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THE DAILY RECORD

# Maryland Lawyer

News and analysis of legal matters in Maryland

## Breaking news

# Leadership in Law winners choose Coe

BY STEVE LASH

steve.lash@mddailyrecord.com

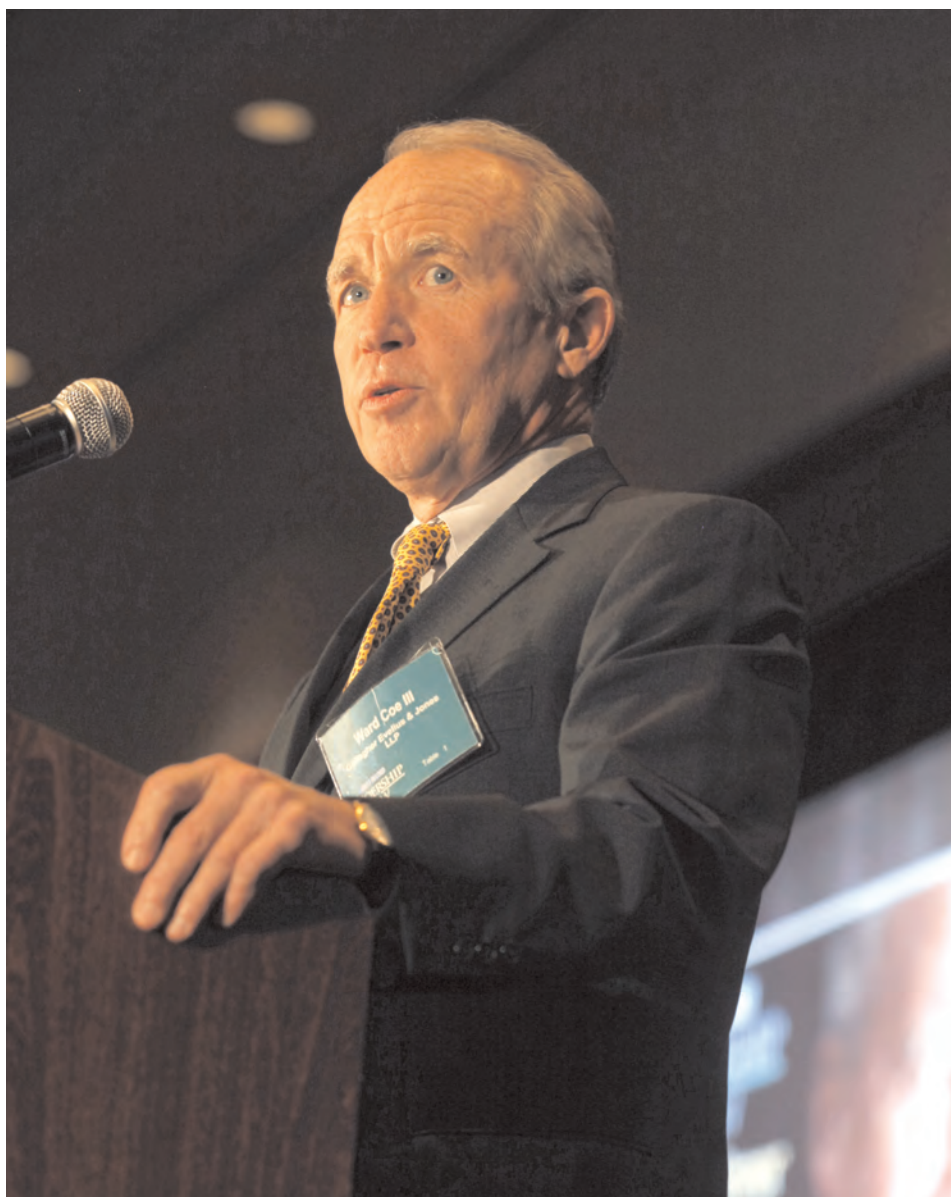
## Twenty-four honored by The Daily Record

Ward B. Coe III, chairman of the **Court of Appeals'** Standing Committee on Pro Bono Service, received **The Daily Record's** top Leadership in Law award for 2009 — an honor that left the veteran litigator expressing gratitude for being in a profession he called a force for justice.

