

THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA

2016 HARRY B. SONDHEIM

CALIFORNIA PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AWARD



State Bar of California News Release

March 2016

TWO LEGAL LUMINARIES TO BE HONORED AT 20TH ANNUAL ETHICS SYMPOSIUM

SAN FRANCISCO, March 28, 2016 – The State Bar of California announced today that it will honor two legal luminaries at its 20th annual statewide ethics symposium on April 9 in San Francisco.

Sacramento attorney Karen M. Goodman and Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Brian C. Walsh will each receive the 2016 Harry B. Sondheim California Professional Responsibility Award. The award was created in 2010 to honor long-term outstanding contributions to the advancement of professional responsibility standards in California. The winners were chosen by the Board of Trustees.

“It’s a privilege to be giving this award to two deserving individuals whose efforts have made a lasting impact on bettering the profession and protecting the public,” State Bar President David Pasternak said.

Goodman, 56, was chairwoman of the State Bar’s Discipline Standards Task Force in 2014, which revised the guidelines that are used to determine the appropriate sanction for attorney discipline cases and ensure consistency in how cases are dealt with. Before that, she was chairwoman of the Board of Trustees Committee that oversees the discipline system. Among many other volunteer roles, she has served as a member of the State Bar’s Committee of Bar Examiners and Committee on Professional Responsibility and Conduct.

Walsh, 68, was a pioneer for promoting civility and professionalism. As president of the Santa Clara County Bar Association in 1992, he developed a code of professionalism for the county. The code, still in use today, was used as a model for the State Bar of California’s Civility Toolbox adopted in 2007. Walsh has been appointed by the chief justice of California to serve on a number of statewide committees, including the Supreme Court Advisory Committee on the Code of Judicial Ethics. He also mentors new judges.

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2016 Harry B. Sondheim

California Professional Responsibility Award Recipients

This year, the State Bar of California deviated from its usual practice and selected not one, but two members of the legal community to be honored with the Harry Sondheim California Professional Responsibility Award for 2016. Each recipient has a long history of service promoting high standards of conduct for the legal profession in their practices and in their volunteer work to advance legal ethics and professionalism with their respective bar associations, and also with the State Bar.

Honorable Brian C. Walsh

Judge, Santa Clara Superior Court



Judge Brian Walsh has been a champion for ethics and professionalism issues for four decades.

He is a long-time, well respected advocate for legal ethics and professionalism in Santa Clara County and statewide. He has shown exemplary leadership in elevating awareness

of professionalism and helped to ensure that law practice in Santa Clara County is of the highest caliber.

In 1972, Walsh graduated from the Boalt School of Law at University of California Berkeley and went on to work at the Legal Aid Society of Monterey County. He later moved to private practice as managing partner of McTernan, Stender, Walsh, Weingus & Tondreau.

In 1992, Judge Walsh was President of the Santa Clara County Bar Association and his efforts, through a task force of prominent Santa Clara County superior court judges, federal court judges and attorneys, culminated in the creation and implementation of the Santa Clara County Bar Association's Code of Professionalism. The Code is a set of principles delineating the high level of professional conduct expected of attorneys.

As a result of Brian's efforts in 1992, the San Jose federal district court judges adopted the Code for use in their courtrooms and the Santa Clara County Superior Court adopted the Code as a local rule to be used by the superior court judges as a guideline for professional conduct for attorneys litigating in Santa Clara County. The Code is one of the first

"Ask any attorney who has been practicing law for a significant period what has changed about the practice of law, the likely response will be: 'The decline of civility among attorneys.' This trend of declining civility has led to wide-spread professional dissatisfaction, as well as a marked decrease in the public perception of attorneys.. Judge Brian Walsh has had a singular positive influence on this issue, on a local, state, and national level."

Hon. James E. Towery

professionalism codes in the country and served as a model when the State Bar of California later adopted its own Attorney Guidelines of Civility and Professionalism.

Judge Walsh founded and was the original Chair of the Statewide Bench-Bar Coalition. He chaired the California Association of Local Bars in 1993 and served as an attorney member of the State Judicial Council from 1994 to 1998. His involvement also included service on the Santa Clara County Bar Association Professionalism Committee, which he chaired in 1997.

Judge Walsh was appointed to the Bench in December 2000. Prior to his appointment, he practiced law for 28 years. Judge Walsh has been honored with the Professional Lawyer of the Year Award in 1999, the Byrl R. Salsman Award in 2002, and the Diversity Committee's Unsung Hero Award in 2011. During his years as an attorney, he enjoyed a reputation for integrity, honesty, fairness and diplomacy. As a judge, he is admired and respected by his colleagues and has earned the reputation as a leader in every division of the Court in which he has served.

Judge Walsh exemplifies all that is good about the legal profession and strives at every turn to ensure that attorneys, judges, and the courts provide responsive, ethical and expeditious service to the public.