



THE BARRISTER

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SEASON'S GREETINGS!



The staff of the Camden County Bar Association, together with the officers and trustees of the Association and Foundation, extend their warmest wishes to you and your loved ones for a joyful, healthy, and safe holiday season, as well as a bright and prosperous New Year. Please note that our staff will be enjoying the holidays and taking some vacation time from December 24 through January 1. We appreciate your patience during this period and will return in the New Year, refreshed and ready for another year of camaraderie and service.

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ADOPT A FAMILY FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Give the gift of JOY this holiday season!

Now in its 35th year, the Camden County Bar Foundation is again organizing the annual Adopt-a-Family. The Public Benefits Committee is pleased to partner with St. Joseph's Pro Cathedral School in Camden to bring joy to approximately 100 families.

It's easy to participate. You tell us the size of the family you wish to "adopt" and we'll let you know the ages of the children, their clothing sizes and, in some cases, their wish list. All you have to do is shop and feel good knowing you are sharing the joy and spirit of the holidays with a family you will never meet, but who will be touched by your kindness and generosity. We also ask that you purchase food for your adopted family.

Please contact Kara Edens Graser at kara@camdencountybar.org for family assignments or call (856) 482-0620 if you have any questions. Please see the flier included in this issue for more information.

CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY PARTY SET FOR DECEMBER 6!

The Camden County Bar Foundation will again provide food and gifts to children in Camden who need it most. The Camden County Bar Foundation is working with Boys & Girls Club, Better Tomorrows, Holy Name, Hispanic Daycare, and Anna Sample House to provide the children they serve with presents, food and stocking stuffers. This heartwarming event features a hot breakfast, a festive carol sing-along, magic show, and visits from special guests straight from the North Pole. Each child will have the chance to meet Santa, take a photo with him, and receive a wrapped toy along with a goodie bag. You can help make a difference by volunteering to wrap gifts before the party, assist with set-up, chaperone during the event, or help with clean-up afterward. Or consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Foundation! Check out the flier in this month's issue for more information.



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THE DOCKET

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THE BARRISTER

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DEC

9

Tentative Agenda for
December 9 Board Meeting

Wednesday, December 3

CCBF Wrapping Party

5 p.m. — Bar Headquarters, Cherry Hill

Saturday, December 6

CCBF Children's Holiday Party

8:30 a.m. — Boys & Girls Club, Camden

Tuesday, December 9

CCBA Board of Trustees Meeting

4:30 p.m. — Treno, Haddon Township

CCBA Holiday Party

5:30 p.m. — Treno, Haddon Township

Monday, December 15

Happy Hannukah!

Monday, December 22

Adopt-a-Family Drop Off

8:30 a.m. — St. Joseph's Pro Cathedral, Camden

Thursday, December 25

Merry Christmas!

Friday, December 26

Happy Kwanzaa!

A tentative agenda for this month's regular Board of Trustees meeting follows. The meeting will begin at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom/Bar Headquarters. All meetings are open to the membership. Anyone interested in attending should notify and confirm their attendance by calling Bar Headquarters at 856.482.0620.

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of Minutes from Meeting
- III. Treasurer's Report
- IV. President's Report
- V. Executive Director's Report
- VI. Committee Reports
 - a. Membership Committee
 - b. Young Lawyers Committee
 - c. Standing Committee Reports
- VII. Foundation Update
- VIII. NJSBA Update
- IX. Old Business (*if any*)
- X. New Business (*if any*)
- XI. Adjournment

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Parker McCay attorney **Christopher Orlando**, who chairs the firm's Corporate and Business department, has been appointed to Governor-Elect Mikie Sherrill's collaborative Interdisciplinary Advisory Task Force as part of her ambitious Transition Action Team. Orlando will join leaders from across the state, representing diverse roles and backgrounds, to provide the incoming administration with valuable perspectives in shaping policy. He brings nearly 20 years of legal experience, with expertise in governmental, redevelopment, litigation, and energy development law. "I am thrilled to serve on this transition team and excited to provide ideas to help inform policy. It is an honor to work with the incoming administration to help improve the lives of the residents of the state," Orlando said.

