

MBA NEWS

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Worcester judge, two attorneys to be honored Thursday with MBA Centennial Award

BOSTON, Mass. — The Massachusetts Bar Association will Thursday present a Worcester judge and two attorneys – one posthumously – with the MBA Centennial Award, an honor created to celebrate local attorneys’ service to the profession and their community. The awards, presented at the DCU Center in Worcester as part of the MBA’s House of Delegates meeting, are three in a series bestowed throughout the MBA’s 100th anniversary commemoration.

“These honorees have given of themselves to both their profession and their communities,” MBA President Denise Squillante said. “They exemplify the spirit of public service on which the Massachusetts Bar Association was founded a century ago.”

Worcester Superior Court Judge Peter W. Agnes Jr., Worcester attorney James G. Reardon, who passed away in 1999; and Worcester attorney Shirley A. Doyle will be presented with the awards at a ceremony following the Jan. 20 MBA House of Delegates meeting at the DCU Center in Worcester.

Agnes is a member of the MBA’s Task Force on Peremptory Challenges, formed in the fall of 2009 to study the history of challenges in selecting juries and the implications of their use in the state courts. Appointed to the Superior Court in 2000, he previously served as a district court justice for ten years. Agnes is a member of the Supreme Judicial Court’s Access to Justice Commission, serves as the assistant editor of the Massachusetts Guide to Evidence and chaired the SJC’s Standing Committee on Dispute Resolution from 1994 to 1998. An adjunct professor at the Massachusetts School of Law, he is president of the Massachusetts Judges Conference.

Reardon, a long-time MBA member, was a beloved trial attorney who had a zeal for justice and was an intense advocate for his clients. A co-founder of the Massachusetts Academy of Trial Attorneys, he was bestowed the Courageous Advocacy award by the group a year after his death. Reardon practiced law for more than 40 years, and spent most of that time at Reardon & Reardon with his now-deceased brother Edward. The U.S. Army veteran served on the Massachusetts Judicial Council, Massachusetts Defenders Committee, the Joint Committee on the Bench and Bar, Committee for Public Counsel Services and the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

Doyle is a member of the MBA’s Crisis in Court Funding Task Force, which released a report last May detailing the human, everyday impacts of court budget cuts and called on the Legislature and governor

to restore adequate funding. A former president of the Worcester County Bar Association and a long-time active member of the MBA, she has run her own law office for two decades. Doyle is a board member of the Worcester chapter of Dress for Success, a member of the Worcester Academy Board of Trustees and an incorporator of the St. Agnes Guild Day Care Center. She is a former vice-chair and board member of the Board of Bar Overseers.

Throughout the state, the MBA's Centennial Awards have been and will continue to be given throughout 2011 to persons of extraordinary achievement (who may be a lawyer, law professor, judge, court administrator, legislator or other person with significant involvement in the legal system and/or the rights and responsibilities of individuals, corporations, partnerships, trusts and other civic bodies) who materially advanced the rule of law, enhanced the integrity of lawyers, judges or the legal profession, engaged or is engaging in important legal scholarship, or protected the democratic principles upon which our country is founded.

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.