



# American College of Trial Lawyers

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Patricia Hebert Receives Beverley McLachlin Access to Justice Award**

NEWPORT BEACH, CALIF., March 15, 2022 – The American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL) presented **Patricia Hebert**, Q.C., of Bruyer & Mackay LLP in Edmonton, Alberta, with the Beverley McLachlin Access to Justice Award at its 2022 Spring Meeting in Coronado, California, on Saturday, February 26, 2022. Since its creation in 2018, this is only the second time the award has been given.

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 **Michael L. O'Donnell** of Wheeler Trigg O'Donnell LLP in Denver, Colorado said, "Access to Justice is one of the core missions of the College, and Patricia Hebert, Q.C., has worked tirelessly to create systematic changes provincially, nationally and internationally, to provide access to justice for families and children in Canada. By providing access to justice for children, Ms. Hebert has made an unequivocal impact on the most vulnerable in our communities. The College is honored to present her with only the second Beverley McLachlin Access to Justice Award."

Past President **Jeffrey S. Leon, LSM** of Bennett Jones LLP in Toronto, Canada, said in his introduction of Ms. Hebert: "In addition to her busy law practice, she has made the time and devoted countless hours to doing all she can to ensure that family litigants, in the words of Chief Justice McLachlin, have a right to justice and are able to get it. She is one of Canada's leading lawyers in the family justice field. She's a leader provincially, nationally, and internationally in working towards systemic change to improve access to justice."

In her remarks, **Ms. Hebert** said, "If, like me, you're inspired about the need to solve family problems and avoid harms to children, find an organization to support that does not necessarily offer legal process but offers problem solving, because that's what people-centered access to justice is. Being an inspiration to others brings everyone to the table."

According to the award committee's nomination: "[Ms. Hebert] has a rare sensibility to look beyond the day-to-day practice issues and see where systemic change is required to achieve better outcomes. She's the kind of person who can see things from 10,000-foot perspective and has the extraordinary combination of skill, experience, and personal commitment to consistently focus on how ideas can and must turn into practical, meaningful, and concrete improvements to the lives of people who need access to justice."

Patricia Hebert is a lawyer, mediator and Registered Collaborative Family Lawyer in private practice with Bruyer & Mackay in Edmonton, Alberta. After completing degrees in psychology and law, she has practiced solely family law with a focus on children. Ms. Hebert is regularly appointed by the court to

represent children in high conflict custody cases. She assists parents in mediation settings and in collaborative family law. She is past Chair of the National Legal Aid Committee and of the National Family Section of the Canadian Bar Association. As part of the Access to Justice Committee, she helped draft Reaching Equal Justice released by the CBA in 2013 and continues to participate in national working groups aiming to achieve the access to justice goals set out in the report. She is currently the CBA representative to Reforming Family Justice in Alberta and to the Steering Committee of the national Action Committee on Civil and Family Matters. Ms. Hebert received her Queen's Counsel designation in 2016 and a Women in Law Leadership Award in 2014.

#### **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](http://www.actl.com).

#### **Photo Available:**

A photo of 2018-2019 President Jeffrey S. Leon, LSM presenting Patricia Hebert, Q.C. the Beverley McLachlin Access to Justice Award during the General Session on Friday, February 25, 2022 at ACTL's Spring Meeting in Coronado, California is available. Please contact Sarah Stokes.

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