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51 Kresson Road
Cherry Hill, NJ 0803

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206 N. Black Horse Pike, Suite B
Runnemede, NJ 08078

President-elect

Jeanette Kwon
2222 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Secretary

Michael J. Ward, IV
118 White Horse Road West
Voorhees, NJ 08043

Vice President

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601 NJ-73 Suite 105
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Executive Director

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Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

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1939 Route 70 East, Suite 120
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

By Thomas A. Hagner



As we approach the close of another year, the Camden County Bar Association extends warm holiday greetings to all our members, colleagues, and partners in the legal community. This season offers a meaningful opportunity to pause, reflect on our collective accomplishments, and acknowledge the dedication each of you brings not only to the practice of law, but to serving the community as well.

Throughout the past year, our members have continued to demonstrate professionalism, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to justice—even in the face of evolving challenges. Whether you served clients, contributed pro bono hours, mentored new attorneys, or supported the courts and community by attending our events or otherwise, your efforts have strengthened both our profession and the public's trust in it.

I am proud of the resilience and collaboration that define the Camden County legal community. These qualities not only help us navigate complex issues but also inspire continued improvement in the services we provide and the standards we uphold. As we look ahead to 2026, the Association remains committed to supporting your professional growth, expanding legal resources, and fostering opportunities to connect with colleagues across practice areas and stages of career.

During this holiday season, I hope you find time for rest, celebration, and connection with family, friends, and those who matter most. May the new year bring you good health, renewed purpose, and continued success in your personal and professional endeavors.

On behalf of myself and the Bar Association, thank you for your commitment to the law and for the contributions you make each day. We look forward to serving you in the year ahead.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Active (9)

Ila Bhatnagar, Esq.
Address private

Drew Anthony Jabour-Gehman, Esq.
Hangle, Aronchick, Segal, Pudlin & Schiller
620 W. Germantown Pike
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

Margaret McHugh, Esq.
Brown & Connery LLP
360 Haddon Avenue
Westmont, NJ 08108

Alexandra Pugh, Esq.
Law Offices of Lynda Hinkle
900 Route 168, Suite A-5
Turnersville, NJ 08012

Michaela J. Rygalski, Esq.
Davis & Mendelson
200 Laurel Oak Road, Suite 101
Voorhees, NJ 08043

Rachel Taylor Savage, Esq.
Charny, Karpousis, Altieri & Donoian, P.A.
401 Route 73 North, Building #10
10 Lake Center Exec Park, Suite 202
Marlton, NJ 08053

Judith A. Schneider, Esq.
Posternock Apell, P.C.
400 N. Church Street
Moorestown, NJ 08057

Damaris Shakesphere, Esq.
Reilly McDevitt & Henrich, P.C.
3 Executive Campus, Suite 310
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

Naomi Torres-Velez, Esq.
Brown & Connery LLP
360 Haddon Avenue
Westmont, NJ 08108

Public Sector (1)
Hon. Michael Mikulski, J.S.C.
Hall of Justice
101 S. Fifth Street
Camden, NJ 080103

Limited Student (4)
Brittany Holsten
Taylor Hoopes
Krista E. Kibler
Gabrielle Alyssa Prager

2025 CAMDEN COUNTY PROFESSIONAL LAWYER OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS

Nominations for Camden County's 2025 Professional Lawyer of the Year Award are now being accepted. The Professional Lawyer of the Year Awards are presented jointly by New Jersey Bar Associations and the New Jersey Commission on Professionalism in the Law to recognize deserving individuals and focus positive attention on the good work done by members of the legal profession.

The criteria for determining a Professional Lawyer of the Year are:

- A lawyer/judge who is committed to the ideals of professionalism
- Who is well recognized in the legal community for character and competence.
- Who is respected by all and looked upon as a model of professional behavior.

