



2016 Public Law Section Awards

On June 3, 2016, the Public Law Section presented its annual awards of excellence. The following articles are from presentation comments made at the awards ceremony or from nomination letters submitted on behalf of the recipient.

Rosalie E. Wahl Judicial Award of Excellence: Honorable Gregg E. Johnson



The Honorable Gregg Johnson

Comments from the awards presentation by the Hon. Diane Alshouse.

I nominated Retired Judge Gregg E. Johnson for the Rosalie Wahl Judicial Award of Excellence because he has dedicated his life to serving the public and the judiciary in Ramsey County from 1992-2015. Judge Johnson has led me in my legal career since I met him in 1985 at the Ramsey County Public Defender's Office. I took over his misdemeanor files, then his felony files when he was appointed to the bench. Then in 2005, I followed him onto the bench. He has accused me of being his stalker, but only with much humor.

Judge Johnson has served continuously on various boards and committees in an effort to improve our legal system, while serving the public of Ramsey County. His dedication and drive to promote fairness and accessibility in the courts was based on his strong belief in justice and protecting the constitutional rights of all citizens. He has been a mentor for hundreds of young attorneys, including myself. He was a model of fairness and compassion while fulfilling his duties as a trial judge. He also served as Chief Judge of the Second Judicial District from 2004-2008 and Assistant Chief Judge from 2002-2004.

Judge Johnson could not be here today but asked me to read the following acceptance speech on his behalf:

I have been honored and fortunate to have been able to spend my career in public service. I had the privilege of working for ten years at the Metropolitan Council. Ten years for the Ramsey

County Public Defender's Office and 22 years as a District Court Judge. My goal while in college, graduate school and law school was to pursue opportunities in public service. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to achieve this goal. I never imagined that I would be receiving such an incredible honor as this. In looking back at my years of public service, I think the project that gives me the greatest satisfaction is the establishment of the Ramsey County District Court's Mental Health Court. Helping mentally ill people address the variety of issues they face while entangled in the criminal justice system was a rewarding experience. I learned much about the challenges the mentally ill face and I believe that I became a better judge as a result. I'm sorry that I cannot be there today to accept this fabulous award, but I'm instead engaged in my public service quest by serving as a member of a Supreme Court Appeal Panel in Stillwater. I want to thank Judge Alshouse for accepting this award for me and to thank the Bar Association for this honor.



Award presented to Judge Johnson by the Hon. Diane Alshouse.

Previous Recipients of the Rosalie E. Wahl Judicial Award of Excellence

- 2015 *Hon. Waldemar B. Senyk*
- 2014 *Hon. Thomas Kalitowski*
- 2013 *Hon. J. Thomas Mott*
- 2012 *Hon. Kathleen Gearin*
- 2011 *Hon. Harriet Lansing*
- 2010 *Hon. John Rodenberg*
- 2009 *Hon David S. Doty*
- 2008 *Hon. Russell A. Anderson*
- 2007 *Hon. John P. Smith*
- 2006 *Hon. Ann Montgomery*
- 2005 *Hon. Allan W. Klein*
- 2004 *Hon. John R. Tunheim*
- 2003 *Hon. Joanne Smith*
- 2002 *Hon. Renee L. Worke*
- 2001 *Hon. George A. Beck*
- 2000 *Hon. J. Earl Cudd*
- 1999 *Hon. Leslie May Metzen*
- 1998 *Hon Kenneth F. Fitzpatrick*
- 1997 *Hon. George H. Hoey*

Julius E. Gernes Prosecutor Award of Excellence: Raymond O. Cantu



Raymond O. Cantu

Comments from the nomination letter submitted by Mary Ellen Heng and Timothy Richards.

It is with a profound appreciation for his decades of service that we jointly submit the name of career municipal prosecutor Raymond O. Cantu for the 2016 Julius E. Gernes Prosecutor Award of Excellence. Few public servants are as well-known and as highly respected throughout the Hennepin County judicial system as Mr. Cantu is for his many contributions toward the furtherance of justice and his dedication to the rehabilitation of chronic offenders in positions of need.

For the past 21 years, Mr. Cantu has left his imprint on the Minneapolis City Attorney's Office in ways that will resonate long after his departure. He is a perennial mentor for new lawyers, a trusted prosecutor in cases of significant community interest, and an effective advocate for the rehabilitation of career offenders.

Mr. Cantu has long been a specialist in the prosecution of repeat livability offenders. For many years he has served as a leader on a Minneapolis "special prosecution" team whose mission has been to innovate ways to discourage chronic low-level offenders not only by traditional means but also through the implementation of alternative techniques and strategies. More recently, over the past four years, Mr. Cantu has expertly leveraged his experience as a prosecutor, his many ties with local stakeholders, and his passion for replacing incarceration with rehabilitation to transform two special Minneapolis programs into models for urban areas across the nation.

