



NEW YORK CITY LAW DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION COUNSEL

Michael A. Cardozo, *Corporation Counsel*

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

**MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG HONORS
LAW DEPARTMENT STAFF
AT 28TH ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY**

Contact: Kate O'Brien Ahlers, Communications Director, (212) 788-0400, media@law.nyc.gov

New York, Dec. 10, 2009 – Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg honored the employees of the Law Department at the 28th Annual Awards Ceremony today in the main Council Chamber at City Hall.

“All year long, the attorneys and staff of the City Law Department defend our interests, our rights, and our safety,” the Mayor said. “And you do so superbly. In a city renowned for its remarkable legal talent, you really stand out.”

The Mayor praised the Law Department’s efforts to defend the City’s calorie count law, crack down on those who peddle untaxed cigarettes, and fight the flow of harmful illegal guns off the City’s streets. He also applauded those attorneys and support staff who volunteered their time and energy through *pro bono* or other outreach efforts.

Corporation Counsel Michael A. Cardozo, head of the Law Department, said, “I congratulate all of this year’s award winners. It is a pleasure to serve this City each day while working besides attorneys and support staff of such high caliber.”

He added, “The ceremony is also in recognition of the tremendous effort with which each member of this Department diligently approaches his or her work, day-in and day-out. I am grateful for their dedication to this office and to the City.”

The 2009 awardees are:

Corporation Counsel’s Award for Distinguished Legal Service

Presented this year to an attorney who has served the Law Department for at least 10 years and who has consistently demonstrated the superior achievement and dedication that define a distinguished career.

- Eric Rundbaken, Commercial & Real Estate Litigation

Martin J. Devine Memorial Award

Awarded to a member of the non-legal staff who has shown distinguished performance, achievement, dedication and initiative during a Law Department career of at least 10 years.

- Yvette Garrett, Tort

The Edith Spivack Special Recognition Awards

Named in honor of Edith Spivack, who served a 70-year career at the Law Department. This award is given to non-managerial attorneys with more than five years of service, for specific outstanding achievements as well as overall dedication and superior performance.

- Richard Costa, Affirmative Litigation
- Sosimo Fabian, Tort
- Isabel Galis-Menendez, Economic Development
- Daniel Greene, Environmental Law
- Jim Meece, Library
- Caryn Rosencrantz, Special Federal Litigation
- Nancy Savasta, Tort
- Emily Sweet, General Litigation

Law Department Achievement Awards

Presented to select members of the full-time non-legal staff for specific achievements during the past year, as well as for overall dedication and superior performance.

- Jerry Bradshaw, Operations
- Errol Carrington, Operations
- Cassandra Dodson, Administration
- Irene Dukorsky, Workers' Compensation
- Connie Etheridge, Tort
- Sonia Segarra, Tort

Legal Assistant Achievement Awards

Awarded to Paralegals, Claims Specialists, Student Legal Specialists or Senior Student Legal Specialists with at least one year of service to the Law Department who have demonstrated outstanding performance and achievement during the past year.

- James Allen, Family Court
- Jennifer Chan, Family Court
- Joan Clarke-Harris, Tort
- Kisha Murdaugh, Tort
- Mary O'Rourke, Tax & Bankruptcy Litigation
- Miriam Ordonez, Special Federal Litigation

Legal Rookie of the Year Awards

Awarded to first-year attorneys who demonstrate outstanding performance, promise, dedication, solid work ethics, constructive attitude and willingness to contribute to building a positive work environment.

- Danielle D'Abate, Family Court
- Deanna DeFrancesco, Commercial & Real Estate Litigation
- Janeen Hayat, Legal Counsel
- Jay Kim, Tort
- Max McCann, Special Federal Litigation
- Melinda Skinner-Cifuentes, Family Court
- Keegan Staker, Tort
- Alicia Welch, Labor & Employment Law
- Jessica Wisniewski, Tort
- Joshua Wolf, Tax & Bankruptcy Litigation

Legal Assistant Rookie of the Year Awards

Awarded to Paralegals, Claims Specialists, Student Legal Specialists or Senior Student Legal Specialists who began their Law Department career between July 2007 and June 2008 and who show promise for the future and have demonstrated exceptional dedication to their work.

- Cassandra Benoit, Tax & Bankruptcy Litigation
- Maxeen Drummond-Douglas, Tort
- d.V. Majorhazell, Tort
- Tasian Mohan, Tort
- Millicent Nicholas, Tort
- Susan Rogers, Administrative Law
- Winnifred Simpson Ugbekile, Special Federal Litigation

Support Rookie of the Year Awards

Presented to support employees who demonstrate outstanding performance, promise, dedication, solid work ethics, constructive attitude and willingness to contribute to building a positive work environment.