Selection of the recipient is NOT based on the number of nominations an individual receives. Each nominee is reviewed by the CCBA selection committee with the recipient determined by who best exemplifies the criteria set forth. To nominate a colleague for this prestigious award, use the nomination form included in this month's inserts. **NOMINATIONS ARE DUE TO BAR HEADQUARTERS BY 5 P.M., DECEMBER 31.**



FOUNDATION UPDATE

By Steven Salinger, President



The Camden County Bar Foundation had a strong year thanks to our terrific board and increased volunteerism among our membership. I'm confident the philanthropic spirit will carry into 2026. As we close out 2025, I want to provide a brief update about the foundation and share several terrific activities still ahead of us this holiday season.

The Fall Frolic sold out, and the funds raised go a long way in supporting the charitable efforts of the foundation including an impromptu food drive. While the Camden County Bar Foundation always works to reduce food insecurity, the shutdown of the federal government and termination of SNAP benefits created immediate need and several local organizations reached out for support. The foundation stepped in with direct contributions to Hatch Middle School in Camden and Danny's Pantry located at the Camden Federal District Court. These meaningful contributions helped ensure students and families had access to food and essential items during a difficult period. Happily, the shutdown has ended and SNAP benefits have been restored to a certain extent. While we remain vigilant and supportive of families in need, I'm hopeful the emergent need will not arise again and I am grateful to all who stepped up.

While this food drive occurred due to emergent needs, there is still time to participate in one of the great mainstays of the Camden County Bar Association – the Adopt-a-Family Program through Saint Joseph's Pro-Cathedral. This initiative provides holiday gifts and dry goods to local families in need. Individuals and firms are encouraged to sponsor a family or two! Please contact the Bar office for details.



Santa (aka Mike Dennin) and his elves with one of his biggest fans at the Children's Holiday Party on December 6!

Help us meet our goal of supporting 100 families this holiday season! Drop off is December 22, 2025 so plenty of time to get involved.

Also, be sure not to miss the Camden County Bar Association Holiday Party. This terrific event will be held on December 9, 2025 at Treno! This event is always well attended and offers a good opportunity to connect with colleagues before the end of the year. I encourage all members to join us.

The Children's Holiday Party was another successful event this year. Thanks to our many volunteers, we were able to again deliver a well-run, enjoyable celebration for the children and families who attended. This remains one of our most meaningful community outreach efforts. It boasts a terrific breakfast, entertainment including a magic show and caroling, as well as visit from Old Saint Nick himself. Special thanks to Mike Dennin for getting the invite to the North Pole year after year. It is a shame Mike can't seem to make it each year, but we're grateful he gets word to the Bigman.

As the year draws to a close, I encourage you all to get involved. I want to thank, the Foundation Board, our Executive Director, the Board of the Bar Association and all our amazing members for their ongoing work and support. I also want to thank the many volunteers and committee members whose efforts make our events and programs possible.

Thank you all for your continued support. Wishing you all a happy and healthy New Year.



CCBF President Steven Salinger (right) bestowing the Recovery Court Scholarship to recent graduate Iesha Watkins in October.

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COMMITTEE CORNER: Education Law Committee

Custody & Special Needs Children

By Howard Mendelson, Chair

When parents live separate and apart and/or divorce, they must resolve issues of and concerning their children; how they will prospectively make decisions regarding their children's health, education, and welfare, and where their children will primarily reside, and how much time the children will visit with the parent who is not the parent of primary residence. While these decisions are always of vital importance to the welfare of their children, these issues become particularly important when the separated and/or divorced parents have (a) special needs child(ren).

