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# Ontario Bar Association Announces President's Award Recipients

*Firm and three of its litigators being recognized  
for championing lawyers with disabilities*

TORONTO – Ontario Bar Association President Kelly McDermott is recognizing three lawyers from the law firm of Conway Baxter Wilson LLP in Ottawa with the annual OBA President's Award.

Thomas G. Conway, Abdalla Barqawi and Mohammed Elshafie were selected because they are setting the bar for accommodation and creating a space where all lawyers can thrive. They will receive their awards at the annual OBA Awards Gala on June 20 in Toronto.

“This firm, led by Tom and promoted by Abdalla and Mohammed, has demonstrated exceptional leadership in moving the dial on accommodations for lawyers living and working with disabilities in the legal profession,” says McDermott. “They have set the gold standard in workplace accommodations. Their focus is on providing an environment where lawyers living with disabilities can thrive and shine and not simply adapt.”

“Their work exemplifies the transformative power of inclusivity and removing barriers to success for all members of our profession.”

“Abdalla and Mohammed are talented lawyers, on the cusp of becoming leaders of our great profession. Their energy and zest for life have inspired every member of our law firm,” Conway says. “Their friends at Conway Baxter Wilson are overjoyed that their life stories have also inspired this year's prestigious President's Award. We thank President Kelly McDermott for her tremendous leadership in promoting the OBA's Peer Support Network for Lawyers Living with Disabilities and for recognizing the example that Abdalla and Mohammed have shown for all of us.”

Each year, the OBA President's Award recognizes the significant contribution of an individual or organization, which, in the view of the current OBA president, has made a significant impact on the advancement of justice. Previous winners include the Hon. Roy McMurtry (2010), the Canadian Cross-Border Legal Coalition (2018) and Kristin Taylor, Carla Potter, Ardy Mohajer and Noble Chummar (2022).



Other awards to be handed out at next month's gala include:

### **Award for Distinguished Service**

Lisa Borsook, WeirFoulds LLP  
Sidney H. Troister, KC, Torkin Manes

### **Joel Kuchar Award for Professionalism and Civility**

Katherine DiTomaso, Stieber Berlach LLP

### **Linda Adlam Manning Award for Volunteerism**

Paul Lomic, Lomic Law

### **OBA Foundation Award**

Empowerment Council

### **Mundell Medal for Legal Writing**

Professor Karen Eltis, University of Ottawa

In addition, the inaugural recipient of the **Orlando Da Silva Award for Improvement of Mental Wellbeing in the Justice Sector** will be announced at the gala from a list of the following finalists:

- Associate Well Being Program, McMillan LLP
- Teresa Donnelly, Ministry of the Attorney General
- Doron Gold, The Lawyer Therapist
- HHR Wellness Employee Program, Henein Hutchison Robitaille LLP
- Stephen Kelly, Kelly Santini LLP
- Voices for Mental Health, Ministry of the Attorney General

Come celebrate the achievements of some of Ontario's brightest legal stars at the OBA's annual Awards Gala. Click [here](#) to purchase tickets.

### **ABOUT THE ONTARIO BAR ASSOCIATION**

Established in 1907, the OBA is the largest voluntary legal association in Ontario representing over 16,000 lawyers, judges, law professors and law students. The OBA provides continuing professional development and advocates for improvements to the law in the interests of the profession and public.