. Hausfeld, and Leeanne S. Mancari of DLA Piper LLP; & Thomas P. Yardley of Robbins, Salomon & Patt

Craig D. Leavell of Faegre Baker Daniels LLP; Sylvia N. Winston of Jackson Kelly; Ferlillia V. Roberson of DLA Piper LLP; & Justin R. Bernbrock, Sabrina West, Casey McGushin, and Reed S. Oslan of Kirkland & Ellis LLP

David P. Lindner of Brinks Gilson & Lione

John W. Treece, Anna M. Kabat, and Hannah A. Posen of Sidley Austin LLP

Collette A. Woghiren, Eric Y. Choi, Jonathan S. Quinn and Michael D. Sher of Neal, Gerber & Eisenberg

Giel Stein, Royal B. Martin, and Maureen J. Moody of Clark Hill PLC

Jeffrey W. Finke of the Law Office of Jeffrey W. Finke

J. Kevin McCall, Landon S. Raiford, Andrew W. Vail, Briana T. Sprick Schuster, and Lindsey A. Lusk of Jenner & Block

Thomas F. Geselbracht of DLA Piper LLP

Joseph L. Kish of Segal McCambridge Singer & Mahoney Ltd.

Timothy K. Sendek and Robyn M. Bowland of Akerman LLP; Sara Barnowski of Latrhop Gage, LLP; & Sean P. MacCarthy and Kaitlyn Luther of Chittenden, Murday & Novotny, LLC

Tara A. Amin of Sidley Austin LLP

Mary Ann Leuthner of Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.

C. David Ward of Illini Legal Services, Ltd.

Benjamin R. Kinney and Thomas R. Stilp of Stilp Business Law, P.C.

Bryan Krakauer, Blair M. Warner, Caitlin Maly, Frank J. Favia , Jr. and John A. Prinzivalli of Sidley Austin LLP; Alison R Leff of Loevy & Loevy; and Alexa K. Perez

Craig E. Reimer of Mayer Brown

Daniel D. Rubenstein and Ryan M. Dunigan of Winston & Strawn LLP