

PAST NBTA PRESIDENT'S AWARD RECIPIENTS



William F. Anzalone, Anzalone Law Offices, LLC, Wilkes-Barre, PA

For reinvigorating the Luzerne County Bar Association, developing a campaign to improve the image of lawyers through billboard and television ads and founding the Northeast Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers Advocacy organization.



A. Bernard Bays – Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher, Honolulu, HI

A Bernard Bays has represented well over 10,000 long term residential lessees in Hawaii in their fight to purchase their properties from a handful of very powerful landowners. This was truly a David and Goliath situation. He prevailed in numerous litigation cases that enabled his clients to purchase their homes. One case went to the Hawaii Supreme Court and another to the US Supreme Court in a process that lasted over 10 years. Bernard's efforts in those cases changed the social fabric of Hawaii. He has never stopped making a big difference in Hawaii by the many litigation cases he has handled. These cases include saving one of the largest cattle ranches in the US, the 225,000-acre Parker Ranch which was established in the early 1800's. He has over 50 years of experience and has successfully represented clients in numerous landmark cases and over 150 trials or arbitrations. Bernie is one of only three Hawaii lawyers who are certified by NBTA.



John Blumberg, Blumberg Law Corporation, Long Beach, CA

John reflects NBTA core values, he has written/published over four dozen articles on trial advocacy, ethics, professionalism, and civility. In addition to serving seven years on the ABOTA National Board, he was on the Civility Committee of ABOTA national and assisted in the editing of "Civility Matters." John recently published Persuasion Science for Trial Lawyers to assist trial lawyers in understanding the enormous volume of brain-science literature in the context of persuasion.



Jeffrey A. Burns, Dollar Burns & Becker, Kansas City, MO

For thirty years of fighting to improve truck safety on our nation's highways through advocating for regulatory and legislative changes and for serving on the Transportation Research Board's Truck and Safety Committee for almost a decade.



Joseph Camerlengo – The Truck Accident Law Firm, Jacksonville, FL

Joseph Camerlengo is a leader in the trucking legal community both locally and nationally. As a founding partner of the Truck Accident Law Firm, he is passionate about making our roads safer by helping other attorneys pursue bad trucking companies and dangerous truck drivers. Joseph was instrumental in working to acquire board certification in Truck Accident Law with the National Board of Trial Advocacy. He is a tireless advocate in promoting board certification in this field. Joe is a past President of the Academy of Truck Accident Attorneys, an officer and executive board member for the American Association for Justice Trucking Litigation Group, Past Chair of the American Association for Justice Bus Litigation Group, Co-Chair of the Florida Justice Association's Trucking and CMV Crash Section. He serves on the board of the National Board of Trucking Trial Advocates and the National Board of Trial Advocacy. Joe came to an NBTA national meeting just to observe, but because of his interest and enthusiasm – was asked to join as a director.



Thomas Carey, Carey Leisure & Neal, Clearwater, FL

Thomas Carey made it his mission to make the roads safer. He accomplished this through launching a campaign against drunk driving. Thomas devoted much of his career to seeking justice for those whose lives have been forever changed by drunk driving. He does so by supporting and encouraging law enforcement agencies, educating teens and adults on the consequences and dangers of driving intoxicated, as well as speaking with government officials, news media, and community groups regarding this topic. He is the Founding partner of the Clearwater firm of Carey, Leisure & Neal and has handled approximately 40,000 personal injury cases. He is a member of the Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Florida Washington State Bars. He has been a NBTA member in Civil Trial Law since 1992.



Christy Crowe Childers – Childers & McCain, LLC, Macon, GA

Christy has been one of the biggest advocates for people, especially women to get certified by NBTA in Truck Accident Law. Along with David McCain, she co-founded the Childers and McCain Law Firm. She was one of the first five female NBTA board certified truck accident lawyers in the United States and the first in Georgia. Her strong voice for truck accident victims and families has earned her a widespread reputation in this practice area. She is a regularly featured speaker at conferences and on podcasts regarding truck crashes. Serving as the Education Chair for the Academy of Truck Accident Attorneys, she has taken a significant leadership role for women interested in Truck Accident Law. Starting through the work of the ATAA Women's Caucus, Christy has taken a leadership position in founding and organizing Mother Trucker Rallies. These conferences support women in seeking to improve their practices through developing the skillsets including learning how to drive tractor trailers to fully understanding truck safety issues.



