Nonprofit Organizations Committee

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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2019 OUTSTANDING NONPROFIT LAWYER
AWARD RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED
The ABA Celebrates Outstanding Nonprofit Lawyers

Washington, D.C. – August 2, 2019: The legal nonprofit community has named the 2019 recipients of the annual “Outstanding Nonprofit Lawyer Awards.” The Nonprofit Organizations Committee of the American Bar Association, Business Law Section, recognizes accomplished and civic-minded nonprofit lawyers in the categories of Academic, Attorney, In-House Counsel, and Young Attorney. Additionally, the Committee bestows the Vanguard Award on a leading legal practitioner for his or her lifetime commitment to the nonprofit field. The 2019 recipients are:

Vanguard Award – for distinguished lifetime achievement in the nonprofit sector:

David M. Thoms
Warner Norcross + Judd LLP

Outstanding Academic Award – for distinguished academic achievement in the nonprofit sector:

Jill Manny
New York University
Outstanding Lawyer Award – for distinguished service as outside counsel to nonprofit organizations:

Douglas N. Varley
Caplin & Drysdale

Outstanding In-House Counsel Award – for distinguished service by a nonprofit in-house counsel:

Lara Kalwinski
Zakat Foundation of America

Outstanding Young Lawyer Award – for distinguished service by an attorney in the nonprofit sector who is under the age of 35 or has been in practice less than 10 years:

Martha Lackritz- Peltier
NGO Source, TechSoup Global

VANGUARD AWARD

David Thoms

David Thoms is Of Counsel at Warner Norcross + Judd LLP and has dedicated nearly forty years of his life to the practice of law. He has extensive experience in gift and estate planning, wealth transfer, family business succession planning and nonprofit organizations, providing trusted legal counsel to individuals, families and businesses throughout the region. His practice also encompasses economic development incentives, commercial real estate finance and tax planning.

Mr. Thoms has worked to advance the education and awareness around nonprofit law through numerous speaking engagements and through his service on various planned giving advisory committees. He also serves or has served on the boards of many prominent nonprofit organizations, including Madonna University, Kalamazoo College, the Henry M. Seldon Charitable Trust, the Salvation Army of Metropolitan Detroit, and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

In 2015, Mr. Thoms received the Best Lawyers in America recognition of being the Detroit Nonprofit/Charities Law Lawyer of the Year. He also is an Officier dans l’Ordre des Palmes Academiques of the French Government, and the Fondation Alliance Francaise awarded him La Medaille Paul Belmondo in 2014.
OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC AWARD RECIPIENT

Jill Manny

Jill Manny joined the faculty at New York University School of Law in 1993 and assumed the additional position of Executive Director of the National Center on Philanthropy and the Law (NCPL) at New York University School of Law in 1995. She teaches a variety of courses in the area of nonprofit and tax-exempt organizations, including the Law of Nonprofit Organizations, Tax-Exempt Organizations, Tax Aspects of Charitable Giving, and Private Foundations and Their Alternatives. Through her teaching, Professor Manny has inspired many students to pursue a career advising nonprofit organizations, whether in private practice or in-house.

Professor Manny is highly regarded for her legal scholarship, which includes articles on topics such as private foundations and their alternatives, artist endowed foundations, regulating charitable hybrids, nonprofit legislative speech, nonprofit payments to insiders and outsiders, and governance issues for nonprofit religious organizations. In addition to her role as a professor at NYU, Professor Manny has played an important role in developing and offering training programs for IRS employees who work in the exempt organizations division.

Professor Manny also has made a significant contribution to the nonprofit legal community through her service as the Executive Director of the NCPL. Among other activities, the NCPL holds an annual conference focused on a legal topic involving nonprofit organizations. Conference participants include leading academics, practitioners, government regulators at the federal and state level, and in-house attorneys. Professor Manny is also a member of the American Law Institute and is an advisor on the continuing project of the ALI to draft the Restatement of the Law of Charitable Nonprofit Organizations.

