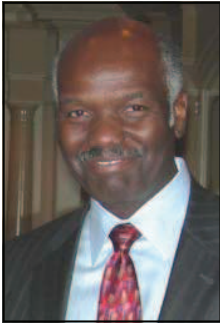


THE MIDDLESEX ADVOCATE

THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER
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Hon. Travis Francis, AJSC

March Awards Dinner to Honor Bar Members for Outstanding Service to the Profession

On Wednesday, March 18th, the Bar Association will hold a special Awards Dinner to honor seven attorneys for their outstanding contributions to the profession. The dinner will be held at The Pines Manor in Edison, beginning at 6:00 p.m. The guest speaker will be Hon. Travis L. Francis, AJSC.

The purpose of the practice area awards is to recognize attorneys practicing in Middlesex County and adjacent municipalities who devote a significant portion of their work to their respective specialty areas and exhibit one or more of the following: leadership in the potential candidate's field of practice; significant, tangible contributions to the Bar, such as participation in educational panels, Bar committees, etc, pertaining to non-litigation issues; significant, tangible contributions to the community and/or charitable endeavors; a record promoting participation and involvement in the MCBA and collegiality within the Association; and a reputation for personal and professional integrity.

The purpose of the Young Lawyer of the Year Award is to recognize attorneys who meet one or more of the following conditions: devote substantial time and energy to community-oriented activities such as *pro bono* work, government service, charity involvement or other public service; dedicate considerable volunteer time to bar activities at the county or state level, including specialty and minority bars; and/or have received professional recognition through publications, excellence in a particular area of law, a significant verdict or law-changing appellate decision, or other such professional achievement.

The purpose of the *Pro Bono* Award is to recognize attorneys who have devoted substantial time and effort doing *pro bono* work through the Central Jersey Legal Services Corporation.

This year's awards will be presented to:



Civil Practice Award
 Jack Kane, Esq.



Municipal Practice Award
 Peter Hendricks, Esq.



Young Lawyer Award
 Hany Mawla, Esq.



Pro Bono Award
 Brenda Vallecilla, Esq.



Non-Litigation Award
 Robert Chalfin, Esq.



Criminal Trial Practice Award
 Joseph Benedict, Esq.



Criminal Trial Practice Award
 Judson Hamlin, Esq.

Criminal Trial Practice Award - Judson H. Hamlin

Jud has been an Assistant Prosecutor since January, 1998. After assignments in the Juvenile, Grand Jury and Trial sections, he was promoted to Team Leader and finally Zone Prosecutor. As part of his continuing assignment to the Zone, he was also assigned to the office's Narcotics Task Force. Since December 2007, he has been the Unit Chief of that unit and is responsible for the prosecution of narcotics, weapons and gang-related offenses arising from that unit's investigative arm. He has also prosecuted several homicides and serial burglary cases.

Prior to joining the MCPO, Hamlin was an Associate with the firm of Golden Rothschild Spagnola and Lundell, located in Bridgewater. Additionally, he was employed as a law clerk at Hoagland Longo Moran Dunst & Doukas of New Brunswick prior to graduating from law school.

(See Awards . . . continued on page 6)

Upcoming Events

Family Law Section Dinner Meeting, The Pines Manor, Edison
 Monday, March 9th

Annual Practice Area Awards Dinner, The Pines Manor, Edison
 Wednesday, March 18th (see page 5 for details)

Annual Beefsteak Dinner, East Brunswick Elks Lodge
 Wednesday, April 22nd (see page 13 for details)

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(Awards, continued from page 1)

He is a 1996 *cum laude* graduate of New York Law School and received his undergraduate degree in 1990 from the University of Richmond, with majors in History and Political Science. He also is a graduate of Rutgers Preparatory School.

Jud has been active in the MCBA since his time with the Hoagland firm. From 2001 to 2007 he was a Board Trustee and currently serves on the Nominating Committee. He has served as an instructor for Criminal Practice seminars and as a Judge in the MCBF Mock Trial Competition.

Criminal Trial Practice Award - Joseph J. Benedict

Joe is a criminal trial attorney who captures the most honorable and admirable qualities of the profession. He possesses inflexible integrity, unflinching honesty and an undying dedication to all that still makes the practice of law a noble profession.

He is a certified criminal trial attorney and on numerous occasions has been voted by his peers as a Super Lawyer. Joe also appears in Best Lawyers in America and, as voted by others in the profession, has the highest rating in Martindale Hubbell.

Joe is a lecturer for NJ ICLE and for the Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. He has served on the Assignment Judge's Criminal Law Committee for over twenty-one years. He is Chair of the Criminal Practice Committee of the Middlesex County Bar Association. In that position, he is instrumental in developing and coordinating instructional programs for young lawyers and those new to the area of criminal law.