The factors a Court must consider in making an award of custody and/or parenting time between special needs parents' include the parents' "ability to agree, communicate and cooperate in matters relating to the child; the parents' willingness to accept custody and any history of unwillingness to allow parenting time not based on substantiated abuse; interaction and relationship of the child with its parents and siblings; the history of any domestic violence, if any; the safety of the child and the safety of either parent from physical abuse by the other parent... the needs of the child; the stability of the home environment offered; the quality and continuity of the child's education; the fitness of the parents; the geographical proximity of the parents' homes; the extent and quality of the time spent with the child prior to or subsequent to the separation; (and) the parents' employment responsibilities..." See N.J.S.A. 9:2-4(c). Each of these factors has unique relevance to the family with a special needs child.

These factors become even more important and more fact-sensitive when there is a special needs child involved. First, while the court generally awards joint legal custody to divorcing or separated parents; so that major decisions of and concerning the child's health education and welfare can be made jointly, sometimes there are disagreements among the parents which have previously prevented them from coming to agreements of and concerning their special needs child. In these circumstances, one parent may agree that certain educational and medical issues should be addressed in one way, while the other parent feels differently. In these cases, it is important to designate one parent as the sole decision-maker when it comes to future issues involving the education and/or medical care for the special needs child. Sometimes, it becomes necessary to involve outside educators, medical providers, therapists, mediators, and/or parent coordinators to help the parties resolve their differences regarding their special needs child. It is also important to consider each parent's willingness to historically accept the responsibilities associated with parenting a special needs child including, but not limited to, developing individualized education programs with the local school district and/or addressing medical needs through the child's medical providers. In those cases where one parent has historically handled these issues, it is best to get the parties to agree to continue same, subject to the other parents right

to review and potentially oppose actions/omissions of the "primary parent for educational and/or medical issues" upon "good cause"; an objective medical and/or educational opinion from a qualified disinterested third party.

In addition, "the needs of the child" for a special needs child may be much more demanding than for their non-disabled siblings. The home they live in may be specifically designed to address the child's limitations and facilitate the child's progress; emotionally, educationally, and/or medically. There may be special arrangements for transportation, related medical services (provided by the school district and/or otherwise), and/or for the bus rides to and from whatever school the special needs child may be attending. Sometimes, home instruction is required for special needs students. Care givers, siblings, and family members may be particularly important to the special needs child.

In any event, and even more than with typically situated children, the special needs child benefits from the "stability of the home environment" and "quality and continuity of (their) education." It is accordingly important for the Marital Settlement Agreement and/or Custody Agreement involving special needs children to include even more detail concerning parental responsibilities and/or decision-making than would otherwise be utilized for a family without a special needs child. Reference to doctors, therapists, and/or educational consultants to assist the parties in making decisions of and concerning their child should also potentially be included. The more specific, the better. It should, however, also be recognized that while continuity is vital for a special needs child, flexibility can also be important. Procedures should, accordingly, be included within the Marital Settlement Agreement to address potential future disputes between the parties regarding the care and custody of their special needs child.

Finally, when it comes to custody of special needs children, the more the parties have historically worked together, the better they will probably do moving forward. No matter how well parents plan and/or whatever the court might order, the sometimes-unpredictable life circumstances of the special needs child often require modifications, flexibility, kindness, and respect to resolve. The best drafted Marital Settlement Agreement and/or Custody Agreements provide specific guidance regarding decision-making, residence-sharing, and procedures to resolve disputes in the future. As the old Jack Johnson song proclaims, all parents, and especially parents of special needs children, are "Better Together" and, as such, should seek to negotiate specific provisions of and concerning their special needs children so that there is predictability and continuity for all concerned, even if specific procedures involving dis-interested third-parties for potential future disputes need to also be agreed upon to ensure same.

