

# Consumer Attorneys Present Annual Awards

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. (Jan. 10, 2007) --- Three prominent Southern California attorneys, two respected jurists, a renowned documentary filmmaker and the Speaker of the California Assembly will receive the Consumer Attorneys of Los Angeles' highest honors at its 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Installation & Awards Banquet at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills on Saturday, Jan. 20. The event begins at 5:30 p.m.

Consumer Attorneys honorees include Carl E. Douglas (Trial Lawyer of the Year), Charles B. O'Reilly (Ted Horn Award), Sharon J. Arkin (Ian Herzog Appellate Lawyer of the Year), Judge J. Stephen Czuleger (Alfred J. McCourtney Trial Judge of the Year), Justice Paul Boland (Roger J. Traynor Appellate Justice of the Year), Robert Greenwald (Consumer Education Award) and California Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez (George Moscone Award for Outstanding Public Service).

Incoming Consumer Attorneys President John C. Torjesen (John C. Torjesen & Associates) and the 2007 officers and board of governors will be sworn into office by California Supreme Court Chief Justice Ronald George at the event. Also in attendance will be Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, who will present the Association's Trial Lawyer of the Year award to Douglas.

The Association's 2007 officers include Amy Fisch Solomon (Girardi & Keese), president-elect; Randy McMurray (The Cochran Firm), first vice-president; Garo Mardirossian (Mardirossian & Associates), second vice-president; Philip Michels (Michels & Watkins), treasurer; and Michael Alder (The Law Offices of C. Michael Alder), secretary

"With the arrival of this new year, I am honored to be the incoming president of the Consumer Attorneys of Los Angeles," said Torjesen. "I am particularly delighted to have

the opportunity to recognize some of the most committed people to civil justice in the country.”

### **CARL DOUGLAS --TRIAL LAWYER OF THE YEAR**

Carl E. Douglas has been a consumer attorney for 20 years. Prior to opening his own firm, The Law Offices of Carl E. Douglas in Beverly Hills, in March 1998, Douglas was managing attorney at The Law Offices of Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. He is probably best known for his successful work as the coordinator of O.J. Simpson’s criminal defense team; however, Douglas has a long history of prolific civil litigation in state and federal courts on behalf of consumers.

In 2006, Douglas represented two of the 15 injured plaintiffs in the matter of *Gonzalo Castillo, et al. v. Quality Shoring & Scaffold, Inc., et al.*, a massive construction defect trial. The jury awarded more than \$30 million in damages for each of the 12 injured plaintiffs including \$3.3 million in favor of Lawrence Lovell and \$1.4 million in favor of Jose Juarez, both of whom were represented by Douglas.

In July 1999, Douglas represented the lead plaintiff in *Patricia Anderson v. General Motors Corporation* in a product liability trial. His work in this case resulted in GM being held responsible for placing the defendants' fuel tank “behind the axle on automobiles of the make and model here in order to maximize profits - to the disregard of public safety,” as Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Ernest G. Williams was quoted as saying in the *Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 29, 1999.

Before joining Johnnie Cochran’s firm, Douglas was a trial attorney at the Federal Public Defender’s Office in Los Angeles. He began his career working at the Federal Communications Commission in Washington, D.C. Douglas earned a bachelor’s degree from Northwestern University and his law degree in 1980 from Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California.

### **SHARON ARKIN--IAN HERZOG APPELLATE LAWYER OF THE YEAR**

Sharon J. Arkin, senior partner of Arkin & Glovsky, Pasadena, is a certified appellate specialist with more than 20 published decisions. She regularly testifies before various California and federal legislative and regulatory committees on behalf of consumers on issues ranging from arbitration provisions in consumer contracts to limitation of punitive damages and limitation of tort liability.

As litigation co-counsel in *Goodrich v. Aetna*, Arkin, then partner in Shernoff, Bidart, Darras & Arkin, successfully held Aetna accountable in a “bad faith” case in which the HMO disapproved of a cancer therapy that promised to prolong a patient’s life. The verdict included \$116 million in punitive damages against the HMO for placing its own financial interests above the needs of the individual patient.

