Introduction: A Tribute to the Honorable Thomas L. Ambro

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Recommended Citation

Z Arima, Introduction: A Tribute to the Honorable Thomas L. Ambro, 40 EMORY BANKR. DEV. J. 393 (2024). Available at: https://scholarlycommons.law.emory.edu/ebdj/vol40/iss3/1

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INTRODUCTION: A TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE THOMAS L. AMBRO

For over two decades, the Emory Bankruptcy Developments Journal has honored giants in the field of insolvency and restructuring with the Distinguished Service Award for Lifetime Achievement. Every year, at our Annual Banquet, we present this Award to an individual who has significantly affected the field of insolvency and restructuring law, and who embodies the highest values of the discipline. A quick glance at our past recipients shows the caliber of the individuals who have done our Journal the honor of coming to Atlanta to accept this Award:

2000: Prof. Kenneth N. Klee  
2001: Prof. Frank R. Kennedy  
2002: Harvey R. Miller  
2003: Hon. David H. Coar  
2004: Gerald K. Smith  
2005: Hon. Conrad B. Duberstein  
2006: Sen. Dennis W. DeConcini  
2008: Prof. Douglas G. Baird  
2009: Sen. Elizabeth Warren  
2010: Barry W. Ridings  
2011: Tony Alvarez II & Bryan Marsal  
2012: Hon. Geoffrey B. Morawetz  
2013: Richard Levin  
2014: Prof. David Epstein  
2015: Prof. Marjorie Girth  
2016: Prof. Grant W. Newton  
2017: Keith J. Shapiro  
2018: Hon. Mary F. Walrath  
2019: James H.M. Sprayregen  
2020: Jay Alix

The reader will notice that there are no entries for 2021, 2022, or 2023. Among the many things that COVID-19 upended were the awards for the years 2021 and 2022—and last year’s award is another story entirely. Volume 40’s Executive Board received tremendous support, both from the Journal’s Advisory Board and Emory Law School more broadly, to revive this tradition and place it on par with the success of years past.

The outpouring of help we received this year is a testament to the fact that EBDJ is a project that matters beyond the walls of Emory Law School. It is a community endeavor, made possible through the concerted efforts of stakeholders from the bench, the bar, and the legal academy. Special thanks are due to our Advisory Board and to our Alumni Advisor, Keith J. Shapiro, who
made our Banquet and the presentation of this Award a success. We simply could not have done it without you all. Thank you.

Our many efforts, however, would have been useless if there were not an honoree truly worthy of the title. We are therefore delighted and honored to have presented the twenty-fourth Distinguished Service Award for Lifetime Achievement to the Honorable Thomas L. Ambro, Senior United States Circuit Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

Judge Ambro received his bachelor’s degree from Georgetown University, and his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center. Following his graduation from law school, Judge Ambro clerked for Chief Justice Daniel L. Herrmann of the Supreme Court of Delaware. After his clerkship, Judge Ambro entered private practice, working at the Wilmington, Delaware firm Richards, Layton & Finger, from 1976 to 2000. Judge Ambro’s work in private practice helped establish Delaware as the premier venue for large chapter 11 bankruptcy cases. Before heading to the bench, Judge Ambro was the head of Richard, Layton & Finger’s bankruptcy practice group.

Judge Ambro was nominated to the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit by President Bill Clinton on September 29, 1999. Judge Ambro filled a seat vacated by Judge Walter K. Stapleton, who had assumed senior status in June of that same year. Judge Ambro was confirmed on February 10, 2000 by a 96–2 vote and received his commission six days later.

As a Third Circuit Judge, Judge Ambro has authored many notable opinions. Chief among those he authored in the bankruptcy space are: In re Philadelphia Newspapers, LLC, 599 F.3d 298 (3d Cir. 2010) (Ambro, J., dissenting) and LTL Mgmt., LLC v. Those Parties Listed on Appendix A to Complaint (In re LTL Mgmt., LLC), 64 F.4th 84 (3d Cir. 2023).

In addition to his duties as a Third Circuit Judge, Judge Ambro has served as a Chair of the Business Law Section of the American Bar Association, as an Editor for The Business Lawyer, and has chaired the Committee on the Uniform Commercial Code for the Commercial Law Section of the Delaware Bar Association. He is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Inns of Court, the American Law Institute, and the National Bankruptcy Conference. Judge Ambro also teaches at his alma mater, Georgetown University, where he helps undergraduate students master the art of public speaking.
We are incredibly grateful to Judge Ambro for joining us in Atlanta on Thursday, April 4, 2024, and to the other members of the greater *EBDJ* community who spent their evening with us for this tremendous event. We hope you will join us in celebrating the achievements of the Honorable Thomas L. Ambro.

Z Arima
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF