

The Honourable Justice John I. Laskin will be honoured with the Toronto Lawyers' Association 2018 Award of Distinction on March 8, 2018

The TLA Award of Distinction recognizes the recipient's outstanding contribution to the integrity and worth of the law and to the legal profession, through a preeminent and lengthy career.

We are delighted to announce that the Honourable Justice John I. Laskin will be the 2018 recipient of this prestigious award at the TLA's annual Awards Gala which will be held at The Omni King Edward Hotel on March 8, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

Justice Laskin has been a judge of the Court of Appeal for Ontario since his appointment directly from practice in 1994. He had a distinguished career as a litigation lawyer and appellate counsel spanning 23 years before joining the Bench.

"Justice Laskin's immeasurable and ongoing contribution to the practice of law makes him a natural recipient of this important recognition" said Melanie Manchee, TLA Board President. "His passion and knowledge of the law have long inspired aspiring students, recently called and seasoned lawyers, and he personifies the high professional standards to which we commit in our profession" she added.

Justice Laskin has offered his insights into communicating persuasively in court in his seminal article, *Forget the Wind-up and Make the Pitch*, and in "What persuades (or, What's going on inside the judge's mind)". In the latter article, he exhorted advocates to use plain language:

“Above all, use plain language and avoid convoluted sentences. Pretend you are speaking to your well-informed next-door neighbours, who talk about their cars, not their motor vehicles ... and using their savings to build a cottage, not utilizing the proceeds of their remuneration to construct a summer dwelling-place.”

Justice Laskin graduated from University of Toronto Law School in 1969 and practised civil and public law litigation between 1971-1994 at Fasken & Calvin, Laskin, Jack & Harris, and finally at Davies, Ward & Beck.

His other accomplishments included distinguished service as a Member of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal; Counsel to several Commissions of Inquiry; Legal Counsel for Canadian Jewish Congress, Ontario Region and Fellow, American College of Trial Lawyers.

Following his appointment to the Court of Appeal, Justice Laskin has organized and taught in many programs on decision writing and advocacy, both in Canada and abroad. For many years he was co-chair of the annual CIAJ Judgment Writing seminar, and then of the NJI-CIAJ advanced judgment writing seminar, called Style and Context. He contributes frequently to the NJI's oral judgments program. And he has taught decision writing to many individual courts and tribunals in Canada. He has also spoken on advocacy at numerous programs, including OCAT's Annual Written Advocacy seminar. Abroad, he has taught judgment writing, advocacy and judicial education in Hong Kong, China, Albania, The Hague, Arusha, Scotland, New Mexico and Barbados.