



Philip M. Epstein, Q.C.
2012 ADR Award of Excellence Recipient

By Bernard Morrow

On September 19, 2012, Philip M. Epstein, Q.C., LSM, Cert. F. Arb., of Epstein Cole LLP, was awarded the ADR Award of Excellence for 2012 at a dinner held at the University of Toronto Club.

I had the pleasure of co-chairing this event with my ADR Section Executive colleague, Deborah Anshell.

The ADR Award of Excellence recognizes exceptional contributions and/or achievements in Alternative Dispute Resolution in one or more of the following areas: academic excellence (teaching or publication); development of excellent ADR practices; enhancement of the practice of ADR or its effective incorporation into the practice of law; leadership in the bar or the government or the Law Society of Upper Canada or OBA in relation to ADR issues, legislation and practice.

Phil was called to the Ontario Bar in 1970, and was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1981. In 1978 he co-founded the law firm Epstein Cole LLP, which has grown to become the largest and leading family law firm in Ontario. His accomplishments as an advocate are numerous, having worked on leading cases before all levels of court in Ontario, including the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada. He is also viewed as a leading academic in the family field, currently serving as the Editor-in-Chief of the Reports in Family Law, co-author of Epstein and Madsen's *This Week in Family Law*, lecturer on children's law at the University of Toronto, and frequent keynote speaker at numerous continuing education programs across the province. His contributions to ADR in the field of family law are equally notable. Drawing on his experience and credibility as an advocate, Phil's colleagues have for years sought him out to mediate and arbitrate their toughest cases. Over time, Phil has developed a reputation as the "go-to" guy for family mediation and arbitration, offering his unique combination of insight, experience and persuasion to settle some of the most difficult domestic disputes. Phil has also spoken extensively on the use of mediation and arbitration in the family field at numerous programs and conferences. He is a dispute resolution officer of the Superior Court of Ontario and has been admitted as a mediator/arbitrator member at the ADR Institute of Ontario.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to Phil's contribution to ADR can be measured by the respect and affection that his peers hold for him. The award dinner was a sold out event, attended by retired and current judges and a wide cross-section of family law lawyers. Phil was roasted and toasted by his longtime law partner Kenneth Cole, colleagues Alfred Mamo and Gerald Sadvari, and his law partner Aaron Franks.

Congratulations, Phil, on this well-deserved award.