One of these programs, called the "Downtown 100," brings together advocates, the courts and area social service providers to unite up to 100 chronic downtown-area offenders with those services that address the underlying causes of their criminal behavior. Mr. Cantu has negotiated and arranged for the provision of services to hundreds of chronic offenders who have been the focus of this program. His efforts have secured housing for dozens of homeless offenders as well as drug, alcohol and mental health treatment for many other offenders whose debilitating conditions have contributed to their criminal behaviors. Moreover, he closely monitors their progress on probation and adjusts services or makes appropriate referrals to specialty courts whenever an offender's rehabilitation strays off course.

Through repeated contacts and a careful study of each chronic offender's individual circumstances, Mr. Cantu gets to know their patterns of behavior and service needs. He attends regular strategy meetings with social service providers and law enforcement officers to create customized service plans that target each individual's primary issues. His achievement in this

area is truly unparalleled as he has succeeded in reducing the recidivism rate among those offenders with whom he has worked by an overall 70%.

Mr. Cantu has also lead the development and implementation of a related initiative called “Downtown 100: Focus 18-24,” which provides specialized services to the youngest adult offenders in an effort to curb their behaviors early by addressing their underlying issues before they become chronic adult offenders. Mr. Cantu’s work with these two programs has led to national recognition by the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and has won awards from among others, the Humphrey Institute of Public Policy.

Raymond Cantu has prosecuted tens of thousands of offenders in the City of Minneapolis throughout his career. His experience, leadership and innovation have significantly contributed not only to his own success but also to the successes of many of those who have learned from him over the years, including both of the undersigned attorneys. Moreover, he has literally changed the Minneapolis paradigm for responding to chronic livability offenders.



Award presented to Ray Cantu by Mary Ellen Heng.

Previous Recipients of the Julius E. Gernes Prosecutor Award of Excellence

- 2015 *Karen Mara*
- 2014 *G. Paul Beaumaster*
- 2013 *William Klumpp, Jr.*
- 2012 *Eric Leonard*
- 2011 *Mark S. Rubin*
- 2010 *Minneapolis City Attorney’s Office Domestic Assault Team*
- 2009 *Gail Baez*
- 2008 *Jeffrey R. Edblad*
- 2007 *Susan E. Gaertner*
- 2006 *Cary William Schmies*
- 2005 *Steve Redding*
- 2004 *Kathryn A. Santelmann*
- 2003 *Larry M. Collins*
- 2002 *Al Zdrzil*
- 2001 *Alan J. Harris*
- 1999 *James C. Backstrom*
- 1998 *Dianne A. Ward*
- 1997 *John R. Speakman*
- 1996 *Conrad I. Freeberg*

William E. McGee Public Defender Award of Excellence: Jeanette Boerner



Jeanette Boerner

Comments from the nomination letter submitted by the Hon. Francis Connolly.

I hereby nominate Jeanette Boerner for the William E. McGee Public Defender Award of Excellence. Jeanette currently serves as the First Assistant Hennepin County Public Defender.

I have known Jeanette since 1998. At the time I was a Hennepin County District Court Judge. In district court, Jeanette appeared in front of me on an almost daily basis in Domestic Violence Court, the Felony Trial Calendar and the In-custody Misdemeanor Arraignment Calendar. She also argued many motions in front of me. Jeanette Boerner is quite frankly one of the finest attorneys in our state. She is intelligent, resourceful, articulate, and totally dedicated to her clients. She is the consummate professional.

Jeanette works tirelessly and zealously for her clients. It is a true calling for her and she does an outstanding job. She is a leader and has risen from the ranks of the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office from a line attorney in the early 1990's to now being the chief deputy at that office. She has always been responsible for training new public defenders and stands as a role model for all public defenders. Since leaving the district court bench, I have often asked Jeanette to meet with the new Hennepin County Judges in order to give them an orientation on what it means to be a good judge. She always volunteers her time to do this and I believe she has made our judges better because she has explained to them the unique needs of her clients.

In short, Jeanette Boerner has worked tirelessly and selflessly for justice since graduating from law school. She has been a public defender her entire career.



Award presented to Jeanette Boerner by the Hon. Francis Connolly.

