

## **Justice Rosalie Abella to receive the Toronto Lawyers' Association 2019 Award of Distinction on February 27, 2019 in Toronto**

The TLA Award of Distinction is awarded annually to recognize the recipients' integrity, accomplishments and long-term contribution to the legal profession.

We're delighted to announce that Justice Rosalie Abella will receive this important award for 2019 at The Omni King Edward Hotel's newly renovated Crystal Ballroom on **February 27, 2019**, at 6:00 p.m.

Justice Abella was appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada in 2004 and is the first Jewish woman appointed to the Court. Born in a Displaced Person's Camp in Stuttgart, Germany on July 1, 1946, Justice Abella's family came to Canada as refugees in 1950. She is the first refugee appointed to the bench in Canada.

**"Justice Abella has long demonstrated an inspiring combination of courage, empathy and unwavering dedication to the practice of law"**, said Dirk Derstine, TLA Board President.

**"Her character, knowledge and life long quest for truth and justice reflect the high professional standards to which we all aspire as members of the legal community,"** he said.

Justice Abella's contribution to the practice of law and the international acknowledgment of employment equity, equality and discrimination is exemplary. As sole Commissioner of the 1984 federal Royal Commission on Equality in Employment, she articulated ground breaking concepts in her Report that were adopted by the Supreme Court of Canada in its first decision dealing with equality rights under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in 1989. (The report has been implemented by the governments of Canada, New Zealand, Northern Ireland and South Africa.)

She subsequently served as Chair of the Ontario Labour Relations Board, Chair of the Ontario Law Reform Commission and Boulton Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Law of McGill University. Justice Abella also served as a commissioner on the Ontario Human Rights Commission; as a member of the Ontario Public Service Labour Relations Tribunal; as Co-Chair of the University of Toronto Academic Discipline Tribunal; as a member of the Premier's Advisory

Committee on Confederation; and as Chair of the Study on Access to Legal Services by the Disabled.

Justice Abella has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Distinguished Alumnus Award of the University of Toronto Faculty of Law; the Alumni of Influence Award from University College; the Distinguished Service Award of the Canadian Bar Association (Ontario); the International Justice Prize of the Peter Gruber Foundation; the Human Relations Award of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews; the Honourable Walter S. Tarnopolsky Human Rights Award; the Bora Laskin Award for Distinguished Service in Labour Law; the Global Jurist of the Year from Northwestern Pritzker School of Law; the Ethical Leadership Award from the Faculty of Management at Dalhousie University; the Calgary Peace Prize; the Women in Law Lifetime Achievement Award; the Goler T. Butcher Medal for International Human Rights from the American Society of International Law; and is an Honourary Bencher of Middle Temple.

She holds 38 honorary degrees and is a distinguished author, having written over 90 articles and written or co-edited four books. She was made a Senior Fellow of Massey College in 1989, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1997, a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2007 and elected to the American Philosophical Society in 2018. She has given, among others, the Harlan Lecture at Princeton; the Ryan Lecture at Georgetown; the Winchester Lecture at Oxford and the Anderson Lecture at Yale. She was the Bullock Chair at the Hebrew University; the Mackenzie King Distinguished Visiting Professor at Harvard; the Floersheimer Distinguished Jurist in Residence at Cardozo; a Distinguished Visiting Faculty at the University of Toronto Law School, and Bright International Jurist in Residence at the University of Hawaii School of Law.

Justice Abella is married to Canadian historian Irving Abella. They have two sons, Jacob and Zachary, both of whom are lawyers.