Villanova Law J. Willard O'Brien American Inn of Court

In September the Villanova Law J. Willard O'Brien American Inn of Court in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, began its 20th anniversary celebration with a keynote address by Judge Marjorie Rendell, a founding Master of the Inn.

Rendell is a senior judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit where she remains active on the court and chairs the Third Circuit's Court and Community Committee.

Before dinner, Rendell participated in the Inn's speed networking event, an annual tradition in which Pupil and Associate members rotate through tables and spend three minutes each with Master of the Bench and Barrister members, giving everyone a brief chance to find out more about each other.

In her remarks, Rendell reflected on the start of the Inn and its growth. She noted that the vision and mission of the American Inns of Court set forth lofty ideological goals, but at the same time gave members very practical goals for the profession and for maintaining its high standards.

Rendell reminded the Inn that good programs include lively discussion facilitated by a leader who involves all members as participants, not observers. She recalled that over the years many of the Inn programs featured the word “difficult”, as in difficult clients, partners, or adversaries, and, oh yes, judges. Noting that “they don’t teach difficult in law school,” she emphasized that the Inn offered reflections of experienced team members who recalled situations they had encountered with such “difficult” people and gave younger attorneys examples of contentious conduct and ways to deal with it.

Rendell commented on how thoughtful and focused the Inn’s efforts have been over the years, providing a rich, real experience for Inn members. She also emphasized the importance for the more experienced members to reach out through the Inn to younger members.

Rendell ended by challenging Inn members to focus more on wellness and ramp up their energy areas, which will continue to keep the Inn relevant.

Nominations Sought for American Inns of Court Christensen, Powell, and O’Connor Awards

Each year the American Inns of Court recognizes individuals whose lives—as well as their words and standards—reflect professionalism, ethics, civility, and excellence in the legal community. Please consider nominating someone for the following awards:

The Lewis F. Powell, Jr., Award for Professionalism and Ethics recognizes exemplary service to the legal profession in the areas of professionalism, ethics, and civility.

The A. Sherman Christensen Award honors an American Inn of Court member who has provided distinguished, exceptional, and significant leadership to the American Inns of Court.

The Sandra Day O’Connor Award for Professional Service recognizes an Inn member in practice 10 or fewer years for excellence in public interest or pro bono activities.

Nominations are due June 1, 2020
For nomination information, please visit www.innsofcourt.org and click on Awards and Scholarships.