"It's astonishing, the contributions lawyers are making to our society," Coe said in accepting the award at Friday's awards luncheon. "I thank you for this recognition, and this is for you guys."

Coe began the brisk fall day as one of 24 winners of the ninth annual Leadership in Law award, which recognizes members of Maryland's legal community who have made outstanding contributions to the profession and public service.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Bonnie Greenberg, one of the honorees, called it "very humbling to be among this group [considering] what they do to better the community." She was recognized at the lunchtime ceremony for helping to develop Maryland's Project Safe Childhood, which combines law enforcement and community lead-



DENNIS DRENNER

Ward B. Coe III, selected by his fellow winners for the top honor, took the opportunity to praise their work for justice. 'This is for you guys,' he said.

ers in combating online child exploitation and abuse.

The two dozen winners voted on which of them would take home the top prize, but the result was not announced until the luncheon at the BWI Hilton in Linthicum.

Off the stage, Coe continued to praise the unpaid contributions of his fellow honorees, including lawyers and judges who volunteer to help low-income civil and criminal litigants, mentor young attorneys and teenagers, and serve on the boards of charities.

“It’s just what the profession should be doing,” said Coe, a partner at **Gallagher Evelius & Jones LLP** in Baltimore. “It’s to help society, help make justice work.”

Coe said he is proud to be practicing in a state where more than 50 percent of the attorneys do pro bono work and added that he hopes the percentage increases.

In his most enduring case, Coe led lawyers from **Whiteford, Taylor & Preston LLP**, his former firm; the **Legal Aid Bureau**; and the **Children’s Defense Fund** in suing Baltimore’s foster program in 1984 for alleged injustices. A quarter-century later, Coe remains the pro bono trustee and legal advisor for the settlements awarded in trust in that case.

Coe, 64, has also been recognized nationally for his work in securing representation for indigent litigants, having received the Pro

Bono Publico Award in 2006 from the American Bar Association.

Through it all, he has managed to keep a sense of humor.

Asked upon winning the top honor if he would like to say a few words, Coe noted his 35 years as a litigator and told the audience, “Don’t get worried” that he would decline the invitation to talk.

### **About the awards**

A panel of five judges selected the honorees from statewide nominations. The judges included Deborah Jeon, legal director at the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland; Thomas Perez, assistant U.S. attorney general for civil rights; former Prince George’s County Circuit Judge Richard Sothoron Jr., of counsel at Gibbs & Haller; and Craig Thompson, a partner at Venable LLP in Baltimore, in addition to Barbara Grzincic, managing editor/law at The Daily Record.

In addition to Coe and Greenberg, other honorees included Judges C. Yvonne Holt-Stone of the District Court of Maryland in Baltimore; Patrice E. Lewis of the District Court of Maryland in Prince George’s County; and David W. Young of the Baltimore City Circuit Court.

The list also included Daniel A. Friedman, counsel to the General Assembly; Cynthia M. Boersma, legislative director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland;

and Assistant Baltimore State’s Attorney Charles Blomquist.

Also honored were Mary Cina Chalawsky, of the Law Offices of Peter G. Angelos; University of Maryland School of Law professor Paula A. Monopoli; and Anne Arundel Community College law professor Karen L. Cook.

Maryland State Bar Association President Thomas C. Cardaro, founding partner of Cardaro & Peek, was also a winner, as was Wayne M. Willoughby, of Maryland Transportation Authority, past president of the Maryland Association for Justice.

Other law-firm partners honored this year were Philip M. Andrews, of Kramon & Graham; Lauri E. Cleary, of Lerch, Early & Brewer; Ann T. Cole, of Miles & Stockbridge; Jason A. Frank, of Frank, Frank & Scherr; Teri M. Guarnaccia, of Ballard Spahr; Lisa Harris Jones, of Harris Jones & Malone; Elise Davison Morris, of Whiteford, Taylor & Preston; Michael C. Powell, of Gordon, Feinblatt, Rothman, Hoffberger & Hollander; Cyril Smith, of Zuckerman Spaeder; Robert W. “Jay” Smith, of DLA Piper; and Thomas J.S. Waxter III, of Goodell, DeVries, Leech & Dann.

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