

Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission Honors Two Outstanding Jurists at 2012 Diversity Awards Presentation



Hon. A. Gail Prudenti and Hon. Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick

For more than 20 years, the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission has promoted diversity on the bench and in the court workforce and helped to ensure the fair and equal treatment of minorities in our justice system. On Tuesday night, December 18, 2012, the organization presented its annual awards. Rose Sconiers, Chair of the Commission and Associate Justice in the Appellate Division, Fourth Department, introduced the evening's ceremonies at Brooklyn Law School's Feil Hall.

Outstanding Jurist for Lifetime Achievement was awarded to Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick, senior associate judge at the New York State Court of Appeals, who retired in January, and the Humanitarian Award to the late Theodore T. Jones, Jr., Associate Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals, who died suddenly in November 2012.

Chief Administrative Judge of the New York State Courts A. Gail Prudenti introduced Judge Ciparick. "She has broken barriers," said Prudenti, who described Ciparick as a talented jurist, an incredibly great friend and someone who has "never forgotten her roots." Ciparick was the first Hispanic woman to serve on the Court of Appeals. Having collected many awards during 2012—her final year on the state's highest court—Ciparick remarked, upon receiving the honor, how fitting it was that her last award (while still sitting as a judge) comes from the "court family."

The Williams Commission, said Ciparick, "promotes thoughtful discourse in the administration of justice. It is of the utmost importance to the citizens of this state that racial, ethnic and gender balance be maintained at our highest court."

Jonathan Lippman, Chief Judge of New York State, then presented the Humanitarian Award posthumously to Theodore Jones, whose life Lippman described as being "about celebrating people in all their diversity." Jones' primary concern, said Lippman, was "not about legal principles but about the people behind them. He believed that litigants should see people on the bench that looked like themselves and understood how critical this was to promoting public trust and confidence in what our courts are all about."

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HON. CARMEN CIPARICK, FORMER SENIOR ASSOCIATE JUDGE,
NEW YORK STATE COURT OF APPEALS

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At the Court of Appeals, Lippman continued, Jones was a “one-person diversity committee” who traveled tirelessly across the state to get people involved in the court system. Theodore Jones III, who accepted the award on behalf of his father, said his dad believed in “lifting as you climb,” adding how happy his dad had been to bring many people along with him as he rose within the judiciary.

Lippman concluded, “He will forever be a part of the history of the Court of Appeals, of our court system. Ted Jones was a humanitarian, a man for all seasons. No one deserves this award more.”

In addition, four diversity awards were given to Vincent E. Doyle, Anthony L. Ricco and Peter E. Quijano, lawyers who have helped to increase diversity in the profession and advocated for the disenfranchised, and Kerron D. Norman, who has been a leader in Westchester County’s innovative Family Assessment Response (FAR) program, designed to reduce racial disparities in child welfare services and keep families together.



Theodore T. Jones III, Esq., Joan Jones and Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman
