

FOR: Illinois Bar Foundation

CONTACT: Jessie Austin, 312.726.6072 or [jaustin@illinoisbarfoundation.org](mailto:jaustin@illinoisbarfoundation.org)

***News Release***

**Former IBF President to Receive  
National Conference of Bar Foundations Excellence Award**

**CHICAGO, IL, January 2017** – Judge Debra Walker, former President of the Illinois Bar Foundation, is the recipient of the 2017 National Conference of Bar Foundations (NCBF) Excellence Award. The award, to be presented at the NCBF midyear meeting in Miami in February, recognizes an outstanding contribution to law-related philanthropy by an individual. Prior to her election to the Cook County Circuit Court in 2008, she was a partner at the law firm of Clausen Miller, P.C. where she concentrated on professional liability matters.

Judge Walker has a long record of leadership in the legal profession. As a past president of the Illinois Bar Foundation, she served longer than any other board member in its 65-year history, holding the offices of Secretary and Vice President, as well as Chair of the Fellows program. A regular attendee at NCBF meetings, she served one term on the NCBF Board of Trustees, which included her service as chair of the Awards Committee and as a member of the Program Committee. She also participated as a presenter at NCBF midyear and annual meetings. She was recently elected to the Illinois Judges Foundation board of directors.

In addition to her bar foundation service, Judge Walker was president of the Women's Bar Association of Illinois, and is an active member of the Illinois State Bar Association. She has also been tapped for service by the Illinois Supreme Court, serving on its Commission on Professionalism since its inception in 2005, and which she currently chairs. In 2012, she was appointed to the Court's newly created Access to Justice Commission on which she continues to serve.

The Illinois Bar Foundation raises funds for distribution to Illinois nonprofit organizations whose mission is to provide free legal services to those with limited means. It also provides assistance to lawyers who can no longer support themselves due to incapacity. The Foundation also oversees the Illinois JusticeCorps program, which provides trained part-time student volunteers to serve as guides in courthouses. This year, the Foundation will distribute more than \$750,000 in funds.

The NCBF is an independent, voluntary association of volunteer leaders and professional staff from bar foundations across the country, providing philanthropic support for the legal and justice system. The NCBF hosts two bi-annual meetings held in conjunction with the American Bar Association.

The Illinois Bar Foundation is located at 20 S. Clark St., Suite 910, Chicago, IL 60603. Call (312) 726-6072 or visit [www.illinoisbarfoundation.org](http://www.illinoisbarfoundation.org).

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