



PRESS RELEASE

Presentation of the 2016 Merit Award of the Commission des services juridiques

Montreal, November 4, 2016. – It is with great pride that M^e Yvan Niquette, Chairman of the Commission des services juridiques (CSJ), presented the CSJ's Merit Award in Longueuil on November 3, 2016. The Merit Award was created in order to recognize the outstanding contribution of individuals in the legal aid network within the scope of their work. The award was presented for the first time in 2014 and was conferred upon M^e Louis-Paul Allard.

This year, the award was presented to **M^e Denis Roy** for his commitment to defending the most disadvantaged members of our society, his contribution towards greater access to justice and his **twelve**-year involvement as Chairman of the CSJ. Under his governance, access to free legal aid was matched to the minimum wage. Moreover, during his time at the helm of the CSJ, the *Legal Aid Act* was amended and became *An Act respecting legal aid and the provision of certain other legal services*. Indeed, in 2010, the CSJ was given responsibility for providing services to those persons who, pursuant to a court order, are entitled to the services of a State-remunerated lawyer and to persons who have had a lawyer appointed to them by a court order made pursuant to the *Criminal Code*. The CSJ was also given the task of establishing the Service administratif de rajustement des pensions alimentaires pour enfants (SARPA) [child support recalculation service] and of offering the services provided for in *An Act to promote access to justice in family matters*, that is, the Homologation Assistance Service (HAS). Both of these services are available to parents who are financially eligible for legal aid as well as to parents who do not qualify for legal aid.

M^e Denis Roy

M^e Roy was Chairman of the Commission des services juridiques from 2004 to 2016. He earned his law degree in 1977 from the Université de Sherbrooke. During his studies, he already had the desire to practise his future profession within the legal aid system and to help those less fortunate within our society assert their rights. He was admitted to the Québec Bar the following year and began practising law at the Eastern Townships Community Legal Centre, subsequently moving to the Québec City Community Legal Centre. His interest in political matters was a guiding force throughout his career. Over the years, he put his activities within the legal aid network on hold in order to act as chief of staff for the premier of Québec and as political adviser to the federal and provincial governments.

About the Commission des services juridiques

The Commission des services juridiques is the agency charged with applying the *Act respecting legal aid and the provision of certain other legal services* in Québec. Legal aid may be granted to anyone who is financially eligible, in order to cover various legal services involving civil, family, administrative, criminal, mental health, immigration or youth law matters. It is also the agency charged with offering the services provided for in the *Act to promote access to justice in family matters*, namely, the Homologation Assistance Service (HAS) and the Service administratif de rajustement des pensions alimentaires pour enfants (SARPA), a child support recalculation service.

For more information, please visit the website of the Commission des services juridiques at <http://www.csj.qc.ca>.

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