

## Lerners partner Jasmine Akbarali receives two awards

**TORONTO, NOVEMBER 19, 2009** – Jasmine Akbarali, a partner with Lerners, was honoured yesterday with her second major award in a week, recognizing her outstanding contributions to the practice of law and to the community. Last night she received the South Asian Bar Association (SABA) Award for Female Practitioner of the Year at a dinner held at Le Meridien King Edward Hotel in Toronto. Six days earlier on November 12<sup>th</sup>, she received Lexpert's Rising Star award honouring Canada's Leading Lawyers Under 40.

“Jasmine is a gold medalist from law school, has worked on landmark cases, twice appeared before the Supreme Court of Canada, and is one of the lawyers who initiated our firm's new specialty practice in appeals,” says Brian Grant, Managing Partner, Toronto office, for Lerners.

“She is a great mentor to young lawyers and is a credit to the profession. We are just thrilled that she has received these honours. She is one of the top young lawyers in Canada today.”

At last week's dinner and awards presentation for Canada's Leading Lawyers Under 40, the special keynote speaker was Dambisa Moyo, author of the international bestseller *Dead Aid*. The evening was emceed by Heather Hiscox, host of CBC News: Morning. At last night's SABA awards gala, the keynote speaker was the Honourable Frank Iacobucci, while guest speakers included the Honourable Chris Bentley, Attorney General of Ontario, and the Honourable Harinder Takhar, Ontario Minister of Government Services.

Akbarali was the gold medalist of her law class at the University of Windsor in 1995, and received many other academic awards. She was only the third graduate of that school to obtain a position as a law clerk at the Supreme Court of Canada. She was called to the Ontario bar in 1997 and joined Lerners in 1999. This year she spearheaded the formation of the new appellate advocacy practice group at Lerners.

Akbarali has worked on several landmark cases with Lerners. One of these was the *Honda v. Keays* appeal, which she argued successfully along with Earl Cherniak of Lerners at the Supreme Court of Canada last year. The Supreme Court of Canada overturned the lower court's awards of Wallace and punitive damages, thus vindicating Honda. Another landmark case was *Kerr v. Danier Leather*, in which she was an important member of the Lerners team. This case was the first action in Canada to consider the statutory cause of action for misrepresentation in a prospectus. She was involved in that action from the pleadings stage all the way through to its appeal at the Supreme Court of Canada.

Akbarali's appellate practice covers many areas of law, including securities law, employment law, constitutional law, statutory accident benefits, medical negligence, and commercial appeals. In addition, she acts as pro bono counsel, most recently with Earl Cherniak on the *Amnesty International v. Minister of Defence* appeal at the Federal Court of Appeal. They were retained by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association to seek leave to intervene, and then to intervene, on

the appeal which considered whether the Charter of Rights and Freedoms would apply to the actions of the Canadian military operating in Afghanistan.

A great supporter of the community and charitable causes, Akbarali is currently Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors of the George Hull Centre for Children and Families, a children's mental health centre in west Toronto. She is a past member of the Young Advocates Committee of the Advocates' Society, and is currently a member of such professional associations as the Advocates' Society, the Toronto Lawyers Association, the Canadian and Ontario Bar Associations, SABA, and the Canadian Association of South Asian Lawyers.

A mother of three young children, Akbarali is also involved with her children's school, is a regular at the gym, and takes classes in jazz dance and Mandarin.

### **About Lerner's**

Lerner's lawyers represent a wide range of individual and institutional clients, from victims of accidents to corporations embroiled in complex disputes. The firm is devoted largely to representing clients involved in disputes and appeals. Its lawyers, many of whom have been involved in landmark cases, practise in the following areas: Commercial Dispute Resolution, Medical Liability, Professional Defence, Insurance Law, Personal Injury Law, and Public Law. Lerner's, which has Canada's largest litigation group with over 100 lawyers, has offices in Toronto and London, Ontario.

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