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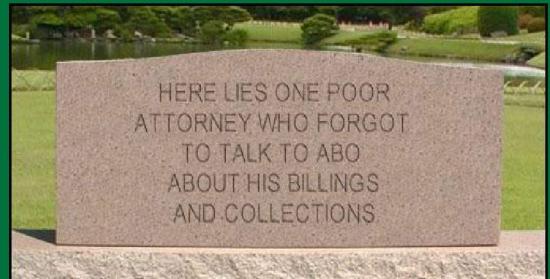
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Selected Collection Techniques and Tips

by Martin H. Abo, CPA/ABV/CVA/CFF



"WORDS PAY NO DEBTS" (William Shakespeare)

"COLLECTING LEGAL FEES AND COSTS FROM CLIENTS: WHERE ETHICS MEET PRACTICE"
(Hanan Isaacs, Esq. - from a comment to Marty

Abo years back but not forgotten)

"WHY LEAVE YOUR MONEY IN SOMEONE ELSE'S POCKET?"
(Martin Abo, CPA)

"THANKS FOR THE INFORMATION, CAPTAIN OBVIOUS" (Dr. Benjamin Abo)

Of the above four quotes, the last one, from Benjamin, may be the most appropriate for those reading the thoughts that follow about managing a firm's accounts receivable. We all feel we know what to do - we need to so remind ourselves and, as per the Nike ad, we need to...."JUST DO IT".

That said, what follows are but some ideas taken from a 6 page newsletter on billing and accounts receivable issues we put together for presentations to several Bar Associations, Lorman, and other CLE providers. The copy of the full newsletter on point is available by just so requesting on our website at www.aboandcompany.com or calling us for a printed copy. Anyway, while I might add "...do what I say, not necessarily what I'm able to do" but perhaps consider these ideas:

- Bill responsively from the outset. Issue invoices as soon as feasible, preferably coincident to providing the service. Delaying can lengthen the payment period. In addition, frequently the more credit you extend, the more you must borrow. Shortening the billing cycle while speeding up your collection process can profoundly impact distributable income to the firm's partners. While every business is unique, with law firms no different, the average law firm may have 80 days of unbilled work while it typically takes another 60 days to collect those fees even after they've been invoiced. You add it up - 140 days from the time the services are performed until the payment is deposited and available to the firm. That's almost 5 months and if you can cut that "delay" by even a third, you could free up enough cash for a partner distribution of one and a half months worth of fees!
- So much for averages and trends. I recall noting in an annual Juris Law Firm Economic Survey of midsized law firms revealed it took the average firm 72 days to mail the bill and another 76 days went by before that bill was paid - 148 days. A later LexisNexis Law Firm Economic Survey we read showed that figure increasing to 170 days from providing a service to getting paid on it. Troublesome pieces of data.
- I've seen some pro-active firms having a pleasant-voiced

Continued on Page 14

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Abo and Company, LLC, and its affiliate, Abo Cipolla Financial Forensics, LLC, **are looking to expand our team** and we'd really appreciate your passing along the below note to individuals you know that may be interested in part or full time involvement with us. How appreciative we'd be if you would consider just passing this along to anyone you might know that might want to chat.

We are a full-service CPA firm providing accounting services; comprehensive business/individual tax and financial planning; forensic accounting & other litigation support services; business valuations; negotiating acquisitions/dispositions of businesses; preparation of business plans and general business consulting.

While we would be flexible, how great it would be if the candidate:

- Is looking for full or even part-time work;
- Has strong accounting, tax, financial, computer and communication skills;
- Has solid experience using all facets of QuickBooks and perhaps other accounting and legal software;
- Has at least four years of work experience (even better if at a CPA or law firm);
- Has a degree in accounting or a seasoned bookkeeper with Quickbooks expertise;
- Is experienced and adept with tax prep software (UltraTax would be wonderful);
- Has the ability to play nicely in the sandbox with others; and
- Has some clients they would like to bring along.

Go to www.aboandcompany.com or mail/email resume and salary history to:

Martin H. Abo, CPA/ABV/CVA/CFF

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FALL FROLIC ANOTHER RESOUNDING SUCCESS!