Tom Culmo, Damian & Valori Llp | Culmo Trial Attorneys, Miami, FL

Tom represents victims of hospital malpractice, personal injury, wrongful death, and commercial litigation matters. Although not board certified by NBTA, Tom is a bike law expert. Through cases he has learned about materials, design, and craftsmanship. Failure at any of these points can be disastrous for a rider. Through his tireless advocacy and investigation, he found flaws in quality control. Tom was able to bring light to these important issues potentially saving cyclists from injury or death.



Mark G. Daniel – Daniel, Moore, Evans, Biggs, Decker, and Smid, Fort Worth, TX

Mark G. Daniel is a criminal defense trial specialist with more than forty (40) years of criminal trial experience. In addition, he is now completing his fourth term on the Texas Forensic Science Commission as the criminal defense lawyer representative. His relentless efforts have brought into reality a publicly accessible database whereby counsel can now easily access data regarding crime labs, crime lab personnel and mandated disclosures of laboratory related issues, mistakes, and corrective actions. He was also instrumental in the passage of legislation mandating a crime law portal in Texas allowing ease of access to all forensic analyses notes and supporting data. Chair of TCDLA Legislative Committee 2004-2016, he is also a past president of the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association (TCDLA). The Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association is recognizing him as 2024 Lawyer of the Year, having already been inducted into the TCDLA's Hall of Fame. This year Mark was awarded the Blackstone Award from the Tarrant County Bar Association, its highest award which is given based on consistent ability and integrity.



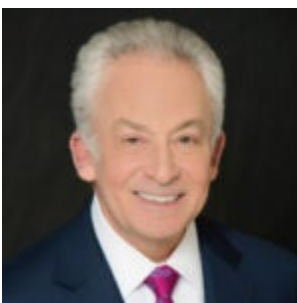
James D Diamond – Law Offices of James Diamond, Norwalk, CT

James D. Diamond has used trial skills, experience and knowledge gained over his career to advance justice for Native Americans throughout the country. In a law review article, he courageously blew the whistle on the legal profession about how the profession and courts have used law as a weapon of oppression against Native Americans, and he has been an advocate for reform. He has worked to address the crises of domestic and sexual violence in Indian Country by empowering crime victims in these types of criminal cases. By training survivors themselves, non-lawyers, to become victim advocates, teaching them courtroom trial skills in a courtroom workshop setting – he has created change. He authored a juvenile criminal court code for an Indian tribe that creatively integrated tribal customs and traditions into court practices and procedures. Jim's commitment to this cause runs deep as he has provided pro bono legal representation to Native Americans in tribal criminal court.



Amos Gern, Starr, Gern, Davison & Rubin, Roseland, NJ

Amos Gern is a New Jersey Attorney whose practice focuses on personal Injury and medical malpractice. He was representative to the New Jersey Supreme Court Civil Practice Committee where he served for 12 years. In that capacity he has been instrumental in addressing numerous reforms to our Civil Practice rules, most important of which involved an increase in contingent fees several years ago, and numerous efforts to enhance the discovery rules associated with personal injury and medical malpractice litigation. This has included addressing reforms designed to allow medical malpractice cases to be reached for trial more readily and limiting the abuse of the designated trial counsel rule. He has been certified by NBTA in Civil Trial since 1989.



Alan M. Feldman, Feldman Shepherd Wohlgernter Tanner Weinstock, Philadelphia, PA

For identifying that fatal dresser tip overs were not the fault of parents, but of unstable and unsafe storage furniture; and through significant global settlements created an agreement with the manufacturer beginning in 2016, they would only sell dressers in the US that meets or exceeds the volunteer safety standards.



