

1-1-1991

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Recommended Citation

UB Law Forum (1991) "Five Presented With Distinguished Alumni Awards," *UB Law Forum*: Vol. 5 : No. 2 , Article 28.
Available at: https://digitalcommons.law.buffalo.edu/ub_law_forum/vol5/iss2/28

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Five Presented With Distinguished Alumni Awards

Five outstanding alumni were honored by the University at Buffalo School of Law this spring when the UB Law Alumni Association held its 28th Annual Meeting and Dinner at the Buffalo Waterfront Hilton. Following dinner, David E. Parker, president of the Law Alumni Association, presented Distinguished Alumni Awards to:

- **Hon. Edmund F. Maxwell**, of Buffalo, Class of 1949, who was cited "for his conscientious performance as a U.S. magistrate."

"Many of you have appeared before Judge Maxwell and know him to be knowledgeable, considerate and conscientious when dealing with the myriad of matters that come into his court," said Parker. "But his fairness, his open-mindedness and kindness is what makes Judge Maxwell stand out from his peers."

Born and raised in Lackawanna, N.Y., Maxwell attended Canisius High School and Canisius College. Before attending law school, he served as a fighter pilot in the U.S. Army Air Force from 1943 to 1945. After graduating from UB Law, he first went into private practice with the firm of Saperston, McNaughton & Saperston, then formed his own firm, Maxwell, Handel & Maxwell, in the mid-1950s. He was assistant U.S. attorney for the Western District of New York from 1961 to 1963. In 1964, he returned to full-time private practice, when he was appointed to his current position as a U.S. magistrate, U.S. District Court, Western District of New York in 1971.

- **J. Mason Davis**, of Birmingham, Ala., Class of 1959. Davis was cited "for



Left to right, J. Mason Davis '59, Hon. Edmund F. Maxwell '49, Carl J. Montante '67 and Lawrence Dautch at the Distinguished Alumni Awards dinner.

his leadership by example as a private practitioner."

Davis grew up in Birmingham, Ala., where he attended public schools and Talladega College. Unable to attend law school in his home state because of state-mandated segregation, he came north to UB Law, where he was a member of the *Buffalo Law Review*. After graduation he returned to Birmingham, where he became heavily involved in the civil rights movement of the early 1960s, working with Dr. Martin Luther King and others in that struggle.

Davis is now a senior partner in the law firm of Sirote & Permutt, one of Alabama's largest. He is also an adjunct professor at the University of Alabama School of Law. He has assumed leadership positions in numerous professional, corporate and civic organizations. A businessman and politician as well as an attorney, Davis has served as president of the Birmingham Bar Association and as a commissioner of the Alabama Bar Association, among others. He is currently secretary of the Alabama Democratic party.

• **Paul Gonson**, of Washington, D.C., Class of 1954. Gonson was cited "for his commitment to public service." His friend and former law partner, Irving Schuman, accepted the award for Gonson, who was delayed on a flight from Europe.

Gonson completed his undergraduate work at UB, served on the *Buffalo Law Review* and graduated from the Law School cum laude. After serving in the Army for two years, he became a founding partner in the Buffalo law firm of Gross, Gonson & Schuman. He joined the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1961, and since that time has held a series of important positions, including assistant general counsel, associate general counsel and now solicitor.

As solicitor since 1979, he supervises the Commission's appellate litigation and the defense of litigation brought against the agency. Gonson has personally argued more than 100 appellate cases on behalf of the SEC in the U.S. Supreme Court and the federal Courts of Appeal. He has been responsible for an exceptionally large number of diverse legal victories that have enhanced investor protection in such areas as insider trading, market manipulation, tender offers, proxy solicitation and broker-dealer regulation.

• **Carl J. Montante**, of Buffalo, Class of 1967. Montante was cited "for his many contributions to the betterment of our community."

A graduate of Canisius High School and Canisius College, Montante practiced law with his brother Tom for a brief period in 1968. After a few weeks, the Montante brothers went into the tire business. In 1979, Uniland Development was incorporated. As president of Uniland Development Co., Montante has changed the complexion of the City of Buffalo and surrounding suburbs, building some of the area's most appealing buildings and office parks.

"But tonight we honor Carl Montante not for his business accomplishments, which are indeed

impressive — but for his dedication and commitment to this community and the people of Western New York," said Parker, who enumerated an impressive number of charitable activities, ranging from fund-raising for the City Mission to serving on the Board of Trustees of Canisius College.

• **Harold A. Dautch**, Class of 1937.

He received a posthumous award "for exemplary performance in business." His son, Lawrence Dautch, accepted the award. It was the first time a business award category was presented.

After practicing law for a few years, Harold Dautch turned to retailing. With the purchase of one store in Niagara Falls, he founded a chain of department stores in the 1940s. That store is still part of the Jeness chain, with three others serving as anchors in the Summit Park Mall, Eastern Hills Mall and Boulevard Mall.

Dautch had pioneered the idea of better upscale department stores serving as the key to indoor mall shopping. He was one of the principals in developing the Boulevard Mall on Niagara Falls Boulevard in Amherst in the early 1960s.

when enclosed malls were in their infancy. He also founded the Consolidated Bowling Corp., a network of bowling centers now known as Conbow Corp.

"Harold Dautch was regarded in the community and among his employees with extreme affection and admiration," said Parker.

Jean Carol K. Powers was chair of the dinner committee. Serving with her were Sharyn Rogers, co-chair; and Garry M. Graber, Juan E. Irene, Robert B. Moriarty, Arthur A. Russ Jr., K. Michael Sawicki, Hon. Hugh B. Scott and Paul J. Suozzi.

Sponsors for the dinner were Manufacturers & Traders Trust Co.; Ticor Title Guarantee Corp.; Alan Fenster Associates; Barrister Information Systems Corp.; Frank L. Papa National Fire Adjustment Co.; Freedman-Harris Insurance Agency Inc.; Holcberg Ltd. Real Estate Brokerage; Jack Hunt and Associates, Court Reporters; Lathan, Lumsden, McCormick & Co. Accountants; and R.L. Sonnenberger Land Surveyor. ■



Left to right, Morton H. Levy '59, Joseph S. Bengart '56, Eli H. Frankel '59, J. Mason Davis '59, Anthony J. Colucci Jr. '58, June F. Davis, and Lester G. Sconiers '74 at the annual dinner.