

## NYSBA Annual Meeting

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# ComFed: Intersection Of the Federal And State Judiciary

The intersection of the federal and state courts is celebrated by the Commercial and Federal Litigation Section. The section this year has brought new meaning to its name of being the go-to bar group representing commercial and federal litigators by melding both the federal and state judiciaries into its programing.

This year, the section created a new annual award, the first in a decade, called the Shira A. Scheindlin Award for Excellence in the Courtroom. The award is named after retired U.S. District Judge and former chair of the section, Shira A Scheindlin, to honor a woman who has distinguished herself in either state or federal court and who has been actively involved in mentoring attorneys. The award was conferred in the ceremonial courtroom at the Southern District of New York and the audience heard remarks from New York State Court of Appeals Chief Judge Janet DiFiore, Second Circuit Judge Denny Chin, Southern District Chief Judge Colleen McMahon and Eastern District Chief Judge Dora Irizarry. During that same event, the section presented to five young women attorneys scholarships named after New York's former chief judge called the Judith S. Kaye Commercial and Federal Litigation Scholarship.

Further, to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, Chief Judge DiFiore will present the section's 2017 Stanley H. Fuld Award to the Second Circuit. Chief Judge Robert A. Katzmann will accept the award



**Mark A. Berman**

**Chair**  
Commercial and  
Federal Litigation  
Section

in recognition of the circuit's outstanding contributions to the development of commercial law and jurisprudence in New York state. The Second Circuit is the ideal choice for the Fuld Award, as its thoughtful and insightful opinions have advanced commercial law in New York and have provided guidance to business and litigators regarding the legal standards under which businesses operate in our state. The Annual Meeting's CLEs will include judges from both state and federal courts, including Second Circuit Judge Rosemary S. Pooler and Commercial Division Justices O. Peter Sherwood and Timothy S. Driscoll. In furtherance of celebrating the Second Circuit's anniversary, the section will host a reception at the Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse the evening before its Annual Meeting, where young attorneys will have the opportunity to meet the judges.

The section will work with the Second Circuit and the New York Courts Historical Society to develop a program that will look at the historical link between the New York State Court of Appeals and the Second Circuit through the prism of commercial law, in which both courts have been leaders. Concepts for this program are under

development and may include cases where the Second Circuit certified questions of New York law to the New York Court of Appeals on commercial issues.

The section has travelled and will travel throughout the state for its monthly meetings, some of which have been held for the first time in various federal courthouses. In December, we travelled to Syracuse to hear U.S. District Judge Brenda R. Sannes speak; in January, Karen Greve Milton, the Second Circuit Executive, spoke to our Executive Committee; and then, in February, we will be going to the Charles L. Brieant Jr. Federal Building and Courthouse in Westchester to hear U.S. District Judge Cathy Seibel.

The section looks forward to continuing this wonderful conjoining of the state and federal judiciaries in our programming for the years to come.

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