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## **Judicial Independence Symposium Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> at DePaul College of Law**

What happens when judges who interpret the laws of the land face criticism from people who feel wronged by those interpretations? Is the effectiveness of judges premised on the notion that they will not face retaliation for judicial acts? Issues of judicial independence like these will be explored at a day-long symposium co-sponsored by the DePaul University College of Law's *Journal for Social Justice* and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. The Oct. 20 event will be held from 9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. in the DePaul Center, 1 E. Jackson Blvd., Room 8005, Chicago, Illinois.

“There is an assumption that judges have the freedom and independence to render decisions based on the law without suffering ramifications from those who oppose their rulings,” said DePaul College of Law professor Andrea Lyon. “Unfortunately, in many states, judges face public criticism from those who feel wronged by their decisions and, in extreme cases, special interest groups may call for their ouster. This symposium will look at some of the instances where judges have been subjected to political attacks because of their opinions as well as some of the issues impacting judicial independence. Lyon, who also directs DePaul's Center for Justice in Capital Cases, will discuss “The Politics of Criminal Defense Before an Elected Judiciary,” at 4p.m.

The program also will feature presentations by two judges who have been the target of political backlash because of decisions they rendered.

At 9:30 a.m. Illinois Supreme Court Justice **Thomas Kilbride** will discuss “When the Law and Business Interest Disagree.” Last year, a special interest group opposed to large jury awards in negligence cases sought to oust Kilbride by distorting his record in criminal cases. The Illinois Civil Justice League mounted an extensive broadcast and Internet campaign designed to characterize him as soft on crime. Faced with being the first supreme court justice in state history to lose a retention election, Kilbride had to raise millions of dollars just to fight the special interest campaign.

At 1:30 p.m. former Iowa Supreme Court Justice **David Baker** will address “When Special Interests Win.” When the Iowa Supreme Court voted unanimously to support gay marriage last year, special interests attacked Baker and two other justices facing retention. All three were forced from the bench.

Additional presenters will include:

- **Bert Brandenburg**—executive director of Justice at Stake, an agency that works to keep state and federal courts fair and impartial. At 10:15 a.m., Brandenburg will discuss “The Sudden Explosion of Campaign Spending.”
- **Jed Shugerman**—assistant professor at the Harvard Law School and an authority on judicial elections and independence. He will discuss “Judicial Recusal Motions” at 11:15 a.m.
- **Lisa Wayne**—president, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. Wayne will address “Making the Record Before a Biased Tribunal” at 2:15 p.m.

In addition, **Amanda Frost**, a law professor at the American University Washington College of Law, and **Stefanie A. Lindquist**, A.W. Walker Centennial Chair in Law at the University of Texas Law School will discuss judicial neutrality at 3:15 p.m.

For more information about the symposium contact Angela Kalsi at [angela.kalsi@gmail.com](mailto:angela.kalsi@gmail.com).

The full agenda for the symposium is here:

<http://www.nacdl.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=22495>

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**Note to Editors**—Journalists who would like to cover this event, please contact Valerie Phillips, DePaul University, at 312-613-8172 or [yphillip@depaul.edu](mailto:yphillip@depaul.edu).

*The National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers is the preeminent organization advancing the mission of the criminal defense bar to ensure justice and due process for persons accused of crime or wrongdoing. A professional bar association founded in 1958, NACDL's 10,000-plus direct members in 28 countries – and 90 state, provincial and local affiliate organizations totaling more than 40,000 attorneys – include private criminal defense lawyers, public defenders, military defense counsel, law professors and judges committed to preserving fairness and promoting a rational and humane criminal justice system.*

***National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers***

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