

Committee on Judicial Ethics
Teleconference
Monday, November 15, 2010

Members present via teleconference: Justice Barry R. Schaller, Chair, Judge Linda K. Lager, Vice Chair, Judge Francis X. Hennessy, Judge Edward R. Karazin, Jr., and Professor Jeffrey A. Meyer. Staff present: Martin R. Libbin, Secretary, and Viviana L. Livesay, Assistant Secretary.

MINUTES

- I. With all members present, Justice Schaller called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Although publicly noticed, no members of the public attended.
- II. The Committee members present unanimously approved the draft Minutes of the November 9, 2010 meeting.
- III. The Committee considered Judicial Ethics Informal Opinion 2010-32 concerning whether a Judicial Official may accept an honorary degree from a college located in Connecticut in connection with a speaking appearance at the college by the Judicial Official. The college has been a party to approximately 20 superior court lawsuits over the past ten years.

Based upon the facts presented, the Committee unanimously determined that the Judicial Official may accept the honorary degree subject to the following conditions: (1) The Judicial Official should inform the college that it should not promote or advertise the awarding of the honorary degree for the purpose of any fundraising activities (see Canon 2 and new Rule 1.3) and (2) The Judicial Official should be satisfied that the college is not likely to appear regularly as a party before the Judicial Official. In the event that the college is a party in a case before the Judicial Official the Judicial Official should, for a reasonable period of time, recuse him/herself or disclose to all parties the fact of his/her receipt from the college of an honorary degree. The Committee noted that new Rule 3.7 permits judges to participate in various activities of educational organizations, including receiving an award, under certain conditions.

- IV. The meeting adjourned at 9:39 a.m.