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Alumni Association



Matthew J. Murphy III



Jean C. Powers '79



Eric D. Lindauer '81

GETTING THEIR DUE

Six named as winners of 2004 Distinguished Alumni Awards

Five UB Law School alumni and a distinguished non-alumnus had their moment in the spotlight as they were named winners of the school's 2004 Distinguished Alumni Awards. The presentations were made April 28 at the Law School's 42nd Annual Meeting and Dinner, an event chaired by Terrence A. Greiner '87 and Hon. Erin M. Peradotto '84. Denise E. O'Donnell '82, president of the UB Law Alumni Association, and Terrance P. Flynn '88, the association's president-elect, were the presenters.

The dinner included recognition of members of the Class of 1944 in attendance as part of their 60th anniversary celebration, and members of the Class of 1954, celebrating their 50th anniversary.

The Distinguished Alumni Awards, established in 1963, honor service to the profession and the community, and are given in six categories.

For service by a non-alumnus, the award went to **Matthew J. Murphy III**, longtime district attorney of Niagara County, N.Y., whom O'Donnell called "a man of integrity, good judgment and a commitment to justice." She noted that Murphy is "a great friend of the Law School" and a strong proponent of the school's Family Violence Clinic.

Murphy said he has come to respect the UB Law School graduates with whom he works in the legal community.

"Western New York is filled with people who first learned to love and respect the law at UB Law," he says. "A UB lawyer is smart, but not arrogant; hard-working, but remembers the importance of family and friends; thoughtful, but not obtuse; considerate of opposing counsel, but passionate about a client's interest; and articulate, but never verbose."

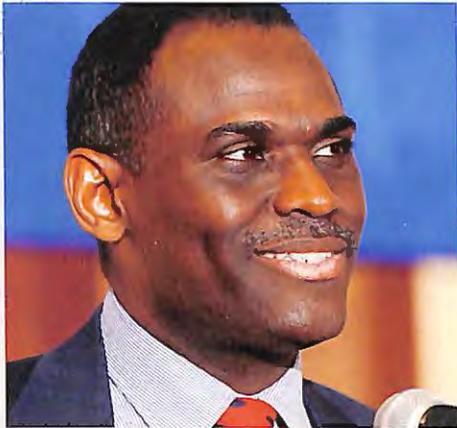
And on top of that, he said, "I have learned that UB lawyers are just so damned dependable."

Flynn presented the next award, for community service, to **Jean C. Powers '79**, a partner in the Buffalo law firm Jaeckle Fleischmann & Mugal. He noted that Powers has served for five years on the Dean's Advisory Council at the Law School; is a director of the Erie County Bar Foundation and the Volunteer Lawyers Project; and is on the board of

trustees of Trocaire College and the University at Buffalo Foundation. Powers is also a past president of both the UB Law Alumni Association and the University at Buffalo Alumni Association.

In accepting the award, Powers thanked her family: her parents, who "taught me by example and by words to value and respect and assist others and to engage actively in the community"; her husband, Kevin, who "never complained about the many hours I spent away from home while at school"; and her daughter, "who spent a good portion of her childhood coloring in the Law Library. She spent a lot of time reading in the *Law Review* office, too."

Powers said of UB Law, "If I had applied to a hundred law schools, I could not have received a finer education or been instructed by a more talented or caring faculty, or had a closer, more collegial, more caring group of fellow students." She accepted the award "in recognition of everybody in our lives who have made our achievements possible and of the organizations and institutions that we serve, because truly that is what this award is all about, our joint commitment to the community."



Oliver C. Young '80



Dianne Bennett '75



Hon. Eugene F. Pigott Jr. '73

Eric D. Lindauer '81, who received the award for business achievements, concentrates his practice at the New York City law firm Sullivan & Cromwell in banking and finance. O'Donnell called him "one of the most brilliant people I know. It was a rare day in the early 1980s when one did not find Eric leading a study group or tutoring a struggling law student on a difficult case or legal theory."

An early and active member of the Dean's Advisory Council, Lindauer "is proof that UB Law School is a great public law school which makes it possible for students to reach the heights of the legal profession," O'Donnell said.

For his part, Lindauer said of his Law School experience: "Now, with the benefit of enlightened hindsight, it's clear that at UB I learned well not only how to think like a lawyer but to be a good colleague, to ask and answer difficult questions, to solve client problems in efficient and creative ways, and to contribute to the greater good of the community."

He also cited the school's continuing development, including the dramatic expansion of its clinical programs, increased legal concentrations, the availability of interdisciplinary degrees and other curriculum initiatives. "The Law School," he said, "has worked hard to move out ahead of the curve in adjusting and continuing to adjust its instructional model to meet many of the goals for the 21st century outlined by the ABA's Task Force on Law Schools

and the Legal Profession."

In his career, **Oliver C. Young '80** is principal court attorney and matrimonial referee for the New York State Supreme Court's 8th Judicial District. But "it is his service to the public beyond the legal profession that is truly remarkable," Flynn said in his introduction in awarding the honor for public service. Young has long been active with the Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers, where he is on the Board of Advisors and is a past board president.

Before an audience of lawyers, Young cited advances in the Supreme Court's operations. "We have tried over the years to be of service to lawyers who call on the department for assistance, whether you are a senior partner at a law firm or an inmate at Attica," he said. "We try to minimize the frustration sometimes inherent in dealing with a large bureaucracy like the court system."

"The consummate professional" is how O'Donnell referred to **Dianne Bennett '75**, recently retired board chairman of the Buffalo law firm Hodgson Russ and the honoree for private practice. "Lawyer, client advocate, manager, marketer, visionary, community leader – Dianne is all of these things and much more. She understands the complex business dynamics of private legal practice better than anyone I know."

"Dianne stands for all that it means to be a client-centered attorney. A client who has Dianne for a lawyer has a powerful advocate, a caring friend, someone who is always looking out for their best interests no matter what. But she above

all she stands for the belief that to excel in private practice is to excel as a community leader."

Bennett recalled the adventure, in 1972, of driving from Fredonia to Buffalo – "in my VW Beetle with holes in the floor so I could see the Thruway" – to enter the Law School at its old downtown location. "UB Law School was the best educational experience of my life," she said. "The teachers really cared. They looked behind the law; they looked at what constructs make up the law. It was not the answers, it was the questions that were important. They really taught you how to think."

"I am so proud to be a lawyer. I think it is a remarkable profession, a wonderful profession."

The award-winner for the judiciary was **Hon. Eugene F. Pigott Jr. '73**, presiding justice of the New York State Supreme Court's Appellate Division, Fourth Department. Flynn cited his "ongoing efforts to promote our law school and its unique courtroom," O'Brian Hall's Francis M. Letro Courtroom, to which Pigott brought the first appellate trial.

Citing a list of judges produced by UB Law School, including a number of female jurists, Pigott said, "It is truly a remarkable hall of fame that the Law School has given us."

He also turned the tables with an award of his own, presenting a plaque of appreciation to Vice Dean Alan S. Carrel from the Fourth Department in honor of Carrel's service as a member of the Continuing Legal Education board.