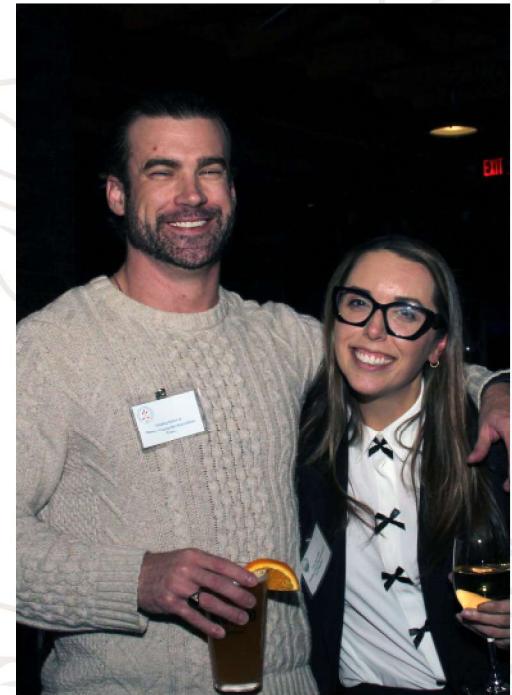
On November 13, the CCBF held its annual Fall Frolic at Kaminski's in Cherry Hill, and it was truly a night to remember! Guests gathered to enjoy a delicious buffet, cocktails, and great company, all while supporting the Foundation's Children's Holiday Party. The event was a perfect blend of camaraderie and community spirit, with everyone coming together to raise funds for a wonderful cause. The Foundation raised approximately \$2,000 and the success of the evening will help make this year's holiday celebrations even brighter for the children and families served by the Foundation.



Andrew Parsinitz, Michaela Rygalski & Howard Mendelson



Nick Gambino, John Iannelli, Sam Asbell & Rick DeMichele



Tim Dalton & CCBF Vice President Tess Berkowitz



Timothy Farrow, Jonathan Amira, Adam Cohler & Isaiah Rivera



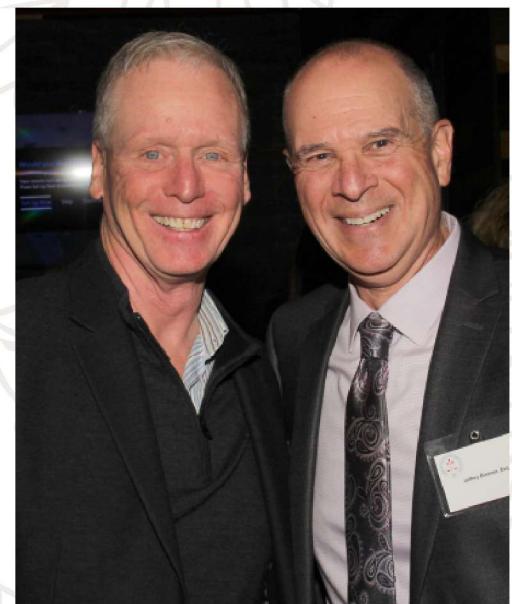
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FALL FROLIC CONTINUED



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Joe Maccherone, Steve Salinger & Stephanie Zane



Isaiah Rivera and Michael Hagner



Bill O'Kane and Jeff Brenner



Why and How to Use a Trust Protector

by Thomas D. Begley, Jr., Esquire, CELA and Emily M. Schurr, Esquire



What is a Trust Protector?

When drafting a Trust—particularly an irrevocable trust or a revocable trust that becomes irrevocable upon the Grantor's death—it is essential to build in mechanisms that allow for future flexibility. Without someone empowered to make certain changes, the Trustee or Beneficiary of an irrevocable Trust may need to seek court approval for even relatively simple updates.

A Trust Protector's role is to monitor the Trustee's actions and the Beneficiary's needs to help ensure the Trust is administered in such a way that the Beneficiary's needs and the Grantor's intents are met. A Trust Protector is a disinterested party—-independent from the Trustee or Beneficiary—designated in the Trust instrument and given certain powers over the administration of the Trust.

A Trust Protector is distinct from a Trust Advisor or Trust Director. A Trust Advisor provides guidance to the Trustee regarding distribution decisions or investment strategies. This guidance is typically non-binding. A Trust Director may also be appointed and given special powers such as directing distribution decisions or investment management. These roles are particularly relevant in the context of Directed Trusts.

