

Philadelphia

Bar Reporter®

FEB. CLE
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P.2

The Monthly Newspaper of the Philadelphia Bar Association

Vol. 45, No. 1

January 2016

Richman Recognized for His Service to Public Interest

■ By Thomas E. Rogers

PUBLIC INTEREST LAW HAS BEEN A significant force in the legal career of David Richman, one of the recipients of the 2015 PNC Achievement Award, presented during the Philadelphia Bar Association's Annual Meeting Luncheon on Dec. 8. Richman, of counsel at Pepper Hamilton, LLP, was nominated for the award in light of his work in co-founding the Pennsylvania Innocence Project at Temple University Beasley School of Law and other service

to the public interest legal community. Founded in 2009, the Pennsylvania Innocence Project works to exonerate those convicted of crimes they did not commit and to prevent innocent people from being convicted.

"The civil rights revolution has taught us two lessons," said Richman. "First, that access to the benefits and protection of the law, access to justice, is often unavailable to those without means, or are otherwise on the margins of society; second, that access to justice can be expanded if lawyers make it their mission to do so."

Richman credited his inspiration for co-founding the Pennsylvania Innocence Project to three lawyers from his own firm who were earlier recipients of the Fidelity Award, that became the PNC Achievement Award. He remembered William R. Klaus, founder of Community Legal Services of Philadelphia; Meg Greenfield, co-founder of Support Center for Child Advocates; and Edward W. Madeira Jr., past president and member of the board of directors of the Defender Association of Philadelphia.

As a board member and officer of multiple Philadelphia public interest legal organizations, Richman said he has been privileged to

admire the important work of their lawyers. He gave specific credit to the organizations' staff lawyers who work tirelessly for their clients.

Richman concluded by encouraging the audience, telling them that through volunteer service with public interest legal organizations, lawyers can make a difference in access to justice.