



Trial Lawyers  
Section

*4th Annual  
Trial Lawyers  
Awards*

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**

# 4th Annual Trial Lawyers Awards

Nominations for exceptional contributions to both the legal profession and the community are currently open through the NYSBA Trial Lawyers Section. These awards acknowledge various facets of the legal and judicial realms and are open to nominations from the general public, not limited to Trial Lawyers Section members.

The recipients of the annual awards will be honored during the Awards and Networking Reception on January 16, 2025 during Annual Meeting at the New York Hilton Midtown Light refreshments will be served.

## **The Peter C. Kopff Trial Advocacy Award**

*In recognition of a career marked by integrity and adherence to the highest ethical standards.*

This award, established by the Trial Lawyers Section, honors the distinguished career of private practice trial lawyers and judges in New York State who embody integrity and the highest ethical standards in their profession.

**About Peter C. Kopff:** Peter C. Kopff is a highly distinguished attorney and trial advocate who served as Chair of the NYSBA Trial Lawyers Section from 2012-2013 and received the Distinguished Trial Lawyer Award in 2017. Known for his unwavering ethics, he has extensively lectured, published on trial advocacy, mentored many lawyers, and demonstrated a commitment to diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.

## **Award Qualifications**

The nominee has:

- Practiced as a trial lawyer in private practice or a member of the Judiciary in New York State
- Demonstrated success in providing high-quality education, training, teaching, or mentoring
- Exhibited excellence in trial advocacy and/or judicial service, maintaining integrity and ethical standards
- Committed to fostering diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.

## **The Justice Irma Vidal Santaella Memorial Award**

*In recognition of outstanding dedication to upholding integrity, justice, and empowerment in the legal profession, echoing the remarkable legacy of Judge Irma Vidal Santaella*

This award, established by the Trial Lawyers Section, honors a litigator or judge in New York State who exemplifies excellence in the courtroom and dedication to promoting integrity, justice, and fairness. Recipients are committed to promoting diversity and inclusion, engaging in professional development, community involvement, teaching, and mentoring. This award celebrates their courageous efforts in championing integrity, justice, and fairness, embodying the spirit of Judge Santaella's dedication to justice and the empowerment of the powerless.

**About Justice Irma Vidal Santaella:** 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 became 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 1960s, she became a strong advocate for Puerto Rican rights and founded the Legion of Voters, Inc., serving as its president until 1968. 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.

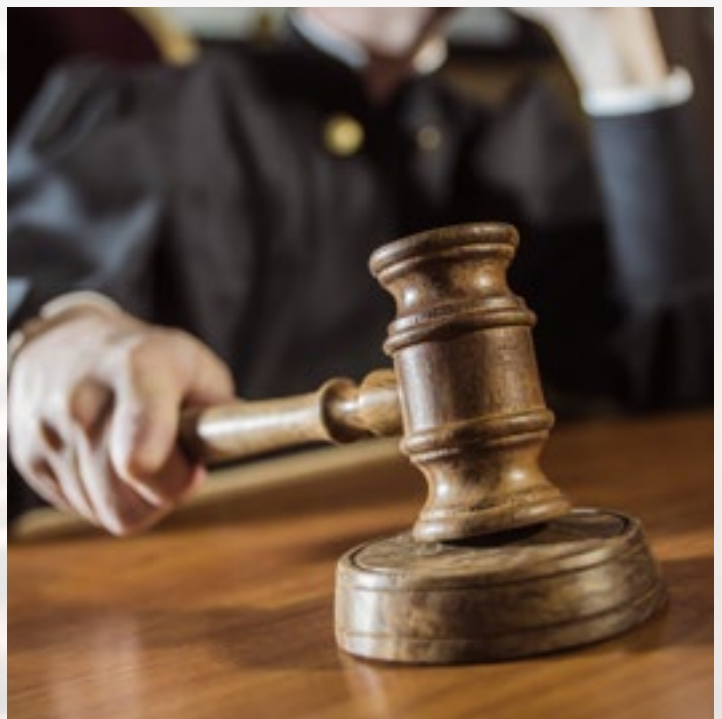
The award recognizes litigators in New York State who demonstrate excellence in the courtroom and uphold the highest standards of advocacy, due process, and integrity. Recipients exhibit significant experience as trial lawyers in state (or federal) courts in downstate New York, showcasing integrity and ethical conduct in trial advocacy and/or judicial service. They are committed to promoting diversity and inclusion within the legal profession, actively engaging in professional development, community involvement, teaching, and mentoring.

This award celebrates the courageous efforts of litigators and judges who champion integrity, justice, and fairness in the legal system, embodying the spirit of Judge Santaella's lifelong dedication to the pursuit of justice and the empowerment of the marginalized.

**Award Qualifications**

The nominee has:

- Significant experience as a trial lawyer or judge in New York State or federal courts in downstate New York
- Demonstrated excellence in trial advocacy and/or judicial service, displaying integrity and ethical conduct
- Dedication to achieving excellence in trial practice and/or judicial service through professional engagement, community involvement, teaching, or mentoring
- Commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion within the legal profession



# NOMINATION FORM

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

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

Nominated for the following Award:

- Betty Friedlander Award for Trial Excellence
- The Peter C. Kopff Trial Advocacy Award
- The Justice Irma Vidal Santaella Memorial Award

*(One selection per form. Note that you may nominate as many candidates as you would like in each category. Please use a separate form for each).*

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

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

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

Nominated by: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

**Candidate's Qualifications: Please provide details regarding the candidate's qualifications for this award, including:**

- Number of years in practice
- Location and nature of practice
- Trial experience and significant distinguishing qualities
- Demonstrations of commitment to the cultivation of excellence in trial skills (e.g., professional affiliation, writing, teaching, mentoring, etc.)

*Optional Supporting Information: Supporting documentation is encouraged, such as:*

- A resume or similar biographical material for the nominee
- News articles
- Brief writings
- Letters of support

Please limit all nomination materials to 25 pages or less.

**Nomination Deadline: November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Prize Awarded:** The recipient will receive an award of recognition and a complimentary registration to the 2025 Trial Lawyers Annual Meeting program on Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

**Presentation Date:** The award will be presented during the Trial Lawyers and Torts, Insurance, and Compensation Law Annual Meeting Awards Reception on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at the New York Hilton Midtown.

Questions can be directed to the Trial Lawyers Chair, Angélicque M. Moreno (amoreno@jkavanzino.com).

Please email completed nomination form and supporting documentation by **November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024** to the **Trial Lawyers Section Liaison, Gina Bartosiewicz (Gbartosiewicz@nysba.org)**.