

VERMONT TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL MEETING

FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 2025



HONORING RETIRED JUDGE HELEN TOOR



5 CLE Credits

June 20, 2025

(4 general credits plus 1 hr. diversity and inclusion)

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

8:30 a.m. - 09:00 a.m.

REGISTRATION

09:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

PRIVILEGES IN VERMONT

Judge David Barra

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

A REVIEW OF FEDERAL COURTS IN VERMONT

Judge Mary Kay Lanthier

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

A CAREER IN THE LAW

Judge Helen Toor

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

LUNCH/BUSINESS MEETING

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

A NEW CAREER IN THE VERMONT COURT SYSTEM

Judge Bonnie Badgewick

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

VERMONT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
JURISDICTION, COMMON CLAIMS, and THE HRC PROCESS

Mitch Rotbert

Big Hartman

FEATURED SPEAKERS:



JUDGE BONNIE BADGEWICK

Judge Bonnie Badgewick was appointed by Governor Phil Scott as Superior Court Judge in 2024. She was a trial lawyer in Woodstock, Vermont since 2001, and served as Chair of the VTLA. Bonnie earned her J.D. from Suffolk University Law School and earned her B.A. in Political Science and Peace Studies from Siena College.



JUDGE DAVID BARRA

Judge Barra graduated from Williams College, cum laude with a double major in English and History (with honors). He earned his Juris Doctor degree from Georgetown University Law Center. Judge Barra was admitted to practice law in Vermont in 1982 and has argued several matters in the Vermont Supreme Court and the United States Courts of Appeal for the 2nd and 4th Circuits. He previously served on the VBA Alternative Dispute Resolution and Municipal Law committees and is a former chair of the VBA Young Lawyers Section.



TOM BIXBY

Tom attended St. Anselm College in Manchester, NH, and received a B.A. in English in 1993 and a J.D. from Thomas Cooley School of Law in Lansing, MI in 1998. In May of 1998, Tom was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar, and in May of 2000, he was admitted to the Vermont Bar and moved to Brattleboro, VT representing clients in all matters of civil litigation, including ski injury and railroad (FELA) cases. He is a Trustee of the Vermont Trial Lawyers Association.



JOHN BLOOMER

John is a graduate of Rutgers University School of Law and has been practicing civil and criminal trial law in Rutland and surrounding areas for over 30 years. He also has a long family and personal background in Vermont politics, having served 4 terms in the Vermont State Senate and later serving as Secretary of the Senate since 2015. He is a Trustee of the Vermont Trial Lawyers Association.



FRANCESCA BOVE

Francesca's practice at Ryan Smith & Cabine involves representation of insured individuals, institutions, and employers and advises health care institutions on regulatory compliance. She is a graduate of Seton Hall University Law School and has practiced law since 2011. She is a trustee of the Vermont Trial Lawyers Association.



BIG HARTMAN

Big Hartman, HRC Executive Director & General Counsel.

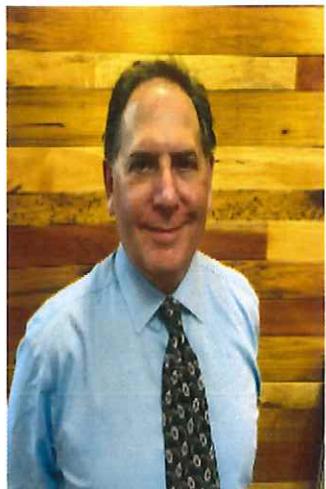
Big Hartman joined the HRC in September of 2021 as a Staff Attorney Investigator and became Executive Director in 2023. They bring to the Commission nearly 20 years of experience as an attorney in Vermont. After graduating from Vermont Law School magna cum laude in 2005, Hartman worked at a Stowe law firm representing Workers' Compensation claimants and personal injury plaintiffs. From 2007-2013, Hartman was in-house counsel at the Vermont State Employees' Association, representing the union and its members in cases before the Vermont Labor Relations Board and in Vermont courts. Before joining the HRC, Hartman operated a solo law practice called Welcoming Workplaces that was focused on preventing workplace harassment through workplace trainings and management consultations. In 2019, Welcoming Workplaces contracted with the Vermont Commission on Women to compile resources and develop online content for the VCW's workplace harassment prevention website (<https://workplacesforall.vermont.gov/>).

Along with their broad experience as an attorney assisting both managers and employees, Hartman brings years of training and knowledge regarding equity and inclusion work. Over the years, Hartman has also served as a Board member for non-profit organizations, including the Vermont Association for Justice, the Washington County Bar Association, and the Circle of Women International.



JUDGE MARY KAY LANTHIER

Judge Lanthier was nominated by President Joe Biden in 2024 to serve as a United States District Judge and was sworn in on September 17, 2024. Prior to this, she was the Rutland County Public Defender with an extensive background in Criminal Defense. She was also an Adjunct Faculty Member at the Vermont Law School. Judge Lanthier grew up in Castleton, Vermont, and lives in Orwell, Vermont.



MITCH ROTBERT

Mitch joined the Vermont Human Rights Commission in October 2023 after a long career in private practice. Born and raised in New York, Mitch received his A.B. in English and American History from Columbia University (1982) and his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center (1988). Mitch is an experienced trial and appellate lawyer, having tried and argued numerous cases in federal and state courts around the country. Mitch became a member of the Vermont Bar in August 2023.



