



Photo by Lotta Studios

44th Annual Arts Awards Ruby Melton

Ruby Melton practiced maritime and international law at the New York firm of Nourse & Bowles before re-joining the Switzerland-based Louis Dreyfus Group, one of the world's oldest commodities merchants, where she began her career in 1973. Over a span of 30 years, she held key positions with various divisions of Louis Dreyfus. By the time she retired in 2008, as Deputy General Counsel of the Group's energy division, she was overseeing all legal and compliance functions for the company's worldwide energy activities.

Ruby earned a B.A. in English and French Literature from Hollins College (now Hollins University), where she graduated as Phi Beta Kappa, and a J.D. from Fordham University School of Law. She currently serves on the Boards of Gateway Community College Foundation, where she is a member of the Executive Committee and co-Chairs the Scholarship Committee, the International Festival of Arts and Ideas, and the Shubert Theatre-New Haven, where she is past Chair, current Secretary and a member of the

Executive Committee. Ruby has also served on the Advisory Council of Women's Health Research at Yale, on the National Council for the American Theatre, and in leadership positions on the Boards of the Long Wharf Theatre, Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame, and Shepherds, Inc.

Ruby has traveled widely and has lived in New York, New Orleans, Athens, Rome, Paris and London. She now resides in West Haven with her wife, Gail McAvay, who is retired from Yale Medical School's Program on Aging.

In 2018 Ruby was inducted into the Gateway Community College Hall of Fame as its Community Honoree in recognition of her contributions to Gateway's Executive Mentoring Program and her mentorship activities with other organizations and students in Greater New Haven. In 2018 she was also honored by the Arts Council of Greater New Haven in recognition of her years of support for the arts and arts education and her work to help make the City's arts organizations more accessible, inclusive and representative of the community. In 2023 Ruby was the recipient of the Greater New Haven NAACP Philanthropy Award. Ruby and Gail have played an instrumental role in, and are underwriting, the establishment of a new Center for Equity and Social Justice at CT State's Gateway campus, whose mission will be to address multiple aspects of inequity present in the college and in the community at large.