Joseph Fried, Fried Goldberg LLC, Atlanta, GA

For co-founding the Academy of Truck Accident Attorneys, a national organization, to provide legal education and advocacy for truck accident attorneys; and for partnering with the NBTA to create national board certification in Truck Accident Law; and for continued recruitment of attorneys to become board certified Truck Accident attorney.



Joseph Friedberg, Joseph S. Friedberg, Chartered Lawyers, Minneapolis, MN

As NBTA's first 40-year Criminal Board-certified practicing attorney, he has an unmatched encyclopedic knowledge of the law. It could be that the media seeks out his opinion as an expert in criminal law. It helps having been the past president of the American Board of Criminal Lawyers and the fact that Joe is the only practicing criminal Lawyer in the Minnesota Lawyers Hall of Fame. He started practicing law in 1966.



William Horton, Jones Walker, Birmingham, AL

He is a well-admired national leader and advisor for the two most important organizations in this field: The ABA Health Law Section, from which he was the Section Delegate to the ABA House of Delegates (2017-2023), and the American Health Law Association. As a highly active member of the AHLA and ABA he has served in incredible numerous positions. He is a valued Liaison for NBTA to the ABA.



Michael F. Hupy, Hupy and Abraham, S.C., Milwaukee, WI

For giving back to his community through safety initiatives such as serving as President of Crime Stoppers who engage media, the public and law enforcement to solve crimes and providing financial support of rewards.



William G. Jungbauer, Yaeger & Jungbauer, Barristers, Saint Paul, MN

For seeking, advocating, and acquiring the passage of a federal law to protect railroad whistleblowers and railroad workers in cases of accidents, injuries and from harassment.



Peter Kestner, McEwen + Kestner, Inver Grove Heights, MN

His success as a Truck Accident Attorney can be attributed in part to his unique background and knowledge as an insurance expert (before he became a lawyer) and his deep understanding of the workings of all different kinds of insurance policies to assist clients to obtain maximum benefits. Pete generously shares his knowledge to raise the awareness of multiple insurance strategies, inherent ambiguities, and policy interpretations with hundreds of lawyers on truck accident listservs.



James Leach, James D. Leach Attorney at Law, Rapid City, SD

For pro bono defending drug suspects who in some South Dakota's police custody were taken to medical clinics to be physically restrained to have a urine sample taken by forced catheterization; and through a successful trial found this practice to be unconstitutional; and through this outcome has stopped this practice.



Ira Leesfield, Leesfield Scolaro, P.A., Miami, FL

According to his nominator, Ira Leesfield is legendary in the South Florida legal community as an exceptional trial lawyer, an extraordinary humanitarian and advocate of fairness and justice. In 2007, while representing numerous victims of carbon monoxide poisoning at a Florida resort, Ira worked with Florida Justice Association on the passage of litigation mandating carbon monoxide detectors in public accommodations which has saved numerous lives and injuries. Mr. Leesfield has been recognized for his accomplishments and dedication by the Anti-Defamation League. He is Past President of the Florida Justice Association and the Melvin Belli Society. Lee is an NBTA Senior Specialist in Civil Trial Law and has been a member since 1983.



Michael Leizerman, The Law Firm for Truck Safety, Toledo, OH

Michael is the founding Chair of the American Association for Justice's Trucking Litigation Group. He is also the Co-Founder of the Academy of Truck Accident Attorneys along with Joe Fried last year's recipient of this award. Michael has authored two litigation resources that most trial lawyers have on their shelf: Litigating Truck Accident Cases and The Zen Lawyer: Winning with Mindfulness. He lectures around the country on trucking litigation topics. He also has a CDL to operate Semi-Trucks.



