

OACTA AWARDS:

Not all awards will be distributed annually. Members are welcome to provide nominations to the OACTA Awards Committee who will make recommendations to the OACTA Board of Trustees. OACTA Awards will be presented at the OACTA Annual Meeting held in November.

Excellence in Advocacy Award

The "Excellence in Advocacy Award" is designed to honor lawyers who have distinguished themselves over a number of years by their professionalism, intelligence, creativity, judgment, personality, sensitivity, civility, advocacy skills, community involvement, efforts to educate newer attorneys, and effective representation of their clients both in and outside of the courtroom. It also recognizes contributions beyond their normal roles as an advocate.

This honor may be made to a present and/or former practicing attorney who has served as a pillar of the bar. The Excellence in Advocacy Award will be presented to the recipient or a member of the recipient's family, or other representative (if the recipient is deceased or cannot otherwise be in attendance) at the OACTA Annual Meeting.

Award criteria: A reputation for representing clients effectively; Demonstrated advocacy skills; A reputation for professionalism and civility; Good judgment in the preparation of trial matters and appeals; Civic, community and bar activities. Candidates must have practiced law for at least 25 years (or in the case of present or past member of the judiciary, at least 15 years) and meet (or have met during the time practiced) OACTA eligibility requirements. It is not necessary that the nominee be currently living and/or practicing law or be a member of OACTA.

PAST RECIPIENTS:

2024 - Neil F. Freund, Esq.
2023 - Jeffrey W. Hutson, Esq.
2022 – Cormac DeLaney, Esq.
2021 – Nicholas E. Subashi, Esq.
2019 – James L. McCrystal, Jr., Esq.
2018 - Frederick Hunker, JD, CPCU
2017 - Lawrence A. Sutter, Esq. (posthumously)
2016 – David W. Peck, Esq.
2015 – Carolyn A. Taggart, Esq.
2014 – James R. Gallagher, Esq.
2013 – Irene Keyse Walker, Esq.
2012 – W. Roger Fry, Esq.
2011 – Rick E. Marsh, Esq.
2010 – David C. Greer, Esq.
2009 - Ronald A. Rispo, Esq.

Respected Advocate Award

The award is given to a member of the plaintiffs bar for the purpose of recognizing and honoring the individual's history of effective representation of clients and adherence to the highest standards of professionalism and ethics. In so doing, we promote mutual respect and civility.

Award criteria: A history of success in civil litigation matters; Unfailing adherence to the highest standards of ethics and professionalism in dealing with the courts, clients and all counsel; The respect and admiration of counsel on the opposing side of the bar.

PAST RECIPIENTS:

2024 - D. Arthur Rabourn, Esq.
2023 - Craig P. Scott, Esq.
2022 – K. James Sullivan, Esq.
2021 – Robert J. Wagoner, Esq.
2019 – Robert P. Rutter, Esq.

2018 - Eleana Drakatos, Esq.

2017 - James (Jay) M. Kelley III, Esq.

2016 – Steven P. Collier, Esq.
2015 – Mark Kitrick, Esq.
2014 – John D. Holschuh, Jr., Esq.
2013 - Eric Kennedy, Esq.
2012 – Patrick W. Allen, Esq.
2011 – John M. Gonzales, Esq.
2010 – Nicholas E. Bunch, Esq.
2009 - Paul O. Scott, Esq.
2005 – Frank A. Ray, Esq. (Professionalism in Civil Law Award recipient)

Outstanding Advocacy Award

This award will recognize lawyers who in the Committee's judgment distinguished themselves during the past year by outstanding advocacy in the trial or appellate courtroom.

PAST RECIPIENTS:

2023 - David C. Comstock, Jr., Esq.
2020 – Richard M. Garner, Esq.
2019 – Benjamin C. Sassé, Esq.
2017 – Timothy J. Fitzgerald, Esq. & Michael M. Neltner, Esq.
2014 – David S. Lockemeyer, Esq.
2013 – Richard M. Garner, Esq.

Outstanding Young Lawyer Award

This award will recognize contributions to the profession by young lawyers who have been practicing law for ten years or less.

PAST RECIPIENTS:

2024 - Elisabeth C. Arko, Esq.
2023 - Phillip M. Samowki, Esq.
2022 – Thomas N. Spyker, Esq.
2021 – Adelia A. Mohan, Esq.
2020 – Christopher F. Mars, Esq.
2019 – Zachary B. Pyers, Esq.
2018 - David J. Oberly, Esq.
2017 - Melanie Irvin, Esq.
2016 – Lori E. Thomson, Esq.
2015 – Natalie M. Wais, Esq.
2012 – Lauren K. Epperley, Esq.
2011 – Jill K. Mercer, Esq.
2010 – Jonathon L. Beck, Esq.
2004 – Crystal Richie, Esq.