Joe is a graduate of Fordham College, received his law degree from Rutgers University School of Law-Camden and was admitted the New Jersey Bar in 1970.

He has served as a member and Chair of the District VIII Ethics Committee; as a crusade chairman for the American Cancer Society; and as a founding member and first president of the South Brunswick Chamber of Commerce.

Pro Bono Award - Brenda Vallecilla

Brenda is a sole practitioner in South Plainfield. She is a graduate of Seton Hall University, where she attended as a Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholar. She moved to New Brunswick and pursued a career in Sales and Marketing with Xerox and Aetna Health Insurance. Five years later she attended Rutgers University School of Law-Camden and upon graduation became an associate of the now defunct Tomar, Simonoff, Adourian, O'Brien, Graziano *et al.* in Haddonfield and later becoming an associate with the criminal defense firm of Baker and Kahn in Voorhees.

Her career took an interesting twist in the late 90's when she took on a sales and marketing position with the concert production company now known as Live Nation.

Brenda opened her own office close to home and has a general practice in South Plainfield where she primarily counsels the communities of South Plainfield, Plainfield, Dunellen, Middlesex and North Plainfield, towns that are in close proximity but in three different counties. Her practice, therefore, takes her to Middlesex, Somerset and Union Counties. Her primary focus areas include family law, real estate transactions -- residential and commercial, criminal law, municipal court and personal injury. She recently completed the Foreclosure Mediation program conducted by the Administrative Office of the Courts and also became a Rule 1:40 Civil Mediator.

Growing up in New York City, Brenda has always had a keen awareness of the needs of those less fortunate and has always dedi-

cated some of her time to the community. As a volunteer attorney for Legal Services of New Jersey she has an opportunity to help others who otherwise would not have access to legal services.

Civil Trial Practice Award - John J. Kane

Jack is a partner with Martin Kane & Kuper in East Brunswick, New Jersey. He is a trial attorney concentrating his practice in civil litigation matters.

Jack graduated *summa cum laude* from Trenton State College, where he was a member of the Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society. He received his legal education at the Rutgers University School of Law in Newark, and received his Juris Doctor degree in 1984. While at Rutgers, Jack served as Associate Editor of the Rutgers Computer and Technology Law Journal and was a member of the Phi Alpha Delta Legal Fraternity. Jack was admitted to the New Jersey bar in 1984, the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in 1989 and the United States Supreme Court in 2003.

Jack was certified by the Supreme Court of NJ as a Certified Civil Trial Attorney in 1993. He has also been certified by the National Board of Trial Advocacy and the American Board of Trial Advocates as a Civil Trial Specialist. He is a member of the New Jersey State Bar Association, the Middlesex County Bar Association and the Middlesex County Trial Lawyers Association. He is also past president of the Middlesex County Trial Lawyers Association and a standing member of the Middlesex County Assignment Judge's Civil Trial Bar Committee. Annually since May of 2005, Jack has been identified by New Jersey Monthly magazine as being among a select group of New Jersey "Super Lawyers".

Municipal Court Practice Award - Peter J. Hendricks

Peter received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Rutgers University in 1977 and his Juris Doctorate degree from Seton Hall University in 1986. In 1987 he was admitted to the bar in New Jersey and in the US District Court, District of New Jersey. He is a member of the Middlesex County, New Jersey State and American Bar Associations as well as the Association of Trial Lawyers of America-NJ (now the New Jersey Association for Justice), the Middlesex County Trial Lawyers Association and the New Brunswick Bar Association, where he served as President from 1994-95.

In addition, Peter is a member of the MCBA's Arbitrator Selection Committee and the District VIII (Middlesex County) Ethics Committee where he served as Chairman from 1998-99. He is also an arbitrator for the Middlesex County Arbitration Program. In 2003, he was appointed as a member of the Municipal Court Practice Committee by the Administrative Office of the Courts of NJ..

Young Lawyer Award - Hany Mawla

Hany is a partner in the Litigation Department at Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis LLP and a member of the Family Law Practice Group. He focuses his practice on the litigation of matrimonial, non-matrimonial and other complex family law related matters.

In 2008, Hany was appointed by Governor Jon S. Corzine as the founding Chair of the New Jersey Arab-American Heritage Commission. In 2006, the Governor also appointed him as a Commissioner to the New Jersey Commission on Civil Rights, Department of Law and Public Safety. He is a member of the New Jersey Supreme Court Committee on Minority Concerns and is a member of the faculties of both the Rutgers University Center for Middle

(See Awards . . . continued on page 8)