The named Trust Protector, Trust Advisor, or Trust Director should be appointed in the Trust document and their powers and duties should be very clearly defined by the terms of the instrument to avoid conflict and ambiguity.

Powers of Trust Protector

A Trust Protector may be granted the following powers, depending on the goals of the Grantor and the terms of the document:

- Remove and/or replace Trustee. This is utilized most often when a corporate Trustee is appointed. You may want to consider giving the Trustee 30 days' notice and the opportunity to resign.
- Amend the Trust. This is helpful to effectuate compliance with changes in law, including tax laws, public benefits regulations, etc.
- Review financial records and approve accountings.
- Change the situs and/or governing law of the Trust. This is helpful if the Beneficiary moves to a different state.
- Decant Trust Assets. (While New Jersey does not have a specific trust decanting statute, the practice is permitted under common law. By exercising a decanting power, the assets are transferred from the existing Trust to the newly created Trust with different terms.)
- Settle disputes between Co-Trustees or Beneficiaries.

Who Should Serve as Trust Protector?

A Trust Protector should be a disinterested party—at least during the Beneficiary's life. Family members or close friends can serve as Trust Protector. You may want to avoid appointing remainder Beneficiaries

as Trust Protectors due to potential conflicts of interest. A trusted professional advisor such as an accountant, attorney, or financial advisor can also serve as Trust Protector.

Fiduciary Status

A Trust Protector may or may not be a fiduciary, depending on the terms of the document. If the document clearly states that the Trust Protector is not a fiduciary, then they generally cannot be sued in their role as Trust Protector.

Likewise, a Trust Advisor may or may not be a fiduciary, depending on the extent of their authority.

A Trust Director is almost always considered a fiduciary, even if the Trust says otherwise.

Because fiduciary status affects liability and standards of care, it is important for the Trust document to be explicit on this point.

Providing Guidance

It is good practice for a Grantor to prepare a letter of intent to the Trustee and Trust Protector. This non-binding document explains the "why" behind the Trust provisions. It should outline details about the Beneficiary's life and the reasons why the Grantor has made the decisions expressed in the Trust.

A letter of intent is particularly valuable in special needs planning to help the Trustee of a Third Party Special Needs Trust (TPSNT) better understand the Grantor's expectations for the use of Trust assets, as well as the Beneficiary's unique circumstances and needs.

In special needs planning, a letter of intent is not a replacement for a Life Care Plan. The process of planning for individuals with disabilities begins with the Life Care Plan that details the needs of the Beneficiary, including a budget and the means for funding the budget. Ideally, the Life Care Plan would include the amount and manner of funding and may also suggest that the Grantor purchase second-to-die or whole life insurance, if necessary, and long-term care insurance to protect again loss of significant assets that were otherwise intended to fund the Trust.

After the Third Party Special Needs Trust is established and funded, the letter of intent and Life Care Plan provide valuable guidance for the Trustee and Trust Protector, as well as any caregiver or legal guardian of the Beneficiary.

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WINE & FOOD

By Jim Hamilton

Now that we have left behind the many television commercials offered by candidates for office and for Pennsylvania Supreme Court robe retention, Big Pharma can again flex its advertising muscle and compete for the right to tout the benefits of countless drugs, while retailers vie for space to lure holiday shoppers into taking their plastic to levels that are confined more by the card's limits than consideration for future consequences. Perhaps this is why state lotteries have become more aggressive this month as they offer the chance that debt can be eliminated or at least reduced if we simply keep on scratchin'.