Nominations will occur in alternating years for the following two awards:

A. Distinguished Contributions to the Community Award

Some of our members do wonderful things outside the practice of law, with charitable groups and volunteer efforts to serve the community. This award recognizes members' interests outside of the law and the quality of their contribution to the community.

PAST RECIPIENTS:

2024 - Kurt D. Anderson, Esq.
2022 – Hilary S. Taylor, Esq. (posthumously)
2016 – Mark F. McCarthy, Esq.
2014 – Tabitha Justice, Esq.
2013 – Carolyn A. Taggart
2012 – Thomas M. Glassman, Esq.

2011 – Stephanie D. Adams, Esq.
2009 - Carter E. Strang, Esq.

B. Public Service Award

From time to time OACTA may wish to recognize certain public officials and members of the news media for their contributions to civil justice.

PAST RECIPIENTS:

2023 - Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy
2021 – Director Judith French
2017 - Judge Michael P. Donnelly
2015 – Judge Lisa Sadler
2014 – Chief Justice Maureen O’Connor
2013 - Evelyn Lundberg Stratton
2005 - Hon. Michael H. Watson
2005 – Justice Judith A. Lanzinger
2005 – Hon. Patrick J. Tiberi
2004 – Representative Bill Seitz
2004 – Senator Steve Austria

Nominations will occur in alternating years for the following two awards:

A. Distinguished Contributions to the Profession Award

This award will recognize senior practitioners for their long-standing contributions to the profession.

PAST RECIPIENTS:

2023 - W. Charles Curley, Esq.
2021 – James L. Mann, Esq.
2019 – Gretchen Koehler Mote, Esq.
2017 - Terrance M. Miller, Esq.
2015 – Peter J. Hersha, Esq.
2014 – Timothy D. Johnson, Esq.
2013 - Stephen V. Freeze, Esq.
2012 – William M. Cussen, Esq.
2011 – Thomas E. Boyle, Esq.
2010 – James L. O’Connell, Esq.
2009 – Henry A. Hentemann, Esq.

B. Lifetime Achievement Award

From time to time OACTA may wish to recognize members for their contributions to the association and the profession, over a lifetime.

PAST RECIPIENTS:

2024 - Thomas P. Erven, Esq.
2022 – Mark F. McCarthy, Esq.
2020 - Stephen V. Freeze, Esq.
2018 - Steven T. Sloan, Esq.
2016 – James S. Oliphant, Esq.
2015 – Neil F. Freund, Esq.
2014 – Charles E. West, Esq.
2013 – Ralph F. Dublikar, Esq.
2011 – John B. Robertson, Esq.
2001 – Robert A. Manning, Esq.
1998 - Eugene F. Tierney, Esq.

The following awards will be determined by the OACTA officers:

A. Frank Seth Hurd Member of the Year Award

This award will recognize a member whose commitment to OACTA is truly distinguished.

PAST RECIPIENTS:

2024 - Benjamin C. Sassé, Esq.
2023 - Brigid E. Heid, Esq.
2022 – Adelia A. Mohan, Esq.
2021 – Joseph T. Mordino, Esq.
2020 – Jamey T. Pregon, Esq.
2019 – Gary L. Grubler, Esq.
2018 - David W. Orlandini, Esq.
2017 - Anne Marie Sferra, Esq.
2016 – Gregory E. O'Brien, Esq.
2015 – Michael M. Neltner, Esq.
2014 – Hilary S. Taylor, Esq.
2013 – James N. Kline, Esq.
2012 – Jamey T. Pregon, Esq.
2011 – James L. McCrystal, Jr., Esq.
2010 – Lynnette Dinkler, Esq.
2009 – Terrence Kenneally, Esq.
2002 – John G. Farnan, Esq.
2001 – Scott A. Gilliam, Esq.
2000 – Mark F. McCarthy, Esq.
1999 – James R. Gallagher, Esq.
1997 – James L. McCrystal, Jr., Esq.

B. OACTA Committee Chair of the Year Award

This award will recognize a lawyer who has contributed greatly to OACTA in their role as a Committee Chair. The OACTA officers will select this recipient.

PAST RECIPIENTS:

2024 - David W. Peck, Esq.
2023 - Michael M. Neltner, Esq.
2022 – Gretchen Koehler Mote, Esq. and Nicole A. Mitchell, Esq.
2021 – Michelle L. Burden, Esq.
2020 - Brigid E. Heid, Esq.
2019 – Christopher F. Mars, Esq.
2018 - Charles R. Wendland
2017 - Michael M. Neltner, Esq.
2016 – T. Andrew Vollmar, Esq.
2015 – Lynn V. Luther, Esq.
2014 – Benjamin C. Sassé, Esq. / Jennifer K. Nordstrom, Esq.
2013 – John J. Garvey, III, Esq.
2012 – Natalie M. E. Wais, Esq.
2011 – David W. Peck, Esq.
2010 – Jamey T. Pregon, Esq.
2009 – Kurt A. Anderson, Esq.
2008 – Brian D. Kerns, Esq.