William E. McGee Public Defender Award of Excellence

2014 *William M. Ward*
2013 *Michael F. Cromett*
2012 *Connie Iversen and Patrick Valentini*
2011 *Daniel Sadowski*
2010 *Patrick Kittridge*
2009 *Lisa Kristine McNaughton*
2008 *F. Richard Gallo, Jr.*
2007 *Noreen C. Phillips*
2006 *Daniel M. Scott*
2005 *Brad Colbert*
2004 *Paul G. Thompson*
2003 *Richard G. Carlson*
2002 *Ronald Greenley*
2001 *Cynthia T. Daley*
2000 *Larry Hammerling*
1999 *Manley Zimmerman*
1998 *Harry Newby, Jr.*
1997 *Candace Rasmussen*
1996 *Fred Friedman*

**Public Attorney Award of Excellence – Attorney Working in a Government Agency:
Gregory N. Gray**



Gregory N. Gray

Comments from the nomination letter submitted by Amy Akbay.

I have known Greg since March of 2012 as my direct supervisor. Greg has been employed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) as its Chief Compliance Officer since March 2011, and, prior to that, in other governmental and public service capacities, such as Minnesota State Representative for District 58B, Executive Director for the Legislative Commission to End Poverty by 2020, and as the MSBA Director of Member Services. Greg has 16 years of public service, and his service represents a continuum of his community leadership and engagement extending over many more years.

As a dedicated public servant, Greg has made significant contributions that aid in the operation of government and has demonstrated extraordinary leadership and initiative in the performance of his duties. For the last five years, in his role as the DHS Chief Compliance Officer and member of the DHS Senior Management Team, he has overseen critical, complex, and high-profile legal, compliance, ethics, policy, management, contracting, and audit operations for DHS.

Through developing and implementing enhanced strategies, policies, and procedures, Greg has strengthened the culture of compliance within DHS and beyond, including through interactions with external partners, such as other state agencies, state offices, the legislature, counties, tribes, providers, and the public.

Of note, Greg has served in a key leadership role, making significant contributions over the past five years toward the creation and implementation of Minnesota's Olmstead Plan, a plan that serves to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to live, work, and enjoy life, in the most integrated setting according to their choices and needs. He has also been closely involved with the creation and recent adoption of the Positive Supports Rule, which requires providers subject to the rule to use positive supports, and reduce and eliminate the use of seclusion and restraint for person with disabilities.

Prior to joining DHS, by an overwhelming margin, Greg was elected and served four years as a Minnesota State Representative for District 58B, an area that includes the Near Northside and a portion of downtown Minneapolis. As a State Representative for this area, known at the time as having one of the lowest per capita incomes, Greg fought hard to bring jobs, affordable housing, and economic and physical security to his constituents. He also served as a prominent member of the Education Policy, Jobs and Economic Development, Redistricting, Family and Early Childhood Education, and Finance Committees. He was recognized for this work and made the 1999 "Years Top Legislators" list, by the *Minnesota Law & Politics* magazine.

Throughout the years, Greg has shown exceptional public service leadership in both paid professional and volunteer capacities. His passion and dedication for public service and bettering his community comes through in the breadth and scope of his engagement in the community. He has served on the boards of several government and community organizations, including the City of Minneapolis Capital Long-range Improvements Committee, United Way Allocations Committee, Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, Red Cross Blood Services, and YMCA Black Achievers, to name a few. He has also served on the Minneapolis Library Board as Trustee and President.

In closing, Greg is of the highest moral character and has the utmost respect of his colleagues at DHS and across state government. His leadership and expertise is frequently sought for new legal and compliance initiatives. He is a resource for all of DHS and, over the past five years, he has been critical in shaping this agency and key initiatives to better serve the people of Minnesota.

He is not only an attorney with a remarkable record of government leadership and dedication to public service and the profession; he is a distinguished colleague and a dear friend.



Award presented to Greg Gray by Amy Akbay.

Previous Recipients of the Public Attorney Award of Excellence: Attorney Working in a Government Agency

2015 *Elizabeth Hayes & Patricia Winget*
2014 *Katherine A. Engler*
2013 *Ann Stiehm Ahlstrom*
2011 *Debra Swaden*
2009 *Stephen A. Shakman*
2008 *Virginia Rae Bly*
2007 *Allen E. Giles*
2006 *Dennis Wade Erickson*
2005 *Gail M. Olson*
2004 *Kenneth A. Nickolai*
2003 *Richard A. Wexler*
2001 *Thomas W. Anderson*
2000 *Laura D. Kadwell*
1999 *Ann Russell*
1998 *Michael B. Johnson*
1997 *Julie M. Brunner*

Public Attorney Award of Excellence – Civil Attorney Working in a Public Law Office: Daniel Klint



Daniel Klint

Award presentation and comments by Nancy Norman.

Chris, Donna and I are fortunate to work with Dan every day, unlike all of the other attorneys and professionals in the state that have to try to catch him by phone or e-mail. The decision to recommend Dan for this award was a no-brainer. The purpose of this Award is to recognize the work and dedication of outstanding public sector attorneys. The criteria for this award seemed to have been written especially for Dan.

