

LALIVE

Médaille Bellot

LALIVE's Geneva office gathered together on Thursday 8 June to celebrate Senior Counsel Michael E. Schneider's long legal career, after the Geneva bar awarded him the prestigious Médaille Bellot. The medal is awarded to lawyers who have completed 50 years of practice since their initial admission to the Geneva bar. In an official ceremony on 6 June, Miguel Oural, president of the Bar, said the medal was a “token of affection and gratitude to our elders,” as the medal was presented to four prize winners, Michael Schneider, Céline Ringgenberg, Pascal Maurer and David Lawson.

Miguel Oural described Michael Schneider's “strong sense of justice and love of complex and complicated issues that can only be resolved by a fair, indisputable and ideally, equally complex and complicated legal solution”, as proof that he was destined to a career in law.

Michael studied in Munich, Bonn and Geneva. His trainee experience included AEIESEC's summer programme 1962 in Sierra Leone, where he spent three months looking after Shell's accounts, in spite of possessing few accounting skills. He was a teaching assistant at the Geneva University Law school from 1965 to 1967 while attending the Graduate institute of International Studies, where he graduated from in 1968. He returned to Munich to finish his degree in 1967 and to complete his three-year *referendat* (legal clerkship). He managed to convince Munich authorities to allow him to complete the programme's six-month traineeship abroad, in 1970 contacting Professor Pierre Lalive, who he had met at a party, before returning to Geneva to join Lalive Budin as a trainee.

Michael Schneider's arbitration career began with a bang when in 1972 Prof. Lalive involved him in the first ICSID arbitration, *Holiday Inns SA and others v Morocco*. He was given the opportunity to plead at a preliminary hearing and was reportedly so convincing the Kingdom of Morocco considered settling the dispute.

Michael has had an active academic career, first as scientific collaborator at the Graduate Institute (1972-1983), as Director of Studies at the Center for studies and Research in International Law and International Relations at the Hague Academy of International Law in 1987, and currently as lecturer at the University of Fribourg LLM Programme. He was a member of the UNCITRAL Expert Group on the Guide for Industrial Works Contracts from 1983 to 1985 and held several roles in the ICC Commission on International Arbitration, including on the Revision of ICC Arbitration rules from 1995 to 1997.

In 1995 Michael Schneider, together with Teresa Giovannini and brothers Jean-Flavien and Pierre Lalive, split from Budin to found the four-partner LALIVE. Over the course of his long career Michael has acted in nearly 150 arbitrations, both as counsel and arbitrator. He has never stopped fighting for justice, including when he was a member of the ad hoc tribunal on compensation following the invasion of Iraq by Kuwait, when complex questions on the establishment and on calculation of damages required the most impartial of judgments. At the official Médaille presentation Miguel Oural concluded that Michael Schneider was an “extraordinary practitioner, one of the best in the world, who is transparent and sincere”.



Michael E. Schneider

Senior Counsel
Geneva