



MassNAELA Honors State Representatives Natalie Higgins and Christine Barber at Annual Meeting

Awards Legislative and Chapter Leaders For Their Advocacy For Seniors; Presents Representative Higgins with the Legislator of the Year Award

BOSTON – January 6, 2021 – At its annual meeting held virtually on December 2, 2020, the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (MassNAELA) honored several individuals for their advocacy of elder services and their commitment to raising awareness of legal issues affecting seniors. Massachusetts State Representative Natalie Higgins was named the Legislator of the Year for her support and efforts for passage of legislation that protects seniors. Massachusetts State Representative Christine Barber received the Arthur Stavisky Award, an honor MassNAELA bestows each year to a person who has dedicated themselves to promoting elder causes in the community.

MassNAELA members, Karen Johnson, Westford, MA, and Kathleen Moncata, Natick, MA, were each presented the Deborah H. Thomson Advocacy Award, which recognizes a MassNAELA member's efforts in advocating for elder issues in state government. Ms. Johnson was honored for her work on the Remote Notarization bill, which allowed remote notarization and witnessing of critical documents during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Moncata was honored for her work on protecting the rights of assisted living and nursing home residents.

The John J. Ford Litigation Advocacy Award, which honors a member's efforts to educate the chapter membership relative to litigation strategies, was bestowed to John Welch, Salem, MA.

Each year, MassNAELA recognizes chapter members for their commitment of time and energy to the chapter. Awards for Outstanding Chapter Members were presented to Paula Nedder, Milford, MA; Mary Powers, West Springfield, MA; and Denise Yurkofsky, Wayland, MA for their commitment of time and energy to the chapter. Ms. Nedder was honored for co-chairing the chapter's Diversity Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee, which was created in 2020 to support the chapter's commitment to align its advocacy with efforts to end all healthcare, educational and societal inequities and disparities. Ms. Powers was honored for her work on the chapter's first-ever strategic plan and Ms. Yurkofsky was honored for her efforts in creating the MassNAELA Mentorship Program.

The President's Award was bestowed to Alexis Levitt, Norwell, MA, and Steven Mann, Waltham, MA for their service to and support of the chapter and its president. Annette Hines, Framingham, MA, was honored as a retiring member of the chapter board of directors. Paula

Almgren, Lenox, MA, received an award for her service and dedication as the 2020 chapter president.

The MassNAELA annual meeting also included the election of chapter officers and directors for the New Year. The 2021 officers include president, Pamela Greenfield, Needham, MA; president-elect, Cathleen Summers, Acton, MA; vice president, Abigail Poole, Dedham, MA; treasurer, Steven Mann; clerk, Alexis Levitt; and immediate past president, Paula Almgren. Faith Delaney, Haverhill, MA, is a newly elected director.

The meeting also included a keynote address by NAELA president-elect, Letha McDowell, from North Carolina, who provided an overview of the landscape and agenda of the national organization, including its upcoming efforts.

About MassNAELA

The National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA), the premier organization of elder and special needs law attorneys in the country, is dedicated to developing awareness of issues concerning the elderly and those with special needs. Over 450 attorneys are members of the Massachusetts Chapter. Members work directly with the elderly and those with special needs in areas as diverse as planning for catastrophic care costs, disability planning, age discrimination in employment and housing, benefits planning, estate planning, veterans' benefits and more.

For more information about MassNAELA, visit www.massnaela.com.

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