

**David Richman's Remarks upon Receiving 2105 PNC Achievement Award
Philadelphia Bar Association Annual Luncheon
12.8.15**

The Civil Rights revolution of the past 60 years has taught us two lessons: first, that access to the benefits and protections of the law—access to justice—is often not available to those without means or who are otherwise found on society's margins. And second, that access to justice can be expanded if lawyers make it their mission to do so.

My good fortune is to have been taught the second lesson by, among others, a succession of Pepper Hamilton lawyers who have stood at this very podium. The first Fidelity Award was presented in 1966 to Bill Klaus for his singular role in the founding of Community Legal Services. Ten years later, Meg Greenfield was recognized for having co-founded the Support Center for Child Advocates. And while he did not found the Defender Association of Philadelphia, 1973 recipient Neddy Madeira did preside over its board for 30 years and remains a guiding light. When I contemplated the establishment of an innocence project here in Philadelphia a few years ago, those three Pepper colleagues served as an example and inspiration and made the challenge of creating such a project just a little bit less daunting.

Practicing law in the public interest or supporting public interest lawyers through board service has the virtue of bringing you into contact with lawyers whose hearts are as vast as their legal skills. Dave Rudovsky and I have done prison conditions litigation together for the better part of the past 35 years. Besides co-founding the Pennsylvania Innocence Project, Rudy personally litigated the Project's first exonerations.

As a board member and officer for long stretches with the Education Law Center, the Public Interest Law Center, and the Defender Association, I was privileged to admire close up the remarkable work of Janet Stotland and Len Rieser, Mike Churchill and Tom Gilhool, Ben Lerner and Ellen Greenlee.

The Pennsylvania Innocence Project is succeeding in its mission of "seeking truth, providing hope, and freeing the innocent" by dint of the leadership of Marissa Bluestine and Richard Glazer and a terrific board. And when it comes to

all of these public interest law firms, let me not forget the selfless staff lawyers who bang every day on the doors of justice, demanding admission for their clients.

My last word is that the task of expanding access to justice is far from finished. By making the mission your own, you may not finish the task but you will make a difference and reap some unexpected rewards in the process. My thanks to the Philadelphia Bar Association, the kind folks who nominated me, and PNC for this particular unexpected reward.