

# MBA NEWS



20 West Street, Boston, MA 02111-1204 • [communications@massbar.org](mailto:communications@massbar.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Feb. 15, 2008

**CONTACT:**

Jennifer Rosinski (617) 338-0675

Tricia M. Oliver (617) 338-0677

**MASSACHUSETTS BAR ASSOCIATION DEDICATES ACCESS TO JUSTICE AWARDS LUNCHEON TO THE LATE NANCY KING FORMER SOUTH MIDDLESEX LEGAL SERVICES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO RECEIVE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD POSTHUMOUSLY**

BOSTON, Mass.—The Massachusetts Bar Association has dedicated its Access to Justice Awards Luncheon on March 6 to the late Nancy King, former executive director of South Middlesex Legal Services in Framingham. She will also receive the Lifetime Achievement Award posthumously.

“In Massachusetts, we are fortunate to have many attorneys who devote their skills and their hearts to legal services for the disadvantaged in our communities. Even among such amazing advocates, Nancy King was person whose rare dedication and unique skills stood apart,” said Access to Justice Section Chair Ellen J. Zucker, a partner at Burns & Levinson LLP in Boston.

“We were fortunate to have her working among us for so many years, and her family’s loss is ours as well. She was an example to all of us and she will continue to hold a special place in people’s hearts. Naming this luncheon in her honor is just small token to show our very large appreciation for the profound impact she has had on our lives and our work,” Zucker added.

The Access to Justice Awards Luncheon will honor, in total, five attorneys and two firms for their extraordinary efforts in providing free legal services to the public.

The event is being held at the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum in Boston and will feature a keynote address from State Rep. Byron Rushing (D-Boston).

King, who lost her 20-year battle with breast cancer in December, spent 30 years at SMLS, which provides free civil legal aid to the low-income residents of 36 towns between Routes 128 and 495. After dramatic cutbacks in federal funding in the early 1980s, King lined up new funding sources for SMLS from foundation grants and private donations.

King earned a reputation as a tireless champion for providing legal services to those who need it most, a woman who fought valiantly for critical funding but in a cheerful, enthusiastic way that observers said was nearly impossible to resist. Her willingness to help out in whatever way was needed was renowned, as was her warm, personal style and sense of humor.

“This year’s ceremony is special because it pays special tribute to legal services luminary Nancy King,

who is greatly respected and admired for her role as a selfless advocate for the delivery of legal services to the poor,” MBA President David W. White Jr. said.

After graduating from Boston College Law School in 1972, King started her career as a legal aid attorney in Albuquerque, N.M., before returning to the Boston area and joining SMLS as a staff attorney in 1977. She was named executive director in 1979.

King’s honors include Boston College Law School’s David Nelson Award for Public Interest Law (1994) and the United Way of Tri-County’s “Women of Character Award” (2003). She served on the steering committees of the Neponset Valley and MetroWest Community Health Care Coalitions, was appointed by the Supreme Judicial Court as a commissioner of the Equal Justice Commission and became chair of the Children’s Law Support Project Advisory Committee at its inception in 1993. She also served on the boards of the MetroWest Boys and Girls Club and the South Middlesex Bar Association.

The MBA’s Access to Justice to Section nominates the candidates, who are then approved by the MBA House of Delegates.

“The Access to Justice Awards Luncheon highlights the true stars of the legal profession: lawyers who tackle often challenging cases for the public good without compensation. These honorees show us what it means to be a good attorney, and we should all strive to emulate them,” White said.

**The other award recipients are:**

- **Legal Services Award**, Faye Rachlin, Legal Assistance Corp., Worcester
- **Pro Bono Award for Law Firms**, Heisler, Feldman, McCormick and Garrow PC, Springfield; Nutter McClennen & Fish LLP, Boston
- **Pro Bono Publico Award**, Thomas A. Manning, Worcester
- **Defender Award**, Erica E. Cushna, CPCS, Springfield
- **Prosecutor Award**, J. Thomas Kirkman, District Attorney's Office, Barnstable

*Incorporated in 1911, the Massachusetts Bar Association is a non-profit organization that serves the legal profession and the public by promoting the administration of justice, legal education, professional excellence and respect for the law. The MBA represents a diverse group of attorneys, judges and legal professionals across the commonwealth.*