They must have **5 years'** experience as a public attorney,
Engaged in **activities that show dedication and commitment** to public service
and the public practice of law and may
Distinguish themselves by making **significant contributions that aid in the**
operation of government or the practice of law and/or by demonstrating

extraordinary leadership, initiative or innovation in the performance of their duties.

Dan has been practicing with the Anoka County Attorney's Office since 1986. He has become an expert in his field through years of experience and dedication to his work. After short stints in the criminal division, family law division and as an appellate lawyer, Dan has been working in the ever changing, very complicated world of eminent domain, acquiring property for public highway purposes.

He is an expert in right-of-way acquisitions, commissioner hearings, and has years of trial experience in this area, including appeals to the Minnesota Appellate Court and Supreme Court. He's been invited to speak at Right-of-Way conferences on issues related to eminent domain; he is involved in the Minnesota Eminent Domain County Attorney's Association; and he provides advice to the County as a whole on real estate matters.

In the time he has worked with transportation, Dan has acquired over 1,000 parcels of land for Anoka County. But, Dan is not the Big Bad Government taking away people's property – he takes time to listen and to explain things to those affected. Although he is an advocate for the county, Dan never compromises his integrity, and shows sincere respect and fairness to those he is dealing with – truly a gift.

For any of you who work in eminent domain, you understand that this assignment **alone** is a full-time job. But Dan does all of this and more.

Dan's civil assignments also include negotiating complex transactions and contracts. Dan has learned to navigate all of the red tape around bidding, contracts and federal regulations to support funding. He is the primary contact throughout the county for bidding/RFP documents, contracts, establishing the proper legal format to be sure the county's interests are protected while complying with all of the federal and state regulations. To put it in perspective, on top of all of the other work he does, in an average year (2014), he was the sole responsible attorney for over 300 contracts, some of which were very complex.

And, as if all of that work isn't enough, Dan also represents or has represented:

- Parks & Recreation
- Highway
- Public Works (including surveyor's office, GIS, and Transit)
- Facilities management (contracts for all of the building/acquisitions, etc.)
- Purchasing, Accounting/Central Services
- Estate Recovery and Collection of Medical Assistance
- Extension Services
- Property Tax Collection
- Property Tax Assessment and Administration & Appeals

All of Dan's wisdom, experience and charm are truly a coup for Anoka County, but Dan has also worked tirelessly throughout the state to help others to understand the process. He's always been willing to help, offer forms, memoranda or other information to help out when you find yourself in a new situation. He's done it all. He has even drafted form documents for the American Institute of Architects used throughout the Nation. **Talk about leadership, initiative and innovation in the performance of his duties!**

He has redefined the word dedication – in all he does and how he does it for Anoka County.

All of Dan's hard work is good, but what makes it **so awesome** is that he is so kind, fair and fun to work with. He is the picture of the criteria for the Award of Excellence of Public Law Office Council and we are so happy that you all recognize this as well.



Donna McLean, Dan Klint and Nancy Norman.

Previous Recipients of the Public Attorney Award of Excellence: Civil Attorney Working in a Public Law Office

- 2015 *Gregory G. Brooker*
- 2014 *Eric D. Larson*
- 2013 *John L. Kirwin*
- 2012 *Gregory J. Wiley*
- 2011 *Jocelyn F. Olson*
- 2010 *Anthony C. Palumbo and Robert E. Asleson*
- 2009 *Christie B. Eller and John T. Kelly*
- 2008 *Jay M. Heffern*
- 2007 *Kenneth E. Raschke, Jr.*
- 2006 *Douglas J. Gregor*
- 2005 *Joan D. Humes*
- 2004 *Toni Beitz*
- 2003 *Mark J. Ponsolle*
- 2002 *David R. Ornstein*
- 2001 *Robert A. Stanich*
- 2000 *John L. Kirwin and Desyl Peterson*
- 1999 *William P. Donohue*
- 1998 *Alan C. Williams*
- 1997 *Richard S. Slowes*
- 1996 *Beverly Jones Heydinger*

Douglas K. Amdahl Public Attorney Career Achievement Awards: William A. Bierman, Jr., Joanne K. Matross, Michele L. Timmons, Toni A. Beitz, Charles L. LeFevere & Thomas M. Scott



William A. Bierman

Award presentation comments by Wendy Legge.

I'm delighted to have the opportunity to tell you a little bit about Bill Bierman. Bill is on the eve of his retirement from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, where he has served as an attorney since 1993. Bill began his career in public service in 1979 as an attorney for the Minnesota Senate, Independent-Republican Caucus. In 1983, he left that position for private practice. Luckily for the state, Bill returned to public service at the department in 1993.

