



## Washington State Bar Association

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Judge Deborah D. Fleck Receives 2009 Award of Merit

(SEATTLE) — The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) announces that King County Superior Court **Judge Deborah D. Fleck** will be presented with the 2009 Award of Merit. First given in 1957, the Award of Merit is the WSBA's highest honor, most often given for long-term service to the Bar or the public, although it has also been presented in recognition of a single, extraordinary contribution or project. It is awarded to individuals only — both lawyers and non-lawyers. WSBA President **Mark Johnson** will present the award at the WSBA Annual Awards Dinner, to be held on September 24, 2009, at the Hyatt at Olive 8 in Seattle.

Judge Fleck is being honored for her leadership in advocating for adequate funding for Washington state courts and promoting access to justice for all. She is particularly being recognized for her role in the Justice in Jeopardy Initiative, which includes her current service as co-chair of the Justice in Jeopardy Implementation Committee. Chief Justice **Gerry Alexander** has called the Justice in Jeopardy Initiative “the most significant reform effort of the judicial branch of government since statehood.” He added, “Judge Fleck has been more instrumental than any other judge in achieving the gains we have made in securing adequate funding for our state's trial courts.”

In 2005, Judge Fleck was the recipient of the WSBA Outstanding Judge Award. Other honors include the 2000 Judge of the Year Award from the Washington State Trial Lawyers Association; the 2004 Vanguard Award from the King County Chapter of Washington Women Lawyers; the 2005 President’s Award from the King County Bar Association; and the 1999 Jurist of the Year Award by the WSBA Family Law Section.

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Judge Fleck is a frequent speaker and panelist at conferences and seminars, and has written articles for publication in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, *The News Tribune*, the King County Bar Association *Bar Bulletin*, and the *Washington State Bar News*.

Judge Fleck received her undergraduate degree and teaching certificate from the University of Washington, and her law degree from Seattle University School of Law (then the University of Puget Sound School of Law). She has been a King County Superior Court judge since 1992, serving as chief judge of the Regional Justice Center and in the criminal, civil, and juvenile departments. She has served in many capacities for the Board for Judicial Administration (BJA), the policy-making body for Washington's judicial branch of government, including BJA co-chair with Chief Justice Alexander from 2003 to 2005; chair of the Long Range Planning Committee; and chair of the Judiciary and the Media Committee. Judge Fleck has also served in a variety of roles with the Superior Court Judges' Association, including a term as president from 2002-2003, and with the Minority and Justice Commission, where she chairs the Workforce Diversity Sub-committee.

#### **About the Washington State Bar Association**

The WSBA is part of the judicial branch, exercising a governmental function authorized by the Washington State Supreme Court to license the state's 33,200 lawyers. The WSBA both regulates lawyers under the authority of the Court and serves its members as a professional association – all without public funding. As a regulatory agency, the WSBA administers the bar admission process, including the bar exam; provides record-keeping and licensing functions; and administers the lawyer-discipline system. As a professional association, the WSBA provides continuing legal education for attorneys, in addition to numerous other educational and member-service activities.

The governance of the WSBA is vested in its Board of Governors. There are three governors from the seventh congressional district; one from each of the other eight districts; and three at-large, one of whom represents the Young Lawyers Division. The president is **Mark A. Johnson**, of Seattle. 2008-2009 president-elect is **Salvador A. Mungia**, of Tacoma; 2009-2010 president-elect is **Steven G. Toole**, of Bellevue; and the immediate past-president is **Stanley A. Bastian**, of Wenatchee. The Board meets regularly (every six weeks) at various locations around the state, and its meetings are open to the public. Much of the work of the Bar is carried out through its numerous standing committees, 27 sections, and a Young Lawyers Division with its many committees.

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