

Frank Walwyn Honoured by Ontario Bar Association

April 28, 2016

Frank Walwyn, senior litigation partner at WeirFoulds, received the Ontario Bar Association's 2016 Award for Distinguished Service at an award ceremony in Toronto on April 20, 2016. In ["Frank Walwyn honoured by Ontario Bar Association"](#), an article featured on ShareNews.com, Frank's colleagues and peers explain why Frank is deserving of this distinction.

Ontario Court of Appeal judge Michael Tulloch said Walwyn is deserving of his peers' recognition. "Frank reflects and represents a generation of Black lawyers who are consummate professionals, who are beneficiaries of an excellent legal education, training, mentorships and support systems and who themselves possess the discipline, work ethic and legal acumen to compete with the best in the world," he said. "Gone are the days when our detractors can marginalize us and relegate us as being not good enough."

"He epitomizes the best in the legal profession and this is why he is being recognized. At the same time, he's not unusual within our community as excellence is a standard that runs in our race and we can see many Black professionals like Frank in many fields every day if we just look around us."

Retired Ontario Court regional senior court judge Greg Regis said Walwyn's contribution to the legal profession and the justice system does not only come from his considerable skills as a lawyer. "He also spends time teaching and mentoring young lawyers and his work as a member of the judicial appointment committee that selects qualified lawyers for appointment as judges of the Ontario Court of Justice has real impact on the wider community," said Regis. "This committee has earned the reputation of having the strongest process for the selection of judges in Canada."

Lee Akazaki, a partner at Gilbertson Davis LLP, nominated Walwyn for the award. "Throughout the time I have known Frank, he's a singularly unique diplomat of the Bar, an exemplar of civility and, from what I can tell, a tremendous lawyer when he finds time to practice," said Akazaki, an OBA past president. "The fact that he has received honours from other organizations should not deter the OBA from doing so. It is for us a matter of catching up to the rest of the Canadian legal community in joining the Frank Walwyn Fan Club. I believe that despite other recognitions, it is important that the OBA recognize him in order to shine a spotlight on the fact that he is really one of our own success stories."

Derry Millar, who last year retired from the partnership at WeirFoulds after 37 years, said Walwyn represents the best of Canada's legal profession. "Simply looking at his CV and looking at everything he has done demonstrate why he's a worthy recipient of this award," said Millar, a former Law Society of Upper Canada treasurer. "He is a dedicated lawyer who brings intelligence, compassion and empathy to everything he does. I sometimes wonder if Frank ever sleeps because he has so much on the go. I am honoured to be Frank's friend and I was proud to be his partner for many years until I retired."

Professional mediator and adjudicator Patricia DeGuire was the recipient of the accolade four years ago. "Frank is known for his effective and unique litigation strategies that have been lauded by the Privy Council," said DeGuire, who co-founded the Julius Alexander Isaac Scholarship for students enrolled in the University of Windsor's Faculty of Law. "He continues to make remarkable contributions to the legal and broader communities and is most deserving of any recognition by his peers and colleagues."

JUST. Magazine, an Ontario Bar Association publication, also published an article about the Ontario Bar Association's 2016 Award for Distinguished Service. "[Paying it Forward: OBA Distinguished Service Award Winner Frank Walwyn](#)", focuses on the many reasons why the Ontario Bar Association awarded Frank Walwyn with its 2016 Distinguished Service Award.

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