Emma Rhodes to be honoured with the 2019 Honsberger Award at the Toronto Lawyers' Association (TLA) Awards of Distinction in Toronto

Emma Rhodes, a practicing lawyer committed to ensuring the representation of young people in the criminal justice system is this year's Honsberger Award recipient. Emma is a true advocate for children and youth placed in vulnerable positions within the legal system. She has dedicated her career to representing under-privileged youth and educating the public, law students and lawyers about the issues faced by this segment of society.

She will receive the 2019 Honsberger Award at The Omni King Edward Hotel's newly renovated Crystal Ballroom at 6:00 p.m. on **February 27, 2019**. The Honsberger Award is presented annually to a member of the TLA in recognition of a single unique accomplishment or ongoing contributions to the legal community and the community at large, exemplifying the TLA's three pillars: Knowledge, Community and Advocacy. (The Honsberger Award differs from the TLA Award of Distinction, which honours a recipient's lifetime achievement of excellence and contribution to the integrity and worth of the law and the legal profession.)

Emma's commitment to social justice extends beyond serving youth to adult matters as well. She is a panel lawyer for the Ministry of the Attorney General's Independent Legal Advice for Sexual Assault Survivors Pilot Program and acts for complainants in sexual assault cases in third party records applications. Emma has been appointed by the courts to act as *amicus curiae*, where the accused is suffering from mental health issues but has refused counsel.

She is equally focussed on public and legal education. Emma has been a part of the Board of Directors of Justice for Children and Youth since 2014, where she currently serves as a co-Vice Chair, and an Executive Member of the Child and Youth Law

section of the OBA since 2014, where she currently serves as Vice-Chair. Emma taught a seminar course as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Toronto Law School on Youth Criminal Justice from 2012 to 2014 and was an instructor in Osgoode's Trial Advocacy Program from 2010 to 2016. Remarkably, her efforts on behalf of youth included acting as a tutor for high school students in Regent Park. In addition to Emma's work on criminal matters, she is a panel lawyer for child protection cases, custody and access, Voluntary Youth Service Agreements, and secure treatment cases for the Office of the Children's Lawyer.

"**As the legal profession is increasingly challenged by public perception, Emma personifies the best in the practice of law. Her understated dedication to serving those less fortunate is a testament to all that the profession has to offer the public**", said Dirk Derstine TLA Board President. "**Her work is quietly lauded by the judiciary, crown counsel, students and in particular her clients**," he said.

Emma has also published widely in the area of youth criminal justice, including co-authoring a definitive textbook, *Prosecuting and Defending Youth Criminal Justice Issues*, (2016). Most recently, Emma was a contributor to *Wilson on Children and the Law*, (2017). Emma also has numerous other academic articles to her credit.

Her volunteer activities mirror her commitment to her legal practice and include her work on behalf of Covenant House, Community Legal Education Ontario and the Ontario Justice Education Network. She currently is a member of the Criminal Law Advisory Committee for Legal Aid Ontario.