Some of you may know that the department licenses various master craftsmen, such as master plumbers and master electricians. Although we don't license attorneys, Bill has become a master attorney in several of the specialized areas of law enforced by the department, namely workers' compensation, OSHA and prevailing wage law. Bill's historic knowledge and legal acumen in these areas are unsurpassed. He has settled thousands of Minnesota OSHA cases, mentored the other attorneys who represent Minnesota OSHA, and consistently helped department staff sort through difficult legal issues.

But there is something more that explains why six of Bill's current and former colleagues at the department wrote letters nominating him for this award. Bill is a caring and compassionate public servant who is uniformly liked and respected by his colleagues and clients. He has an uncanny ability to calm irate employers and injured workers. Bill will take the time needed to explain the complex laws in a manner that the employers and injured workers can understand. During contentious negotiations in Minnesota OSHA cases, including many tragic serious injury and death cases, Bill's patience and ability to remain calm have allowed him to reach settlements.

Bill is always willing to share his time and knowledge with his colleagues. His nominators have described him as "exceedingly respectful," "shows exceptional kindness and patience," and "always gentle with his feedback" to those whom he mentors.

Bill is an outstanding example of dedication to excellent and caring public service. I feel honored and privileged to have worked with him, and to have the opportunity to introduce him

today as a 2016 Recipient of the Douglas K. Amdahl Public Attorney Career Achievement Award.



Award presented to Bill Bierman by Wendy Legge.



Joanne K. Matross

From the nomination letter submitted by the attorneys of the Metropolitan Office of General Counsel.

Jeanne Matross has been a public lawyer for 40 years. Jeanne began her career at Housing and Urban Development (HUD). She represented the local HUD office for ten years working on various urban redevelopment projects. Jeanne then joined the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission in 1986 and has spent the last 30 years advising the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission and its successor, the Metropolitan Council, on various projects. Jeanne is planning on retiring later this year. Jeanne has successfully practiced in several areas of law, but her primary focus and deep expertise is in real property law. Jeanne is a Certified Real Property Specialist.

Jeanne's 30 years of real property advice to the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission and then to the Met Council are invaluable. She has been an integral part of numerous projects for the Metropolitan Council, working with other governments and private parties, and the results of her legal work can be seen in wastewater and transit infrastructure throughout the seven-county metropolitan area. Jeanne is also a consummate team player. She is always willing to assist on other's projects and provide her sage advice and expertise. Her ability to apply her institutional

knowledge to new situations and projects is irreplaceable and she will be sorely missed by her colleagues.

Here are just a few of the major projects that Jeanne has been involved in:

- Metropolitan Waste Control Commission. Oversaw the acquisition and condemnation of over 500 parcels for various sewer interceptor projects throughout the metro area.
- Metropolitan Radio Board. Jeanne was the Metropolitan Council attorney assigned to the Metropolitan Radio Board to implement the metro-wide 800 MHz trunked emergency radio system. Jeanne provided legal advice to the Radio Board on various topics and real property expertise for the leasing of space on various towers to create the system.
- Hiawatha Light Rail Project. Jeanne provided legal advice to the Metropolitan Council on numerous topics related to other project and helped acquire the real estate needed from the federal government agencies at Fort Snelling including the Veteran's Administration, Air Force, Navy, General Services Administration, and the Army.
- East Metro Bus Garage. Jeanne provided legal advice and real estate services for the acquisition of land and construction of the Metro Transit's East Metro Bus Garage.
- Council electronic land records project. Jeanne played a leading role in a multi-year project to develop and implement a land records management system for the approximately \$1.8 billion worth of property owned by the Council. The system is an online system of all Council land records over-layered with GIS information that is accessible to all Council employees. The system is the first of its kind for a government in Minnesota and it allows any Council employee to identify what and where Council real estate interests are, as well as the nature of those interests.
- Industrial Pretreatment Incentive Program. Jeanne created the legal framework for an innovative public/private partnership program that incentivizes industries to build certain wastewater treatment technologies onsite in order to save the industry fees it pays the Council, reduce Council energy use, and improve Council wastewater treatment plant operations.



Award presented to Joanne Matross by Peter Hind.



Michele L. Timmons

Comments from the nomination letter submitted by Paul Marinac, Deputy Revisor of Statutes.

I am writing to nominate Michele Timmons, the Revisor of Statutes, for the Douglas K. Amdahl Public Attorney Career Achievement Award. Ms. Timmons will be retiring in November after serving 18 years as Revisor of Statutes for the Minnesota Legislature.

I have been Ms. Timmons' Deputy for Drafting and senior advisor for the 18 years she has been the Revisor of Statutes. I would like to highlight three initiatives that Michele directed as Revisor of Statutes that demonstrate her qualifications for this award. These initiatives are good examples of her strong commitment to enhancing public access to the law.

