

MBA NEWS



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Byfield resident, former Appeals Court Chief Justice to receive award from the Massachusetts Bar Association

2008 Gala Dinner to be held at the John J. Moakley Courthouse in Boston Nov. 12;
Middlesex County Sheriff's Office attorney also to receive honor

BOSTON, Mass. — Byfield resident Christopher J. Armstrong, a former Appeals Court Chief Justice who oversaw the court's expansion, will receive the Chief Justice Edward F. Hennessey Award at the Massachusetts Bar Association's 2008 Gala Dinner on Wednesday, Nov. 12. The event will be held at the John J. Moakley Courthouse in Boston.

The Hennessey Award is given to federal or state judges within Massachusetts who have demonstrated extraordinary leadership and dedication to improving the administration of justice and upholding the highest traditions for public service. Also at the Gala Dinner, Middlesex County Sheriff's Office Inmate Legal Services Director Lee J. Gartenberg will receive the MBA Gold Medal Award. The presentation of these two awards is not routine annually, and were last given in 2006.

"Recipients Lee Gartenberg and Judge Christopher Armstrong were chosen in large part because they exemplify the timeless tenets of leadership in the law," MBA President Edward W. McIntyre said.

Armstrong was sworn in as one of the first justices of the newly established Massachusetts Appeals Court in 1972. He was appointed chief justice in 2000 and led an expansion of the Appeals Court bench from 14 to 25 justices. When Armstrong retired from the Appeals Court in 2006, he was the commonwealth's longest serving judge.

"I regard the news of this award as a tribute less to me personally than to the Appeals Court that I had the honor to serve," Armstrong said. "I am particularly honored to receive the Edward F. Hennessey Award, since I found him to be an exceptional SJC Chief Justice, as well as a comfortable and wise colleague with a wonderful sense of humor. Ed Hennessey was a lawyer's lawyer and judge's judge."

Prior to his appointment to Massachusetts Appeals Court, Armstrong served as an assistant attorney general as well as chief legal counsel to former Massachusetts Gov. Francis W. Sargent.

A keynote address about mindfulness in the law will be presented at the Gala Dinner by Leonard L. Riskin, the Chesterfield Smith Professor of Law at the University of Florida Levin College of Law.

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.