Upon joining Orange County’s Robinson, Calcagnie & Robinson as a partner in February 1999, Arkin was involved in the plaintiffs’ firm’s litigation as statewide-plaintiff’s liaison counsel for the Diet Drug litigation (Fen-Phen), the Rezulin litigation, and the Bridgestone/Firestone litigation, as well as representing Governor Gray Davis in the Tobacco litigation.

Arkin is a frequent speaker and participant at legal events and professional associations. She is co-author of *The Shernoff Approach to First Party Bad Faith Cases* and is author or co-author of more than 65 magazine articles, law review articles, book chapters and seminar materials.

### **ROBERT GREENWALD--CONSUMER EDUCATION AWARD**

Robert Greenwald is a producer, director and political activist, whose new media company, Brave New Films, uses film to tell stories that build movements and influence debate about the important issues of the day.

In addition to Greenwald’s newest documentary, *Iraq For Sale: The War Profiteers*, he was director/producer of *Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price* (2005) and *Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch’s War on Journalism* (2004). He was executive producer for a trilogy of

political documentaries: *Unprecedented: The 2000 Election*; *Uncovered: The War on Iraq* (2003), which Greenwald also directed; and *Unconstitutional* (2004). Brave New Films also released *The Big Buy: Tom DeLay's Stolen Congress* (2006) and recently produced two television series, *ACLU Freedom Files* and *The Sierra Club Chronicles*, which was aired on Link TV, Court TV and the Internet.

In addition to his documentary work, Greenwald has produced and/or directed more than 50 television movies, miniseries and feature films, including *The Book of Ruth* (2004), based on the best selling book by Jane Hamilton; *The Crooked E: The Unshredded Truth About Enron* (2003), *The Burning Bed*, starring Farrah Fawcett, *Shattered Spirits*, starring Martin Sheen, and *Forgotten Prisoners*, about the work of Amnesty International. Greenwald also produced and directed the feature film, *Steal This Movie*, starring Vincent D'Onofrio as '60s radical Abbie Hoffman, and *Breaking Up*, with Russell Crowe and Salma Hayek.

Greenwald's films have garnered 25 Emmy nominations, four ACE Award nominations, two Golden Globe nominations, the Peabody Award, the Robert Wood Johnson Award, and eight Awards of Excellence from the Film Advisory Board. He was awarded the 2002 Producer of the Year Award by the American Film Institute and has been honored by numerous organizations for his activism.

Greenwald also is a co-founder (with Mike Farrell) of Artists United, a group of actors and others opposed to the war in Iraq and which works to publicize progressive causes. Greenwald has lectured at Harvard University for the Nieman Fellows Foundation for Journalism and speaks frequently across the country about his work.

**JUDGE J. STEPHEN CZULEGER--ALFRED J. McCOURTNEY TRIAL JUDGE OF THE YEAR**

Judge J. Stephen Czuleger became presiding judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court, the nation's largest trial court system comprised of 583 judicial officers and 52 court facilities, on Jan. 2, 2007. From 2005 to 2006 he served as assistant presiding judge for the court, working with then-presiding judge William A. MacLaughlin on such pressing judicial issues as the centralization of the California court system and its funding.

After graduating from Santa Clara University (1973), Judge Czuleger attended Loyola Law School (1976), at night while worked days as a clerk for U.S. District Judge David Williams of the Central District of California, where he was "clerk-crier," meaning he opened court by announcing Williams's arrival on the bench. He was an assistant United States attorney in Los Angeles, trying (and winning), his first case ever on his second day of work, from 1977 to 1979; an associate with Bird, Marella, Boxer, Wolpert & Matz from 1979 to 1982. Judge Czuleger was a special attorney, who helped pioneer use of the then-new law permitting forfeiture of assets used in drug trafficking, with the Justice Department Organized Crime Strike Force in San Francisco from 1982 to 1984.

Judge Czuleger returned to the U.S. Attorney's Office in 1984 and served there until 1988 when he was appointed by then-Governor George Deukmejian to the Los Angeles Municipal court. In 1990, he was appointed to the L.A. Superior Court, hearing both felony criminal and civil cases. In 1996, the Chief Justice of California assigned Judge Czuleger to the Orange County Superior Court to preside over the criminal cases arising from the Orange County bankruptcy. In 1997, he served as assistant supervising judge of the criminal courts, and in 1998 was justice pro tem of the California Courts of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Four. From 2004 to 2006, Judge Czuleger was an appointed member of the California Judicial Council.