OUTSTANDING LAWYER AWARD RECIPIENT

Douglas Varley

Douglas Varley is a Member of Caplin & Drysdale in Washington, D.C. Over the last 25 years, Mr. Varley has advised some of the nation's leading private foundations, philanthropists, public charities, and other nonprofit organizations on matters ranging from best practices in governance and the conduct of innovative advocacy campaigns to complex business transactions and fundraising. His practice is well known for advising funders and grantees on how to use charitable assets to impact important policy debates, with a particular focus on environmental conservation. In addition, he advises private foundations and other nonprofit organizations on a range of legal issues, including complex affiliations between nonprofit and for-profit organizations, international grant making, funding scientific research, and compliance with federal tax rules for nonprofits generally. He has represented tax-exempt organization before the IRS on a wide range of issues both in examinations and seeking private guidance from the Service.

Mr. Varley is proud to have trained many younger lawyers who now serve as in house counsel at major nonprofit organizations and in private practice. He has served on the Board of Trustees of several national nonprofit organizations, including the National Audubon Society, the NRDC Action Fund, Open Society Policy Center and Earthjustice. He is an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University Law Center.
OUTSTANDING IN-HOUSE COUNSEL AWARD RECIPIENT

Lara Kalwinski

Lara Kalwinski is General Counsel at Zakat Foundation of America, an organization that engages in domestic and international grant making. She navigates nonprofit tax and operational issues including complexities associated with navigating the global transfer of grant funds in destabilized regions and among marginalized populations. Ms. Kalwinski previously served as Senior Counsel, Policy and Compliance and the Executive Director of National Standards for the Council on Foundations. She led the Council on Foundation's work on behalf of member foundations with Congressional committee staff; state and federal regulators; and peer philanthropic organizations.

Ms. Kalwinski trained thousands of foundation staff at conferences, presented to international, federal and state government officials, and published numerous articles about foundation governance and international grantmaking. Her career includes two years in India, conducting research for the Indiana University Center for Constitutional Design in Liberia, and being invited to train foundation staff throughout Japan. Ms. Kalwinski is on the Executive Committee for the Charity and Security Network led by Kay Guinane, and she has represented their work in The Hague, at the World Bank, and at the UN in Vienna. She is a Lilly Endowment Community Scholar and has received the Indiana Governor’s Award for Tomorrow’s Leaders. Ms. Kalwinski proudly works with this year’s Outstanding Young Lawyer Award recipient on U.S. tax-exempt organizations access to financial services.

OUTSTANDING YOUNG LAWYER AWARD RECIPIENT

Martha Lackritz-Peltier

Ms. Lackritz-Peltier is Chief Counsel at NGOsource, a project of the Council on Foundations and TechSoup Global, that aims to improve the efficiency of international grantmaking and inspire a significant increase in cross-border philanthropy by centralizing, streamlining, and standardizing the equivalency determination (ED) process for U.S. grantmakers. As Chief Counsel, Lackritz-Peltier supervises the program while independently managing a portfolio of ED applications, including reviews, approvals, and certifications. In addition to all aspects of ED management, she works closely with NGOsource’s global network to ensure a streamlined and efficient ED process by managing and responding to inquiries and training. She is also Associate General Counsel at TechSoup, where she advises the organization on tax-exempt law, corporate governance, contracts, and GDPR.

Prior to joining TechSoup, Ms. Lackritz-Peltier worked at the law firm of Adler & Colvin, where she counseled nonprofit and tax-exempt organizations and donors, with an emphasis on international grantmaking, advocacy, corporate governance, and charitable solicitation.

Prior to this, Lackritz-Peltier clerked for the Honorable Chief Justice Wallace Jefferson, interned for Nina Totenberg at NPR in Washington, D.C., lived in Vietnam under a Fulbright grant, and worked as a freelance journalist. She has authored numerous articles and blog posts on federal tax law regulations, nonprofit compliance, and international law.