The first initiative Ms. Timmons directed was the complete replacement of the 25-year-old computer system used by the Minnesota Legislature to draft and publish legislative documents. All hardware and software was modernized to support enhanced public access to this information in various formats. This redesign also substantially enhanced security, authentication, and preservation of this important information.

The second initiative Ms. Timmons directed was to digitize and make available to the public on the Revisor's website: (1) all session laws, published in the *Territorial Laws* or *Laws of Minnesota*, beginning with the 1st Territorial Legislature in 1849; (2) all editions of the compilation of general and permanent law, *Minnesota Statutes*, and its predecessor publications beginning in 1851; (3) the first 20 years of the *State Register* beginning in 1976, which until this initiative had not been available to the public in electronic format; (4) all editions of the permanent compilation of state agency rules, published in *Minnesota Rules* beginning in 1982; and (4) *Minnesota Court Rules*. These publications are indexed and available to the public as searchable PDF's. Numerous finding aids are now available on the Revisor's website to aid public access to this important legal material.

The third initiative grew out of Ms. Timmons' role as a Minnesota Commissioner to the Uniform Laws Commission. She served as Chair of the Drafting Committee for the Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act. The Act, which was enacted into law in Minnesota in 2013, establishes an outcomes-based, technology-neutral framework for providing online legal material with the same level of trustworthiness traditionally provided by publication in a law book. The law is intended to ensure that electronic legal materials are authenticated, preserved, and made available to the public on a permanent basis. Under her direction, the law has been implemented for the official

publications of Minnesota Law published by the Office of the Revisor of Statutes. Minnesota has become a model for implementation of the act in other states.

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes is a nationally-recognized champion of enhanced public access to the law, thanks to Ms. Timmons' hard work and dedication.



Award presented to Michele Timmons by her son Andy Timmons.



Toni A. Beitz

From the nomination letter submitted by Hennepin County Attorney Michael Freeman.

During her 40 years at the Hennepin County Attorney's Office (HCAO), Toni Beitz has had not one, but two careers. She served for more than 12 years as an accomplished prosecutor in the Juvenile and Adult Prosecution Divisions, including her promotion in 1980 as one of the first female senior attorneys in the Office. In 1987, Toni made a mid-career transition to the Civil Division, where she has spent the past 28 years defending the County and its employees in state and federal litigation, and advising several County departments, including more than 10 years as general counsel to the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office. I promoted her to be the managing attorney for the Civil Division of the HCAO. She served for four years in this position, which includes managing more than 30 attorneys practicing in all aspects of civil law. In her various roles in the HCAO, she has directly influenced a wide range of the criminal and civil issues that confront attorneys representing local government.

As County Attorney, I have heavily relied upon Toni. During this time she was a leader in the Civil Division and was the lead attorney in numerous complex and important civil cases involving Hennepin County. Toni has dedicated countless hours both to her practice and to the profession. Toni is a long-time member of the, Minnesota Bar Association. In addition, as a member of the Minnesota County Attorney's Association Sheriff's Office Civil Issues

Subcommittee she has taken the lead on complex issues of statewide concern relating to jail operations, expungements, data practices and gun laws.

Toni is widely regarded as a mentor and resource, both within Hennepin County and statewide. Toni has handled important conflict cases on behalf of other County Attorneys and even served as the interim Carver County Attorney when that office was vacated due to a judicial appointment. No matter how busy she is, Toni always makes herself available when her colleagues – from any part of the state – seek her opinion and perspective. In addition, she has served as a mentor to many law clerks and new attorneys, and she has an incredible ability to treat young attorneys as peers, while helping them to develop their skills and knowledge.

Four of Toni’s career highlights speak directly to her significant contributions to the work of public attorneys around the State of Minnesota. In *Latimore v. Widseth*, 7 F.3d 709 (8th Cir. 1993) (*en banc*), Toni successfully argued to the Eighth Circuit, sitting *en banc*, that a prosecutor was entitled to qualified immunity against an Eighth Amendment claim brought by a former criminal defendant, who claimed that the prosecutor’s truthful statements about his plea bargain had resulted in a prison attack. In *Johnson v. State*, 553 N.W.2d 40 (Minn. 1996), Toni argued before the Minnesota Supreme Court and successfully appealed a ruling from the Court of Appeals, relating to a County probation officer’s defense of official immunity. Last year, in *Vassallo ex rel. Brown v. Majeski*, 842 N.W.2d 456 (Minn. 2014), Toni argued before the Minnesota Supreme Court and successfully appealed a ruling from the Court of Appeals, relating to a deputy sheriff’s defense of official immunity (and the County’s defense of vicarious official immunity), for discretionary actions taken in response to an emergency call. Finally, late last year, in *Wall v. Stanek*, 794 F.3d 890 (8th Cir. 2015), *petition for cert. filed* (U.S. Oct. 21, 2015), Toni successfully defended against a Fourth Amendment claim brought by a DWI arrestee, who was challenging Minnesota’s Implied Consent Law. Each of these decisions had a statewide impact of particular interest to County Attorneys.

Throughout her diverse legal career, Toni has demonstrated unwavering professionalism and integrity, even in the face of some of the most difficult attorneys and *pro se* litigants. She is well-respected by her colleagues, opposing counsel, and the bench for her high ethical standards. Her integrity makes her an effective advocate – one who can be trusted implicitly by opposing counsel or the judge – while promoting confidence among the profession and the public in the work of the County Attorney’s Office and public attorneys in general.



Award presented to Toni Beitz by Mike Freeman.



Charles L. LeFevere

Comments from the nomination letter submitted by Mary Tietjen.

I practiced with Charlie at Kennedy & Graven since 2001. Charlie graduated from St. Olaf College in 1968 and the University of Minnesota Law School in 1975. He spent his entire 40-year career practicing exclusively public law.

Charlie joined LeFevere, LeFevere, Lefler, Kennedy, O'Brien & Drawz in 1975, which thereafter became Kennedy & Graven, Chartered. He spent his entire career at this firm until his death on January 30, 2016.

Charlie served as appointed City Attorney or General Counsel for many years with many municipal clients throughout his career including Lake Minnetonka Conservation District General Counsel (1978-2015), New Brighton City Attorney (1982-2015), Brooklyn Center City Attorney (1987-2015), and Rosemount City Attorney (1994-2015). He served as City Attorney or General Counsel for many other cities and watersheds as well including Cambridge, Rice, and the Shingle Creek and Bassett Creek watershed districts.

One of his contributions to the field of local government law was his representation in *Sovereign v. Dunn*, a 1993 Minnesota Court of Appeals decision which remains today a defining case in the area of the open meeting law. His greatest contributions to the practice of public law however, were his professionalism, pragmatism, and thoughtful wisdom that he shared daily with his colleagues and clients. Everyone who worked with Charlie respected him for these qualities that made him a trusted legal advisor who impacted countless people.

Charlie once stated, "I enjoy the daily contacts with public officials and staff, and share with them a sincere belief in the importance of local government. I feel very fortunate that, after more than twenty years in the practice of public law (and over 1000 council meetings); I still enjoy my work and feel good about what I do."



Award presented by Mary Theijen to Cathy Lefevere, wife of Charlie Lefevere.



Thomas M. Scott

Comments from the nomination submitted by Amy Schutt.

Tom Scott began practicing municipal law in 1986. An accomplished litigator, Tom handled appeals, eminent domain, land use, relocation benefits, construction disputes, special assessment appeals, and other civil litigation for many municipal clients. Tom served as the St. Louis Park City Attorney from 1996-2015. Tom regularly defended numerous cities and other governmental entities as assigned counsel for the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust. He specialized in eminent domain and land use matters for the 20 + municipalities represented by Campbell Knutson. Tom personally briefed and argued approximately 50 appellate court cases, including matters before the Minnesota Supreme Court and the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Tom retired in 2015.



Award presented to Tom Scott by Joel Jamnik.

Previous Recipients of the Douglas K. Amdahl Public Attorney Career Achievement Award

- 2015 *Steven B. Liss, Robert D. Goodell, Virginia Rae Bly*
- 2014 *Frederick T. Friedman, Thomas A. Fitzpatrick, Stephen J. Bubul, Nancy McLean*
- 2013 *Steven C. Moon, Mary E. Miller*
- 2012 *John LeFevre, Judith Rehak, Richard Slowes*
- 2011 *Steven M. Gunn*
- 2010 *Hon. Lawrence Cohen, Jan Petersen*
- 2009 *David J. Kennedy*
- 2008 *Lane Ayres, Hon. Allen Oleisky, Jeanne Schleh*
- 2007 *Quy T. Dam, Karel Lee Moersfelder, Michael R. Dean*

2006 *James Lammers, Alan Mitchell*
2005 *Philip J. Olfelt*
2004 *Carl Conney, Wayne G. Johnson, Eldon G. Kaul, Clayton LeFevere*
2003 *William E. Falvey, William E. McGee, John D. Tierney*
2002 *Hon. Gary L. Crippen, LeRoy Jackson, Hon. Kenneth J. Maas*
2001 *Hon. Douglas K. Amdahl*
2000 *Hon. Doris Ohlsen Huspeni, Phillip B. Byrne*
1999 *Hon. A. M. Sandy Keith*
1998 *hon. Esther Tomljanovich, James N. Bradford, Floyd B. Olson*
1997 *Hon. Rosalie E. Wahl, Stanley G. Peskar, William R. Kennedy, Julius E. Gernes*
1996 *Earle T. Anderson, Jr., Robert R.W. Johnson, Hon. Jon L. Lunde, Lloyd J. Moosbrugger*

A New Award for 2016 – Public Law Section Diversity Award: Constance M. Tuck



Constance M. Tuck

Comments from the nomination letter submitted by Gregory Gray and the Hon. Thomas Gilligan as a member of the Ramsey Co. Bar Assoc. Diversity Committee.

