



**Trial Lawyers  
Section**

*Justice Irma Vidal Santaella  
Memorial Award For Excellence  
In The Courtroom*

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**

# Trial Lawyers Section

## *Justice Irma Vidal Santaella Memorial Award For Excellence In The Courtroom*

The Justice Irma Vidal Santaella Memorial Award for Excellence in the Courtroom was created by the Trial Lawyers Section in honor of the First Puerto Rican/Hispanic Female Judge elected to the New York State Supreme Court.

Justice Santaella graduated from Brooklyn Law School in 1961 and as the first Puerto Rican woman lawyer in New York. She served from 1983 through 1994 in Bronx and New York Counties. Prior to serving as a Supreme Court Judge, Judge Santaella served as a Commissioner for the Human Rights Appeal Board, and a commercial litigator and accountant in private practice. During the 1960's she became a strong advocate of Puerto Rican rights. In 1962, she founded the Legion of Voters, Inc. and served as its president until 1968. During her time as president, Santaella helped Senator Jacob Javits and Robert F. Kennedy draft an amendment to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to grant non-English speaking citizens the opportunity to vote. She is also a founder of N.O.W. and many other civil rights organizations.

The Section will present the Award annually in May. The Award will be given to a female litigator who has distinguished herself in the courtroom in either the Federal or State Courts in New York and who has shown a commitment to outstanding advocacy, protection of due process and the public welfare, and the integrity of the judicial system mentoring young attorneys and women in the legal community.

This award will recognize the courageous efforts in promoting integrity, justice, and fairness in the justice system in a manner that reflects Judge Santaellas' commitment to the struggle for justice and the qualities that made her an outstanding advocate for civil rights and the empowerment of the powerless.

### **Award Qualifications**

- The nominee has practiced substantially as a trial lawyer in state (or federal) courts in downstate New York.
- The nominee has exhibited excellence in trial advocacy and/or judicial service in the courtroom and demonstrated integrity and ethics.
- The nominee has demonstrated commitment to excellence in trial practice, and /or judicial service by professional engagement and involvement in the community, teaching or mentoring.
- The nominee has demonstrated a commitment to diversity and inclusion in the legal profession

### **Nomination deadline: December 1st, 2023**

**Prize Awarded:** The recipient will receive an award of recognition and a complimentary registration to the 2024 Trial Lawyers Annual meeting program on Thursday, January 18th, 2024.

**Date Presented:** The award will be presented during the Trial Lawyers and Torts, Insurance and Compensation Law Annual Meeting Awards Reception on January 18th, 2024 at the New York Hilton Midtown.

Questions can be directed to the Trial Lawyers Chair, Christian Soller (cjsoller@hodgsonruss.com).

# NOMINATION FORM

Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

Title (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting documentation is encouraged, such as news videos or articles, memos, letters of support, etc.

Please email completed nomination form and supporting documentation by December 1st, 2023 to the Trial Lawyers Section Liaison, Gina Bartosiewicz at [GBartosiewicz@nysba.org](mailto:GBartosiewicz@nysba.org).