

The Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law and its Institute for Communications Law honored Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy, by presenting her with the Institute's Milestone Award on Friday, Nov. 9. The Milestone Award recognizes attorneys in the field of communications law and policy for exemplary service to the law school and outstanding achievement in the field of communications law. The award was first given in 1996 to James Quello, former chairman of the FCC.

Catholic University Milestone Award
As prepared for delivery

Thank you so much, Dean Kmiec, Professor Zuckman and everyone at Catholic University for this recognition. And thank you, Bob and Jenell, for chairing this event and for your kind introduction. It is amazing to see so many faces here that have been with me at varying steps in my career.

It is quite an honor and distinction to receive this award. I am indeed indebted to the Columbus School of Law at Catholic University for the opportunities and the success that I have enjoyed. My years at Catholic were inspiring, as well as challenging and fun – and I have been lucky enough to continue to work with other graduates of this fine university as my career has developed. In fact, it was Harvey Zuckman who provided me with my first opportunity to return as an adjunct professor, which led to other teaching opportunities. I also have been fortunate to work with many current students - as a guest speaker at a class taught by my senior legal advisor, Bryan Tramont, and through the internship program in my office.

The faculty at Catholic should be extremely proud of their innumerable accomplishments embodied by the success of their students. I know first hand that teaching the intricacies of communications law is no easy task. Catholic students, in addition to being sought after associates at communications law firms in the DC area, consistently perform well in the national telecommunications moot court competition. The students also reach out to the community through the “Columbus Community Legal Services,” which is one of the areas first and finest clinical programs. I know from my activities with the Federal Communications Bar Association that Catholic has produced fine attorneys that have made significant contributions to the practice of law. I commend Professor Zuckman and

Dean Kmiec for their fine leadership of this university – with them and others at the helm, I know that this school of law has a bright future ahead.

It is also a privilege to be among such a distinguished group of recipients of the Catholic University Milestone Award – including my mentor, former FCC Chairman James Quello. I am truly honored and humbled by this award, and I am excited about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for me during my term as a FCC Commissioner. I feel confident that I can rely on my education and my experiences to guide me through.

I would like to take just one moment more of your time to remember a teacher here at Catholic University, Karen Kincaid, who we lost in the tragedy of September 11. Karen, while a partner at Wiley, Rein & Fielding, also was teaching the class with Bryan that I spoke at last week. She was a truly special person and Catholic University should be proud to have worked with her, just as I am proud to be a part of this educational institution.

Thank you.