The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law to Confer Nearly 300 Degrees at Commencement

Washington, D.C. – The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law will confer close to 300 law degrees during its 121st Annual Commencement Ceremony, to be held at 11 am Friday, May 28, inside the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, located at 400 Michigan Ave., N.E.

The Hon. Paul R. Michel, chief judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, will deliver the main commencement address. "I am very pleased that our students will be able to hear from such a distinguished jurist," said Veryl V. Miles, dean of the Columbus School of Law. "Judge Michel has always been noted for his pursuit of fairness, accountability and justice. As a former prosecutor, legal educator, advocate for the judiciary and one of the nation’s leading figures in the field of intellectual property, his influence and contributions to American jurisprudence are matched by very few. As commencement speaker, Judge Michel embodies the ideals that I hope each one of our students aspires to."

Judge Michel will also receive an honorary degree from The Catholic University of America. Since his elevation in 2004 to Chief Judge, Michel has served as one of 27 judges comprising the Judicial Conference of the United States, the governing body of the judicial branch.

Chief Judge Michel has judged several thousand appeals and written over 800 opinions in the diverse legal areas covered by his circuit: patent, government contracts, international trade, veterans' benefits, government takings of private property, tax, childhood vaccine injuries, military and civilian promotions, trademark, civilian government personnel, and whistleblower cases.

Prior to his appointment, Chief Judge Michel served in the executive and legislative branches of the government for 22 years. This included service as assistant counsel for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, as deputy chief of the Justice Department's Public Integrity Section, as well as seven years on the staff of Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) as counsel and chief of staff.

Chief Judge Michel was the recipient of the 1999 Jefferson Medal for "outstanding contributions … to promote the progress of science and useful arts". Since 2003, he has annually been named by Managing Intellectual Property magazine as one of the 50 Most Influential People in the world in intellectual property.

Judge Michel has spoken at hundreds of conferences for national, state and local bar associations, including the American Intellectual Property Law Association, the American Bar Association sections of Intellectual Property and Public Contracts, the Intellectual Property Owners, the Licensing Executive Society and the Association of Corporate Patent Counsel.

Judge Michel is a graduate of Williams College (1963) and the University of Virginia Law School (1966).

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