This letter is in support of Constance M. Tuck’s nomination for the new Public Lawyer Diversity Award, given by the Minnesota State Bar Association – Public Law Section, to recognize a public lawyer who has had a demonstrated impact on improving employment opportunities for lawyers from groups historically under-represented because of race, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental disability or sexual orientation. Constance has been employed as a public sector attorney for nearly 30 years. In each of her positions, she dedicated herself to improving opportunities for people from diverse and under-represented backgrounds.

For the last six years, Constance served as the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) Chief Equity and Development Officer. This is a senior management position at the state’s largest and most diverse agency. Constance and her team support DHS in achieving its vision of healthy people, stable families, and strong communities by ensuring that DHS uses equitable practices in employment and service delivery, providing consultation on data analytics, research, strategic planning, and performance measurement, and promoting employee learning, development, and engagement.

Constance’s work is directly related to the recruitment and retention of a diverse agency workforce. She ensures training, compliance, and policy development for state and federal equal opportunity and non-discrimination laws in both the workplace and the delivery of human services programs. She collaborates with human resources and agency-wide management to

increase the diversity of DHS' workforce and encourages the use of diversity to inform policy and program development and service delivery at the state agency level and oversees measurement of county-level service delivery.

Constance's major accomplishments include increasing DHS' affirmative hiring from 11 percent to 24 percent, implementing DHS' first employee engagement initiative, and sponsoring and supporting development of DHS staff from under-represented communities through the L4 Leadership Development Program, and attracting new and diverse talent through the Executive Pathways Program, a paid internship program focusing on first-generation college attendees.

Beyond her official duties as the Chief Equity and Development Officer, Constance is a proven leader and mentor on development of new leaders and a more diverse and culturally competent workforce. Constance has a gift for cultivating leadership in colleagues and her staff. She is committed to increasing employment opportunities for attorneys from diverse and under-represented backgrounds. For example, Constance serves as a mentor to young attorneys of color at our agency, and has overseen the Executive Pathways Program since 2006.

The Executive Pathways Program recruits law and graduate students, and senior level undergraduate students, who have a passion for human services work and are first in their families to attend college. This program provides students with 400 hours of paid practical experience in which they participate in research and policy development, assist in compliance efforts and contract management, or perform other substantive work at DHS. The program also assists students with networking and finding public sector jobs when their internships end. Since 2006, DHS has sponsored 75 interns.

Moreover, Constance stays involved with interns after their internship ends to mentor and guide them in their early legal careers. Constance has also worked closely with DHS Human Resources whenever the agency has employment openings. Her efforts lead to the development of policies requiring consideration of applicants from diverse backgrounds and justifying missed opportunities when candidates from diverse backgrounds were not extended offers of employment. These efforts have made DHS a more diverse work environment.

Constance's efforts and commitment to achieving and maintaining a diverse public attorney environment are not limited to DHS. She has also served as a member of the Ramsey County Bar Diversity Committee since 2010, and as a member of the Minnesota Board of Continuing Legal Education since 2013, where she serves on the On Demand/Elimination of Bias Committee and Lawyer Registration Rules Committee. In 2015, Constance was a presenter at the annual Diversity Committee Elimination of Bias CLE, which celebrated and discussed the historical and on-going legal impact of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Her input is frequently sought for new initiatives. She is a resource for all of the welfare system and through her many years of service, has been critical in molding and shaping this system to better serve the people of Minnesota.

In closing, Constance is highly respected by her colleagues across state and local government. She promotes workforce diversity through her recruitment and hiring practices, her support of employee development activities, and her coaching and mentoring of law students, new attorneys, and attorney managers. She encourages staff to engage in development activities related to diversity, cultural competency, and equal access. Constance epitomizes what this new PLS Diversity award is designed to recognize.



Award presented to Constance Tuck by Rae Bly.

There were no 2016 nominations for the P. Kenneth Kohnstamm Pro Bono Attorney Award of Excellence. Previous recipients of this award have been:

P. Kenneth Kohnstamm Pro Bono Attorney Award of Excellence

2013 Nancy McLean

2011 Beverly Jones Heydinger

2010 Ann E. Cohen and Gerald T. Hendrickson

2008 Kathie L. Battle-Sayles

2007 Patrick Burns

2006 P. Kenneth Kohnstamm