

Court Information Release



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

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Northern District of Illinois
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SIXTEENTH ANNUAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN PRO BONO AND PUBLIC INTEREST SERVICE

CHICAGO – The United States District Court’s Fifteenth Annual Awards for Excellence in Pro Bono and Public Interest Service is scheduled to begin at 1:00 p.m., Thursday, May 14, 2015, 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 area 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. **Matthew B. Moreland**, the National President of the Federal Bar Association, will be the keynote speaker.

Matthew B. Moreland began his involvement with the FBA through the National YLD’s Moot Court Program under a new appointment to the National FBA YLD Board of Directors. He chaired this program until 2005. Matt also served as a representative of the chapter’s Younger Lawyers on the New Orleans Chapter’s Board of Directors. He performed this job individually for a couple of years. Matt was elected president of the New Orleans Chapter for the 2006-2007 term. This allowed him to strengthen the Chapter and National FBA relations while maintaining the service and connection as the largest Chapter in the country even after the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina. He currently maintains an active relationship with the Chapter through many of the programs from institutional history to co-chair of the Host Committee for the 2010 FBA Annual Convention.

Contemporaneously with chapter work, Matt rose to the position of National YLD Chair and sat as an ex-officio member of the last Executive Committee in 2005-2006 before being elected to a three-year term to the National FBA Board of Directors, 2006-2009. After one three-year term on the Board of Directors, he was appointed as General Counsel for the Association, 2009-2010. The following year, he was elected to the Board of Directors again to serve a term from 2010-2013. He was then elected Treasurer of the Association for the 2012-2013 term, followed by his service as President-Elect for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Matt's practice at the Becnel Law Firm in New Orleans, Louisiana involves primarily mass torts and plaintiff's general litigation issues. With experience with products liability, mass disaster recovery, antitrust litigation and pharmaceutical litigation, a majority of his practice is in Federal Court nationwide. He teaches skills courses at Loyola School of Law in New Orleans and actively participates with his alma mater, Paul M. Hebert School of Law at Louisiana State University.

The awards program will also feature written comments and introductions by **Chief Judge Rubén Castillo**, **Mark E. Furlane**, President of the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, and **Rene Hernandez**, Vice President of the Rockford Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

AWARDS

A special Walter J. Cummings Award (named in honor of a former long term member of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals) will be awarded to **Thomas P. Sullivan**, the former U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and currently with Jenner & Block, to honor his long term service to the bar and his commitment to *pro bono*.

Awards for "Excellence in Public Interest Service" will be presented to:

Brian A. Hart of Brian A. Hart Law Offices, P.C.

Misty R. Martin of Segal McCambridge Singer & Mahoney, Ltd.

Randall D. Schmidt, Professor of Law at the University of Chicago and Manager of the Mandel Legal Aid Clinic

Awards for "Excellence in Pro Bono Service" will be presented to:

John C. Gekas and Judith L. Grubner of Arnstein & Lehr LLP

Mark W. Wallin of Chico & Nunes, P.C.

Keith A. Hebeisen of Clifford Law Offices, P.C.

Donna J. Vobornik and Natasha Lipovac of Dentons

Amy R. Jonker of Dykema Gossett PLLC

Michael R. LaPorte and William W. Flachsbart of Flachsbart & Greenspoon, LLC

Lindsey M. Marcus, Edward N. Druck, and Jessica L. McNamara of Franczek Radelet P.C. and **David G. Weldon** formerly of Franczek Radelet P.C.

Mark A. Flessner, Christopher J. Murdoch and Laura E. Atherstone of Holland & Knight LLP

Michael T. Brody and Richard T. Franch of Jenner & Block LLP, and **Keith Porapaiboon** (formerly of Jenner & Block LLP)

Christina M. Egan, Amy L. Starinieri, and Benjamin J. Christenson of McGuireWoods, LLP

Timothy Nolan of Nolan Law Office

Katrina Christakis and Jeffrey Pilgrim of Pilgrim Christakis LLP and **Angad Nagra** formerly of Pilgrim Christakis LLP

Lauren Hillemann of Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, LLP

Edward Casmere of Schiff Hardin LLP

Jordan P. Vick of Seyfarth Shaw LLP

Erin E. Kelly formerly of Sidley Austin LLP

Margaret Firnstein of SmithAmundsen, LLC

Brandon C. Helms formerly of Steptoe & Johnson LLP

William B. Oberts of Tribler Orpett & Meyer, P.C. and **Eric Long** formerly of Tribler Orpett & Meyer, P.C.

Jeffrey Schulman of Wolin & Rosen, Ltd.