



American College of Trial Lawyers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Honorable Jonathan Lippman Receives Inaugural Beverley McLachlin Access to Justice Award

NEWPORT BEACH, CALIF., October 11, 2019 – The American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL) presented the **Honorable Jonathan Lippman**, Chief Judge, New York Court of Appeals (Ret.) with the inaugural Beverley McLachlin Access to Justice Award at its 2019 Annual Meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia, on Saturday, September 28, 2019.

The American College of Trial Lawyers is composed of Fellows who represent the best of the trial bar in the United States and Canada. There are more than 5,800 Fellows of the College, including Judicial Fellows elected before ascending to the bench, and Honorary Fellows, who have attained eminence in the highest ranks of the legal profession, the judiciary, or public service.

ACTL President **Douglas R. Young** of the law firm Farella Braun + Martel LLP in San Francisco, California said, “Chief Judge Lippman epitomizes the best in the trial bars and the judiciaries of the United States and Canada, having championed equal access to justice in New York and throughout the United States and by his leading roles in identifying permanent funding streams for civil legal services. He is a pioneer and a visionary, and the College is honored that he has accepted the Beverley McLachlin Access to Justice Award in recognition of his leadership.”

The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, P.C., C.C., Former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada and ACTL Honorary Fellow said in her introduction of Chief Judge Lippman: “He is, I have to say, in a class by himself when it comes to access to justice. He spent the better part of his career working on access to justice issues wherever he found himself. As a trial judge, he had a very important administrative role in the New York State Courts and he changed the way trials were handled and reduced backlogs. As an appellate judge, he continued his quest for better and more efficient and more accessible justice on the Courts of Appeal. It’s said that wherever he went, he transformed the New York justice system and that is no small accomplishment. I could not be more grateful to the College for having named this remarkable individual as the first recipient of the Beverley McLachlin Access to Justice Award.”

Chief Judge Lippman said, “Overseeing the courts is about thousands of people streaming into our courthouses every day seeking justice and that there is nothing more fundamental to the courts and the judiciary than ensuring access to justice so that everyone gets their day in court, rich and poor, white, black and brown, those with power and clout and those without. I want to thank Chief Justice McLachlin for the leading the way and lighting the path for all of us, and for understanding that our role is not just about the four corners of legal papers. Rather, both adjudicatively and as an institution, it is about making the abstract concept of justice real and concrete for every single person coming to the court seeking justice.”

“In the judiciary and in the legal profession we have to be proactive in the pursuit of justice. We can all make such a difference in healing the divisions in society and promoting the well-being of others by ensuring access to justice and fairness in the justice system. Beverley McLachlin is right, the law, justice and the role of the judiciary is not just a cold and neutral calculation of the law. It is about an engaged act of imagination and putting ourselves in the shoes of those seeking justice.”

The Honorable Jonathan Lippman, former Chief Judge of New York and Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals, the state’s highest court, is Of Counsel in the New York office of Latham & Watkins LLP and a member of the firm’s Litigation & Trial Department. As the state’s Chief Judge, he championed equal access to justice issues in New York and around the country and took the leadership role in identifying permanent funding streams for civil legal services. Chief Judge Lippman made New York the first state in the country to require 50 hours of law-related pro bono work

prior to bar admission and established the Pro Bono Scholars and Poverty Justice Solutions Programs to help alleviate the crisis in civil legal services. He strengthened the state's indigent criminal defense system, addressed the systemic causes of wrongful convictions, created Human Trafficking Courts across New York State, and led efforts to reform New York's juvenile justice, bail, and pre-trial justice systems. In a career spanning more than four decades, he received the 2008 William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence, presented each year by the nation's Chief Justice to a state court judge who exemplifies the highest level of judicial excellence, integrity, fairness, and professional ethics. Chief Judge Lippman was also presented with the 2016 American Bar Association's prestigious John Marshall Award.

About the Beverley McLachlin Access to Justice Award

The award, named in honor of Chief Justice McLachlin, is to be presented to a judge or a member of the bar in the United States or Canada, whether or not a Fellow of the College, who has played an exceptional role in creating and promoting access to justice. The award will recognize innovative measures or extraordinary personal commitment and professional dedication which have enhanced access to justice in the United States or Canada.

About The American College of Trial Lawyers

The American College of Trial Lawyers is composed of preeminent members of the Trial Bar from the United States and Canada and is recognized as the leading trial lawyers organization in both countries. Fellowship is extended by invitation only to those experienced trial lawyers who have mastered the art of advocacy and whose professional careers have been marked by the highest standards of ethical conduct, professionalism, civility and collegiality. The College is dedicated to maintaining and seeking to improve the standards of trial practice, professionalism, ethics, and the administration of justice. The College strongly supports the independence of the judiciary and respect for the courts in the United States and Canada; that independence is fundamental to our democratic societies. For more information about the College, visit its website at www.actl.com.

Photo Available:

A photo of 2018-2019 President Jeffrey S. Leon, LSM presenting Chief Judge Lippman the Beverley McLachlin Access to Justice Award during the General Session on Saturday, September 28, 2019 at ACTL's Annual Meeting in Vancouver, BC is available. Please contact Eliza Gano.

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