Rena Leizerman, The Law Firm for Truck Safety, Toledo, OH

Rena is the Chair of the National Board of Truck Accident Attorneys. She spearheaded efforts, along with Joe Fried and Michael Leizerman, to obtain the first and only board certification in truck accident law in the country. She is co-author of the legal treatise Litigating Truck Accident Cases among other publications. Rena lectures at the University of Toledo where she taught the only course in the country on Truck Accident Law



Pat Lundvall, McDonald Carano, LLP, Las Vegas, NV

Pat Lundvall served as Nevada litigation counsel in a case with a jury verdict awarding \$60 million in punitive damages and \$2.65 million in compensatory damages to her client, plus attorney's fees and costs. The victory is the largest in Nevada and largest in Contract Law in the Western U.S. in ALM's "Top Verdicts & Settlements" report. This national bellwether trial had an impact beyond the case itself; the jury sent a powerful message that it is time to correct an unconscionable humanitarian wrong and fix a gross business inequity. The verdict upended the national out-of-network healthcare reimbursement system and generated national news coverage that created awareness of an issue facing emergency rooms across the country. Attorney Lundvall has been Board Certified in Civil Trial Law and Civil Practice Law since 2001.



Mark S. Mandell, Mandell, Boisclair & Mandell, Ltd., Providence, RI

For inspiring local attorneys to become engaged in in their communities in meaningful ways; and for serving as a community advocate for the less fortunate; and for ensuring children have clothing for school.



Diana Marger Moore, Baum, Hedlund, Aristei & Goldman, PC, Los Angeles, CA

Diana is triple board certified by NBTA. Her career spans four decades, during which time she has tried more than 200 jury trials across the US. She is licensed to practice in six states. Diane is a Board of Regents' member with the Academy of Truck Accident Attorneys (ATAA) and serves as the Co-Chair of ATAA's Women's Caucus. She is a strong advocate for women to acquire board certification in Truck Accident Law and actively seeks ways to encourage them through programs and guidance.



John Moore, Law Office of John Douglas Moore, Oakland, CA

John is a long-time board member and general legal counsel of the Northern California Recycling Association and is a national leader in advocating for zero waste. In 2021, John began a series of popular monthly shows highlighting innovation and entrepreneurship for recovering resources that would otherwise be wasted (i.e incinerated or landfilled) He is Co-Coordinator of Zero Wasted Food Project for poverty alleviation. His efforts seek to develop infrastructure for collecting and recovering unwanted edible food and the distribution of this food to those in need.



David Nissenberg, Law Offices of David Nissenberg, La Jolla, CA

At age 84 David Nissenberg, the San Diego attorney who wrote the groundbreaking treatise on commercial trucking law is still going strong. This June LexisNexis released the 4th edition of "The Law of Commercial Trucking: Damages to Persons and Property." Often referred to as "the bible" on commercial trucking law and considered the definitive text on the subject, its use has been regarded as mandatory for anyone engaged in truck accident litigation. His efforts since 1994 when the 1st edition was published along with his CLE seminar, "Truck Accident Litigation in a Nutshell" provided the foundation for a practice area now known as truck accident law which previously had not existed. Attorney Nissenberg became Board Certified in Truck Accident Law in 2018.



Alice O' Sullivan, Brookings, OR

For establishing, developing, and leading NBTA Community Engagement initiatives that included women's health issues and support and wellbeing of children in the foster care program.



Mel C. Orchard, III, The Spence Law Firm, LLC, Jackson, WY

For a commitment to lawyer education through serving on faculties of The Trial Lawyers College and the Trial School; and as a presenter at national CLE's; and in service to legal organizations devoted to preserving access to the courts and trial by jury.



George Patterson, Patterson Law LLC, Annapolis, MD

George is always looking to sharpen his skills with new challenges; challenges that are extremely difficult and time consuming. He now has 3 board certifications (Civil Trial Law, Civil Practice Advocacy and Truck Accident Law). George has always had over 100 active personal injury cases and works endless, countless hours from sunrise to sunset grinding through each day, never leaving the office (unless litigating). He truly is an inspiration to personal injury law because there is nothing but class in the way he practices law and interacts with clients, lawyers, judges, and his legal staff. Attorney Patterson received his first of three certifications in 2009.



Nicholas E. Phillips, Phillips & Mille Co, LPA, Middleburg Heights, OH

For serving his community the past twenty years by hosting a radio program entitled The Advocate that focuses on critical issues that are important locally; and through the founding of a local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) for disaster preparedness.



David Rapoport, Rapoport Weisberg Sims, P.C., Chicago, IL

David is known nationally for his work representing injured victims and the families of those killed in air disasters. Representing people and groups around the world he has helped to make flying safer. Since 2019 he has been designated as a “Top 10 National Aviation Trial Lawyer” by the National Trial Lawyers. He served as NBTA President for three years, serves as President of the NBTA Foundation, presented at ABA Roundtable meetings, served as moderator for NBTA Webinars, presented in advocacy for board certification; and created and led the NBTA Communications Committee.



Nick Rice – Rice Caperton Rice, Memphis, TN

*Nick Rice embodies a legacy of legal excellence. He is a third-generation attorney following in the footsteps of his grandfather and father – 70 years of Family Law knowledge. He started law study in the seventh grade through learning to pull cases for his father’s legal research. In this work, he gained experience of knowing what is possible, the expertise to get the best results for a client, and the need for compassion to understand the importance of the case of each individual client. Nick coauthored *The Complete Guide to Divorce Practice*, published by the American Bar Association. Because of this, his expertise is sought by attorneys all over the country. Additionally, in October 2022, the Tennessee Court of Appeals issued an opinion in one of Nick’s divorce cases that is already listed as Lexis Note to Decisions on three separate Tennessee statutes. This case and Nick’s efforts in defending his client’s interests have set the standard in Tennessee Family Law. Among all the awards and honors Nick has achieved, the National Board of Trial Advocacy Certification was the most important to him. Board Certification is the highest, most stringent, and most reliable qualification an attorney can achieve.*



Richard Shapiro, Shapiro, Washburn & Sharp, Virginia Beach, VA

Richard N. Shapiro has been a NBTA Board Civil Trial Law Certification since 2000 and it was during his membership that he achieved many remarkable distinctions, including having won client appeals before each of these highest state Supreme Courts. He won client appeals three times before the 4th Circuit Court of appeals as well. Outside of being a trial attorney, he became a prolific American inventor holding 19 US patents, several foreign patents and having licensed his folding handle design to Radio Flyer wagons and obtained another patent license with a European-based group for a folding baby stroller. As an American author, he's been published in the legal field in one of West's treatises, but also has written three other books, and one of his suspense thrillers was a No. #1 bestseller on Amazon in 2015.



Eric Slepian, Slepian Ellexson, PLLC, Phoenix, AZ

Eric Slepian has been instrumental in advancing the cause of Social Security disability claimants throughout his legal career. His advocacy has helped thousands of deserving claimants receive the benefits they had been denied. He protects the rights of his clients and skillfully cross-examines medical and vocational experts, often eliciting testimony from hostile witnesses that help his clients win benefits. His 9th Circuit litigation has resulted in published decisions that have leveled the playing field for claimants and their attorneys seeking to fight unjust denials of disability applications through the court system. His published cases include *Revels v. Berryhill*, 874 F. 3d 648 (9th Cir. 2017) and *Brown-Hunter v. Colvin*, 806 F. 3d 487 (9th Cir. 2015). Eric became a Social Security Disability Advocacy NBTA member in 2007.



Andrew R. Young – The Law Firm for Truck Safety LLP, North Olmsted, OH

Regarding Truck Accident Law, Andrew R Young is all in! In addition to his truck crash cases, he is frequently a guest faculty member teaching CDL candidates at the Great Lakes Truck Driving School. He holds an active Class A Commercial Driver's License and owns and drives his own Peterbilt semi-tractor and 45-foot car-hauler trailer. He is an elected officer of both the American Association for Justice's Trucking Litigation Group and the Academy of Truck Accident Attorneys. Andy was appointed by the US Secretary of Transportation to serve on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee. He has testified before committees in the US Congress, Ohio Senate and the Ohio House of Representatives. He is passionately committed to reducing fatal underride crashes by preventative measures such as side rails match the heights of auto bumpers. Andy was invited by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and two safety advocacy groups to help organize and act as a moderator for two industry related Truck Underride Roundtables.