

Court Information Release



United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

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Fourteenth Annual Awards for Excellence in Pro Bono and Public Interest Service

CHICAGO – The United States District Court’s Fourteenth Annual Awards for Excellence in Pro Bono and Public Interest Service is scheduled to begin at 3:30 p.m., Thursday, May 23, 2013, in the James Benton Parsons Memorial Courtroom (2525) of the Everett McKinley Dirksen United States Courthouse at 219 South Dearborn Street in Chicago, Illinois. The program is open to all attorneys and those interested in pro bono and public interest law and is free of charge.

Robert J. DeSousa, the National President of the Federal Bar Association, will be the keynote speaker at the May 23 awards ceremony recognizing pro bono and public interest service before the court. This annual ceremony is sponsored jointly by the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

Mr. DeSousa is the state director for U.S. Senator Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania. He is a lieutenant colonel in the judge advocate general’s corp of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. He served in Operation Iraqi Freedom where he earned, among other things the Bronze Star.

He has been a member of the FBA for 20 years and with the help of several other members, he re-chartered the then-defunct Middle District of Pennsylvania Chapter and set forth an aggressive program of CLEs, judicial receptions, and membership drives. He has served in every office in the Middle District of Pennsylvania Chapter, including that of president and national delegate. During his two terms as a circuit vice president, he started a chapter via phone, letters, and e-mails in the Virgin Islands. DeSousa served for three years on the former Executive Committee of the FBA and has served on the board since its inception.

On May 23, 2013, nineteen “Awards for Excellence in Pro Bono Service” and one “Award for Excellence in Public Interest Service” will be presented to area attorneys for their contributions in helping people most in need of assistance before the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.