**JUSTICE PAUL BOLAND--ROGER J. TRAYNOR AWARD/APPELLATE JUSTICE OF THE YEAR**

After 20 years as a judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court, sitting on civil, criminal, family and juvenile cases, Justice Paul Boland was elevated to the California Court of Appeals in 2001. As an appellate justice he has authored hundreds of opinions and has sat by designation on the California Supreme Court. Additionally, Justice Boland also directs the Court of Appeal's law student judicial externship program and serves on the editorial board of the *California Courts Review*.

Justice Boland attended Loyola High School and Loyola Marymount University, and today is on the board of regents of both institutions. He graduated from the University of Southern California Law School (1966), and was a Prettyman Law Fellow at Georgetown University Law Center, from which he earned a master of laws degree.

Returning to Los Angeles, Justice Boland served as a law clerk on the United States District Court before becoming a litigator with the Western Center on Law and Poverty. After the WCLP, Justice Boland went to the University of California at Los Angeles Law School to establish the Clinical Education Program. He also served 11 years as professor of law and associate dean.

While a Los Angeles Superior Court judge, Justice Boland was supervising judge of both the Child Dependency Court and the Eastlake Juvenile Delinquency Court before becoming presiding judge of the 50 Los Angeles County juvenile courts. As presiding judge, he supervised the design and construction of the Children's Court, the nation's first courthouse built to hear cases involving abused and neglected children; established drug treatment programs for parents, young and children in juvenile proceedings; and instituted a policy for independent representation of children in dependency cases.

**FABIAN NÚÑEZ --GEORGE MOSCONE AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING  
PUBLIC SERVICE**

The Hon. Fabian Núñez was born in San Diego but lived in Tijuana, Mexico, until the age of eight. His parents, who were migrant workers, became citizens some time later, and Núñez and his 11 siblings grew up in Logan Heights in San Diego.

At the age of 31, Núñez earned a bachelor's degree from Pitzer College in Claremont, Calif. From 1996 to 2000, Núñez was political director of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. Between 2000 and 2002, he worked as the government affairs director for the Los Angeles Unified School District. In 2002, Núñez was elected to the California State Assembly to represent the 46<sup>th</sup> district, and on Feb. 9, 2004, he was sworn in as California's 66<sup>th</sup> speaker.

Among the legislation Núñez has sponsored or co-sponsored during the last two years, includes legislation to combat global warming, to reduce the price of prescription drugs, to raise the minimum wage by a dollar, to reform the Los Angeles Unified School District and to increase competition among cable television companies.

#### **CHARLES B. O'REILLY--TED HORN AWARD**

Charlie O'Reilly is known for his involvement and success in some of the most important civil cases to come before the courts in the last three decades. He is one of best liked and most respected trial lawyers in Los Angeles.

O'Reilly's most famous case was his 22-year battle with the Church of Scientology that received worldwide attention and included two appeals to the United States Supreme Court and successful defenses to numerous countersuits and harassment of he personally and of his staff by members of the church. O'Reilly also successfully litigated, with lead plaintiffs' counsel Garo Mardirossian, the first trial in California focused solely on the instability of the Ford Explorer and *Cindra L. Palmer v. Schindler Elevator Corporation*, again with Mardirossian & Associates, where the jury found all three defendants guilty of negligence and awarded her \$5.75 million.

O'Reilly is a graduate of Loyola Law School (1972). He graduated top of his class in the Evening Division and passed the California Bar that same year.

He is one of only two attorneys to be named twice as Trial Lawyer of the Year by the then-Los Angeles Trial Attorneys. The Ted Horn Award recognizes the many years of dedicated service O'Reilly has provided to the plaintiffs' bar.

The Consumer Attorneys of Los Angeles is the nation's largest local association of plaintiffs' attorneys. Members represent individuals who have been injured or harmed as a result of preventable corporate or medical negligence and misconduct. The association's mission is to educate the public about the importance of the American civil jury system, one of the fundamental bedrocks of our democracy.

For information regarding the Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles, call 213.487.1212 or visit [www.caala.org](http://www.caala.org).

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