

NEWS RELEASE

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ANGELACCIO NAMED 2009 LIBERTY BELL AWARD WINNER

CHICAGO, ILL. (April 15, 2009)—Cheryl Angelaccio, Lambda Legal, will be honored with the 2009 Liberty Bell Award at the annual Judges' Reception at 5 p.m., Monday, April 27, at the Chicago Bar Association (CBA), 321 S. Plymouth Court, Chicago. The award is presented by the Young Lawyers Section (YLS) of the CBA as part of its annual Community Law Week Celebration and recognizes a member of the community who is not an attorney and who has rendered service that strengthens the effectiveness of the American system of freedom under law.

Angelaccio has been a legal assistant for five years at Lambda, the oldest national organization pursuing litigation, public education and advocacy on behalf of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and HIV+ community. In nominating her, attorneys Christopher Clark and Camilla B. Taylor wrote that her work in *Varnum v. Brien*, an Iowa lawsuit seeking legal marriage for gay people, is an example of Angelaccio's commitment.

Her professional background, which includes undergraduate and masters degrees in psychology, enabled her to prepare Lambda's lawyers for witness examination at the trial. Lambda won the lawsuit, and in the succeeding appeal to the Supreme Court, Angelaccio again proved her value by searching out experts and hard-to-find research supporting Lambda's arguments. "Our own experts were amazed at our degree of preparation for depositions and our mastery of the underlying science," wrote Clark and Taylor.

Other citations of Angelaccio's excellence included her work in public education and her interaction with callers to the organization. "She handles callers gracefully, paying attention to

what they need and shows special sensitivity in dealing with callers who have suffered through distressing experiences such as harassment and discrimination.

“It is reassuring for us to know that, with Cheryl as the manager of our help desk, everyone who contacts Lambda legal will, at the very least, have talked to someone who truly listens to them and genuinely cares about their problems,” they wrote.

About the Award

The Liberty Bell Award promotes the ideals of justice, liberty, and the importance of individual and community responsibility and is bestowed on honorees who have met the following qualifications:

- a) they must not be lawyers;
- b) they must have a sense of responsibility for community welfare and public duty under the law;
- c) they must help others to understand and assert their rights under the law;
- d) they must promote and encourage respect for and obedience to the law;
and
- e) they must assist the smooth functioning of our system of justice.

The Liberty Bell Award winner will be presented with a commemorative plaque by Justice Mary Jane Theis of the Illinois Appellate Court at the Judges’ Reception which includes cocktails and appetizers. To RSVP for the complimentary event, call 312-554-2032 or email yls@chicagobar.org. Space is limited.