

# NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **STATE SENATOR VITALE, JUDGE BISSELL AND FORMER STATE BAR PRESIDENT EDWIN McCREEDY AMONG THOSE TO RECEIVE EQUAL JUSTICE AWARDS**

EDISON— The twentieth Legal Services Equal Justice Awards Reception, sponsored by Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ) and the New Jersey State Bar Association (NJSBA), will take place on Wednesday, May 3, 2006, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at the New Jersey Law Center in New Brunswick. The reception honors those in the public and private sectors who have made major contributions toward securing greater justice for people in poverty.

Among those to be honored will be the Honorable Joseph F. Vitale, New Jersey State Senator from the 19<sup>th</sup> District, and the Honorable John W. Bissell, retired chief judge of the U.S. District Court in New Jersey (now of counsel at Connell Foley, Roseland) who will receive the Richard J. Hughes Career Public Service Award; and Edwin J. McCreedy of McCreedy & Cox (Cranford), immediate past president of the NJSBA, who will receive the Debevoise-Eakeley Award.

Melville D. Miller, Jr., LSNJ president, said that Bissell is being honored “most especially for his overall leadership and example, stressing respect and fairness for all

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litigants, particularly those with less means and from other cultures.” The award to Vitale, said Miller, “is in recognition of his untiring and successful work to secure and preserve New Jersey FamilyCare and Medicaid benefits and other essential assistance for low-income people. Senator Vitale has been a true champion for those in poverty in New Jersey, even during difficult budget times.” McCreedy, said Miller, “is being cited for his efforts – as State Bar president and as a board member and Supreme Court working group member – on behalf of the IOLTA Fund, a critical source of support for Legal Services programs.”

Equal Justice Medals will be presented to eighteen private attorneys and law firms [listed below], and to recipients in three special categories:

- A doctor, Monroe Karetzky (Newark Beth Israel Medical Center), and a psychologist, Elizabeth Smith (Morristown), will be recognized for providing, without a fee, evaluations, consultation and expert testimony for Legal Services clients.
- The Warren County Bar Association will be honored for its regular financial support, through an annual special event, for Legal Services of Northwest Jersey.
- Four financial institutions – Crest Savings Bank (Wildwood Crest), Farmers and Mechanics Bank of Burlington, Peoples Savings Bank (Bordentown), and Synergy Bank (Cranford) – are being recognized, according to Miller, “for paying superior interest rates on IOLTA accounts.” Miller added that “New Jersey’s Legal Services programs depend to a great degree on the support they receive

from the IOLTA Fund. By paying rates above the required standard, these banks have significantly increased the IOLTA Fund's potential for providing support.”

The full list of recipients follows.

**THE RICHARD J. HUGHES CAREER PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD**

The Honorable John W. Bissell  
The Honorable Joseph F. Vitale

**THE DEBEVOISE-EAKELEY AWARD**

Edwin J. McCreedy

**EQUAL JUSTICE MEDALS**

**(Medical Professionals)**

Monroe Karetzky, M.D. (Fort Lee)  
Elizabeth M. Smith, Psy.D. (Morristown)

**(Financial Institutions)**

Crest Savings Bank (Wildwood Crest)  
Farmers and Mechanics Bank of Burlington  
Peoples Savings Bank (Bordentown)  
Synergy Bank (Cranford)

**(Bar Associations)**

Warren County Bar Association

**(Pro bono Private Attorneys and Law Firms)**

William Brigiani (Brigiani, Cohen & Schneider, East Brunswick)  
Bruce Buechler (Lowenstein Sandler PC, Roseland)  
David Dumbroff (O'Donnell & Dumbroff, Sparta)  
Amy Gjelsvik (Albino & Gjelsvik, Sparta)  
Kazmierczak & Kazmierczak (Oakland)  
Larry Lesnik (Ravin Greenberg PC, Roseland)  
William Mackin (Woodbury)  
Laurie Madziar (Morris, Downing & Sherred, Newton)  
Doris Masse (Ringwood)  
Steven Neuner and Joanne Ventura (Marlton)  
Eric Perkins (Nicolette & Perkins, Hackensack)  
Kurt Reinheimer (Reinheimer & Reinheimer, Toms River)  
Kenneth M. Schultz (Skoloff & Wolfe, Livingston)  
Michael Shuhala (Cliffside Park)

Ilana Volkov (Cole, Schotz, Meisel, Forman & Leonard, Hackensack)  
E. Elaine Voyles (Pennsville)  
Richard Weltman (Weltman & Moskowitz, Fairlawn)  
Richard Zuvich (Colonia)

*Legal Services programs provide essential legal aid—and access to the judicial system to resolve disputes—to people who cannot afford legal counsel for their civil legal problems. Through a network of six regional Legal Services programs, operating 22 local offices across the state, and LSNJ, the statewide coordinating office, the Legal Services system represents more than 51,000 low-income clients every year, and provides legal information and referral to tens of thousands more.*

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