

Establishment of a NYSBA Committee on Professional Discipline Memorial Award

Background

With great assistance from those attorneys practicing in the field of Professional Discipline, the New York State Bar Committee on Standards of Attorney Conduct recommended substantial Changes to the Rules of Professional Conduct. Those recommendations, approved by our Association, were submitted to the Administrative Committee of the New York State Judiciary. The Judiciary, in promulgating the new Rules of Professional Conduct adopted many of the COSAC and NYSBA recommendations.

In this climate of change and modernization of the rules governing the conduct of attorneys, it is even more apparent than in the past that the field of Professional Discipline is vital to the interests of every New York attorney. Attorneys who practice in this area, and contribute to and participate in the enforcement process of the Rules, perform an important, although often unrecognized function for the entire bar. Many of these attorneys serve on the various grievance committees, or serve as staff counsel for the grievance committees. Their services allow the Appellate Divisions to monitor attorney conduct and protect the public. Other attorneys in this practice area represent attorneys accused of misconduct, over 90 percent of whom are found not to have committed any wrongdoing.

Proposal

In an effort to publicize and recognize the work of disciplinary attorneys, the Committee on Professional Discipline has voted to confer an award on a deserving member of the profession in recognition of that attorney's contributions to the field of professional discipline. We have voted to ask this Committee to approve an award in memory of Robert J. Saltzman, Esq. who himself contributed so much to this field and to this Committee. We do not anticipate that this award be an annual award, but will be decided by the Committee as circumstances indicate.

Criteria

Attorneys who are candidates for this award must have spent a majority of their careers in the field of Professional Discipline, or performed exceptional work in this area. In addition attorneys must demonstrate outstanding contributions to the field by leadership and initiative, service and pro bono work.

We respectfully request that the Executive Committee approve the Robert J. Saltzman Memorial Award.