JUDGE HELEN TOOR

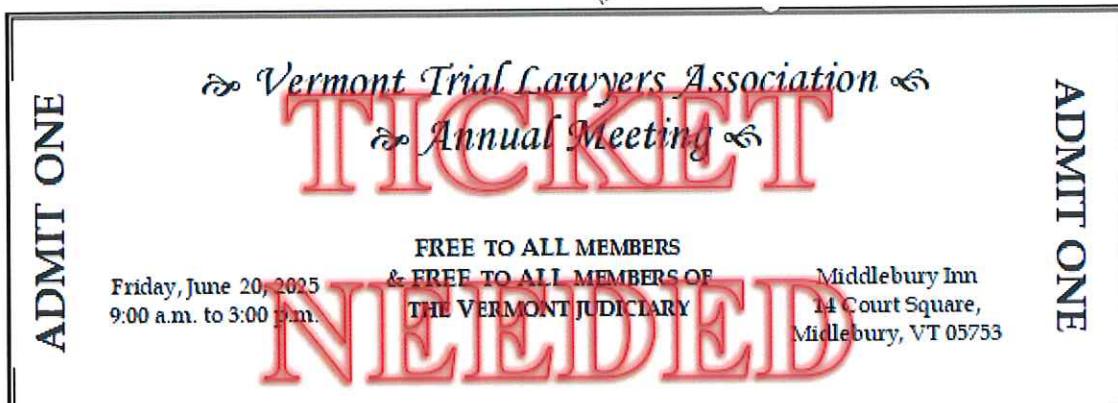
Judge Toor graduated from the University of Vermont in 1978 and the University of Chicago Law School. She practiced law in New York for 7 years and then in 1989 served as chief of the civil division for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Vermont for 10 years. Then-governor Howard Dean appointed her in 1999 as Vermont Superior Court Judge. Judge Toor retired on July 31, 2024, having been Vermont's longest-serving Superior Court Judge.



PATRICK WINBURN

Patrick Winburn has been practicing law in Vermont since 1987. He is listed in Best Lawyers in America in personal injury and medical malpractice law and is rated Av by Martindale-Hubbell. He has tried over 100 contested jury trials and has received two jury verdicts in excess of \$1M. He is a graduate of George Washington University, BA, 1977 and the University of Miami, JD, 1980. He is a Trustee of the Vermont Trial Lawyers Association.

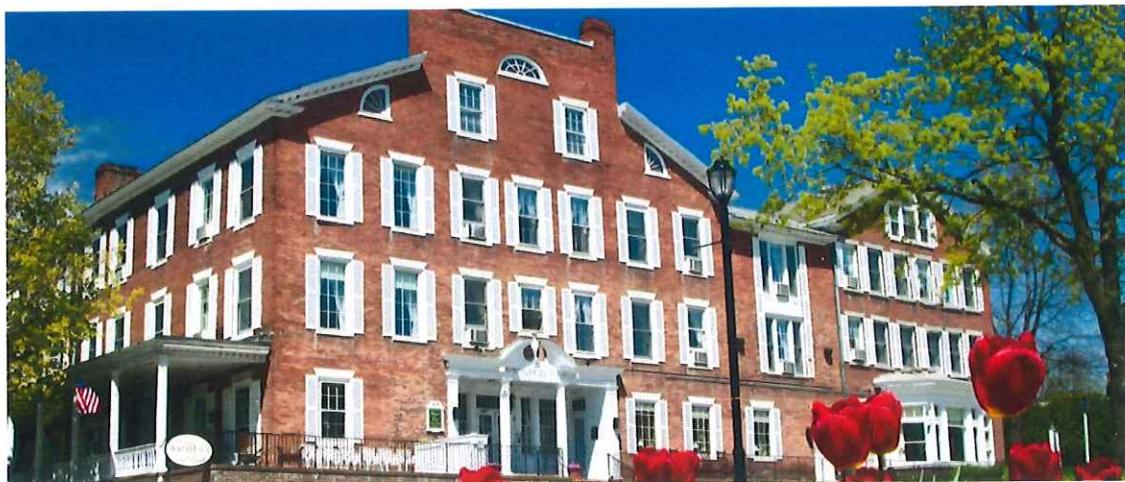
FREE TO ALL VTLA MEMBERS AND JUDICIARY
[CLICK HERE](#) for your free ticket before June 20, 2025
(but only if you are really attending)



VENUE INFORMATION

**MIDDLEBURY INN
14 Court SQ, Middlebury, Vermont 05753**

<https://www.middleburyinn.com>



The Annual Meeting is for members of the VTLA. If you are not a VTLA member, receive your ticket by clicking "Join Now" and completing the form or mail a check to VTLA, 409 Main Street, Bennington, VT 05201 BEFORE JUNE 13, 2025.

[JOIN NOW](#)

ADMIT ONE

to Vermont Trial Lawyers Association &

to Annual Meeting &

TICKET

FREE TO ALL MEMBERS

& FREE TO ALL MEMBERS OF
THE VERMONT JUDICIARY

Friday, June 20, 2025
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Middlebury Inn
14 Court Square,
Middlebury, VT 05753

NEEDED

ADMIT ONE

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