

MBA NEWS



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MASSACHUSETTS BAR ASSOCIATION PRESENTS 2008 ACCESS TO JUSTICE AWARDS TO LAWYERS WHO PROVIDE FREE LEGAL AID TO THE POOR

BOSTON, Mass.— Five attorneys and two law firms were honored March 6 at the Massachusetts Bar Association’s 2008 Access to Justice Awards Luncheon held at the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum in Boston, where State Rep. Byron Rushing (D-Boston) gave a keynote address about eradicating homelessness.

“The common ground for all of the Access to Justice Award recipients is their steadfast and selfless fight for clients who cannot afford representation,” MBA President David W. White Jr. said. “The collective efforts of the 2008 Access to Justice awardees have had an overwhelmingly positive and often life-altering impact on the lives of their many clients.”

The luncheon was dedicated to Nancy King, the former executive director of South Middlesex Legal Services in Framingham, who died in December after a 22-year battle with breast cancer. Her two brothers and three sisters accepted the Access to Justice Lifetime Achievement Award on her behalf.

Following the award presentation, White announced that the board of the Massachusetts Bar Foundation, the MBA’s philanthropic partner, has created the Nancy King Memorial Fellowship. This fellowship will support a legal intern at South Middlesex Legal Services during the summer months. The fellowship was made possible by a contribution from MBA Past President Elaine M. Epstein and matching funds from the foundation’s Fellows program.

Rushing, co-chair of the state’s Commission to End Homelessness, spoke about the need to create true access to justice and public institutions and challenged the crowd to help wipe out homelessness. “Justice is justice when it is for all,” he said.

The other 2008 Access to Justice Award honorees are as follows:

- **Legal Services Award** - Faye Rachlin, Legal Assistance Corporation of Central Massachusetts, 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, Committee for Public Counsel Services, 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.