

2011 MBA Awards of Merit

Congratulations to this year's Merit Award recipients! This award is presented to members and nonmembers who demonstrate an enduring commitment to the MBA mission of promoting justice through service, education or leadership to the MBA, the legal profession and the community.

The awards will be presented on May 17.

Chief Justice Paul J. De Muniz is being recognized for his commitment to safe and efficient state court facilities. Awards are also being presented to Multnomah County Chair **Jeff Cogen** and Multnomah County Commissioners **Deborah**

Kafoury, Judy Shiprack and **Diane McKeel** for their efforts to build the new East County Court Facility and for studying ways to upgrade the downtown courthouse.

Mark Hackett will receive the award for his pro bono services to the MBA. Additionally, he has provided ongoing pro bono legal advice to Mercy Corps, the Portland Children's Museum and various other nonprofit organizations. He was a valuable member and chair of the MBA CLE Committee. Mark was among the Oregon volunteer lawyers who went to the Gulf Coast to provide legal assistance in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.



Chief Justice Paul J. De Muniz



Jeff Cogen



Judy Shiprack



Deborah Kafoury



Diane McKeel



Mark Hackett

Oregon Hispanic Bar Association - a small bar with big results

Mark your calendar for the 2011 Convocation on Equality on November 4

By Judy A. C. Edwards, MBA Executive Director.

The Oregon Hispanic Bar Association (OHBA) focuses on representing the voice of Latinos in Oregon's legal community, encouraging them to become attorneys, supporting and mentoring Latino law students and legal professionals, promoting advancement of Latino legal professionals, retaining them in Oregon, providing social networking opportunities, collaborating with other organizations and raising the awareness of Latino legal issues.

2011 board members are Graciela Cowger, Stolowitz Ford Cowger; Kevin Diaz, ACLU of Oregon; Susan Felstiner, Cable Huston; Marisol McAllister, Farleigh Wada Witt; Sandra Naranjo, Naranjo Prosser Law; and Judith A. Parker, Hinshaw & Culbertson.

"The organization works with other minority lawyer organizations in Oregon to provide a course to teach legal professionals from diverse backgrounds on how to become a judge," stated Marisol McAllister.

Each year OHBA presents a CLE, ranging in topics from Latinos on the bench and in public office; to helping diversity students in Oregon law schools prepare for a successful legal career, to training lawyers, in conjunction with the Juvenile Rights Project (now Youth, Rights & Justice), who are interested in representing Latino students with school discipline issues.

Kevin Diaz's idea to establish an annual award program and dinner has led to one of the legal community's premier events.

Appeals for the Federal Circuit this month. Subsequently, the award has been awarded to Hon. Angel Lopez (2008), at the time a criminal defense attorney, Daniel P. Santos (2009), who was a member of the Governor Kulongoski's staff, Hon. Kathryn Villa-Smith (2010), previously a litigator in a domestic relations firm, and to John Haroldson (2011), currently the Benton County District Attorney.

The annual dinner event has grown significantly, including tables filled by students from all of Oregon's law schools. The evening is "an atmosphere of celebration, with everyone coming together and having a good time and honoring the achievements of very successful people who have contributed a lot to the community," says Susan Felstiner, the first OHBA president.

With the help of corporate sponsors, the annual dinner also raises funds to send law students to the national convention to give them an opportunity to network with other Latino attorneys. The organization has also donated to the Portland Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber for Latino student scholarships.

One challenge "is making sure we're connecting with people outside Portland, including Eugene and Salem attorneys and the law schools. It is important that we keep the channels of communication open and that we are working together," stated Graciela Cowger. "We try to do a little more each year to retain and support new lawyers. There is a large Latino community with so few Hispanic lawyers," she continued.

The OHBA is open to all attorneys, paralegals, law professors and judges with an

interest in supporting the Latino legal community. It is a regional affiliate of the HNBA, which has allowed the OHBA access to key decision makers at the highest levels of government, including those within the White House.

OHBA members regularly participate in HNBA's board meetings and other activities. Dues are \$10/year for law students and recent graduates and \$40 for everyone else.

Pictured at the 2011 annual dinner



L to R - Danny Santos, advisor to former governor Kulongoski and the 2009 recipient of the Paul J. De Muniz Professionalism Award; Mick Konowal, senior attorney at Microsoft (sponsor); John M. Haroldson, Benton County District Attorney and the 2011 recipient of the Paul J. De Muniz Professionalism Award; and Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice Paul J. De Muniz



L to R - Kevin Diaz, ACLU Legal Director for Oregon; Mick Konowal, senior attorney at Microsoft (sponsor); Judge Marco A. Hernandez, U.S. District Court, District of Oregon; Judge Kathryn L. Villa-Smith, Multnomah County Circuit Court and the 2010 recipient of the Paul J. De Muniz Professionalism Award



Even though the initial small nucleus of local Latino lawyers started meeting informally just 10 years ago, they've evolved into a well-recognized formal bar that received its nonprofit IRS status in 2005. The OHBA's influence, in part, has led to the appointments of Latino judges in Multnomah County, Hon. Lopez and Villa-Smith, and the newest U.S. District Court Judge Marco Hernández.

"We created the OHBA to be a resource for Hispanic attorneys, including an organization that would openly advocate for increased appointments of Hispanics to the judiciary. We have had some success at that both at the state and federal level," said Román Hernández.

"We started our annual dinner to showcase the depth and breadth of talent in the Latino legal community and to recognize the enormous contributions OHBA members make to Oregon," said Kevin. The OHBA award, the Paul J. De Muniz Professionalism Award, honors an individual who exemplifies the spirit of professionalism and who makes significant contributions to the Latino Community and Oregon.

The first award was given to its namesake at the inaugural dinner where the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA) president, Jimmie Reyna, spoke. He was just confirmed to the U.S. Court of