

**Dennis W. Archer**  
President

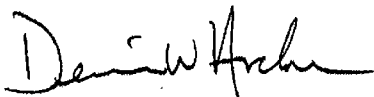
On behalf of the American Bar Association, it is my great pleasure and honor to extend heartfelt greetings on the occasion of the Inaugural Award for Excellence and Innovation in Teaching Professionalism Award Ceremony. We celebrate those admired colleagues who uphold the highest integrity of the law through a sustained commitment to the values and virtues of professionalism in their teaching. They lead by example, conducting themselves with the highest standards of excellence and embracing their position as instructor and mentor to encourage professional practice and positive change within the legal community.

Today we recognize law professors who have not lost sight of the underlying need for dignity and civility within the profession, and who have met with success in the scope and strength of their programs. Such outstanding leadership and uncompromising dedication to professionalism prepare future lawyers, as well as enhances public opinion toward the profession and perceptions about the administration of justice. Indeed, the making of professionalism as a priority in institutions of higher learning has far-reaching effects on the legal profession. By cultivating professionalism to the highest degree amongst their students, today's award finalists instill the pride that comes with belonging to a time-honored profession and shape tomorrow's legal leaders to better practice the law.

As professional advocates, we possess a collective responsibility to remain ever mindful of our respect for the law, duty to the legal system and the role of lawyer as public servant. Our charge is to strive to ensure justice; inherent in that obligation is adherence to the indispensable virtues that guide our profession. The law is meant to serve and we must share a common commitment to serve our communities well. We are proud to uphold justice in this country and are forever indebted to those who have shown us the way.

While I originally planned on attending this wonderful event, my duties as an ABA officer called me to other commitments. I regret not being able to congratulate the finalists in person, but be assured that I am present in spirit and offer my most heartfelt congratulations on the achievement of such an honor. I am grateful for your invitation to speak and feel fortunate that John Berry, Executive Director of the State Bar of Michigan and Chair of the ABA Standing Committee on Professionalism, has been kind enough to carry on in my absence. Once again, I commend those who have helped our future lawyers develop foundations thick in professional integrity, along with their contributions extending far beyond the classroom walls.

Sincerely,



Dennis W. Archer