- Gabriella Padilla, Operations
- Liz Thomas, Media

Pro Bono Award

Given to an attorney who has demonstrated distinction by providing extraordinary legal pro bono services during the past year.

- Johana Castro, Special Federal Litigation

Community Service Award

Given to a non-legal member of the Law Department's support staff who has shown distinction through his or her participation in providing volunteer services to not-for-profit or community organizations during the past year.

- Margaret Nelson, Family Court

Jane M. Bolin Diversity Leadership Award

Named in honor of Jane Bolin, the first African-American woman to serve as an assistant Corporation Counsel and later the first African-American jurist in the United States. Recognizes and celebrates the outstanding contributions and significant impact by an exceptional member of the Law Department in promoting and advocating the office's diversity goals.

- Muriel Goode-Trufant, Special Federal Litigation

Dorothy Marie Miner Award for Outstanding Service as Counsel to an Agency

Presented to an attorney with at least three years of legal service to an agency other than the Law Department.

- Elizabeth Fine, General Counsel, City Council

New York City Affairs Committee Awards

Presented by the New York City Affairs Committee of the Bar Association of the City of New York to Assistant Corporation Counsels who have demonstrated outstanding promise, ability and achievement in public service law.

- Amrita Barth, Contracts & Real Estate
- Danielle Boccio, Family Court
- Ivan Mendez, Jr., Labor & Employment Law
- Siobhan O'Grady, Family Court

- Andrew Potak, Tort
- Eric Sugar, Tort

DOITT Excellence in IT Support and Service Award

This Award is presented by the New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications in recognition of operations services of such high quality that problems never arise, or are quickly and effectively handled.

- Kevin Ellis, Information Technology

New York County Lawyers Assoc's Public Service Award

This prestigious award is in recognition of distinguished service as a public sector attorney.

- Rita Dumain, Tax & Bankruptcy

Association of Arbitrators, Small Claims Part's Arbitrator of the Year Award

This award – one of six annually – recognizes excellence in arbitration, with just one winner per county. Volunteer arbitrators play a crucial role in assisting judges with the caseload handled by New York State's Small Claims Court.

- Sheila Rossi, Tort, Special Litigation Unit

International Municipal Lawyers Association Award

This award was given in recognition of its recipient's outstanding work in submitting an amicus brief on behalf of the City in support of the City of San Francisco's ordinance mandating calorie labeling information in restaurants.

- Fay Ng, Appeals

Military Service Recognition

This award recognizes the personal sacrifice involved in serving our country. The recipient is a reservist under operation "Enduring Freedom."

- Ramon Barreiro, Labor & Employment

Longevity Awards

We applaud the following staff who have been with the Law Department 40 years:

- Pauline Jones

We applaud the following staff who have been with the Law Department 35 years:

- Annette Haig
- Robert Katz
- Isaac Klepfish
- Juan Mora
- Larry Sonnenshein
- Gabriel Taussig

We applaud the following staff who have been with the Law Department 30 years:

- Soraya Bonit

- Malcolm Wilson Engoron
- Bernard Godlewicz
- Edward Francis Hart
- Derek Ishmael
- Vivian Jones
- Ilene Kass
- Fay Leoussis
- Barbara McLean
- Rashmika Patel
- Diana Thillet

We applaud the following staff who have been with the Law Department for 25 years:

- June Buch
- Andrea Cohen
- Oretha Farrow
- Nancy Goldbach
- Kristin Helmers
- Ellen Lombardi
- Armando Mantilla
- Naomi McQueen
- Elizabeth Natrella
- Jonathan Pines
- Yolanda Rivera
- Maude Ann Rodrigues
- Ellin Rothstein
- Anita Siegel
- Michael Wald
- Leonard Wasserman
- Virginia Waters

Editor's Notes:

- *Winners of our Division Chief Awards can be obtained by calling the Media Office at (212) 788-0400 or e-mailing media@law.nyc.gov.*

The New York City Law Department is one of the oldest, largest and most dynamic law offices in the world, ranking among the top three largest law offices in New York City and the top three largest public law offices in the country. Tracing its roots back to the 1600's, the Department has an active caseload of 90,000 matters and transactions in 17 legal divisions. The Corporation Counsel heads the Law Department and acts as legal counsel for the Mayor, elected officials, the City and all its agencies. The Department's 690 attorneys represent the City on a vast array of civil litigation, legislative and legal issues and in the criminal prosecution of juveniles. For more information, please visit nyc.gov/law.

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