As this holiday season builds to a crescendo, there are so many ways we spread ourselves thin. Rather than visions of sugar plums, many will have visions of repeat Super Bowls dancing through their head. Another increasingly popular diversion is searching for those often elusive made-for-television holiday movies worth watching. Fortunately, if the canary in the coal mine is still singing after the movie's first 5 to 10 minutes, there is a reasonably good chance you can get to the final kiss (there is an unwritten rule that the first one must be interrupted). If you really want to enhance the prospect that you will enjoy the movie, why not pull the cork from a nice bottle of sparkling wine? There is a chance that the very real bubbles will help overcome any disappointment with a predictable plot or that the flurries of snow depicted on screen are the product not of Mother Nature but rather computer generation.

Whether for a movie night or a celebration of time together with family or friends, choosing a nice sparkling wine from among so many options can be daunting. Certainly, one of the first considerations will be the budget. The larger the gathering that will be enjoying the wine, the more bottles you will need to purchase, and this may impact how much you are willing to spend per bottle. Conversely, if the occasion is particularly festive and involves only one or two couples, a holiday splurge may be in order. While the prices for the famous Tête de Cuvée Champagnes such as Dom Pérignon have reached levels that may cause you to consider other options, fortunately there are many ways to celebrate the occasion without applying for a second mortgage. Whether that is buying a more favorably priced Champagne from a top producer, or selecting a well-crafted sparkling wine made outside the Champagne region, there is no shortage of bubbly choices. Let us then turn to some of our area's most knowledgeable wine sellers for their suggestions. Not only does this allow us to expand our wine horizons by enlisting their expert advice, but it also ensures that wines discussed will be available to purchase from their respective stores. I asked each

of these savvy sources to recommend wines selling at three different price points: A.) less than \$15, B.) between \$15 and \$30, and C.) more than \$30. Their selections along with their reasons and/or descriptions follow (and remember, "NV" means a non-vintage wine, typically because it is made from grapes from more than one vintage rather than a single year).

As you know from my discussion with Jimmy Quaile regarding his book, *Tales from the Wine Floor 100 Questions Asked of a Sommelier*, he not only is the wine guru at the Roger Wilco store at 1001 Rt. 73, Pennsauken, but he also is a Certified Sommelier. I was pleased that Jimmy was able to participate in our annual December survey last year and that he once again has answered the call. Here are his sparkling wine suggestions:

Mont Paral Cava Vintage 2022 Brut Rose (\$13.98): Parallels are often drawn between Cava and Champagne. Although each uses different grapes, both are produced using the same traditional method based on secondary fermentation in the bottle. This Cava features a variety of grapes: 40% Xarello, 35% Macabeu, 20% Parellada, and 5% Garnatxa aged for more than 15 months. There are other differences between Champagne and Cava, but perhaps no difference is more glaring than price! Does it taste like "Champagne"? No. Do I like it? ABSOLUTELY!

Pierre Sparr Crémant D'Alsace Brut Reserve NV (\$19.99): This blend of Pinot Blanc and Auxerrois is classic Alsace: dry and medium-bodied, with crisp citrus and hints of bread dough. Add texture and balance, and you have a bubbly that gives Champagne a run for its money. This is one of the best sparkling wine values in France!

Valentin Leflaive Champagne Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut CV/19/3.0 NV (\$49.98): From the distinguished Leflaive family in Burgundy, this is pure Chardonnay (21% from Cramant, 27% from Bergères-les-Vertus, and 52% from Vertus), fermented in stainless steel and matured on lees for 39 months. With notes of yellow apples, candied lemons, fig, and brioche, it's no wonder that so many experts award it such high scores - James Suckling 93 Points, Vinous 92 Points, and Wine Enthusiast 93 Points.

While it may simply reflect her thoughtful approach to all things wine, Nina Sygnecki of Traino's Wine & Spirits, 100 Church Road, Marlton, claims to enjoy participating in this annual December column, and she always manages to challenge us with one or two off-the-beaten-track recommendations. Let's see what Nina has for us this year:

NV Shabo Primo Secco Spumante Semi-Sweet

TAITTINGER

VISITE DES CAVES



(\$14.99): From Ukraine, this delightful blend of Pinot Blanc, Riesling and Chardonnay is a beautiful straw color, with floral and citrus aromas. It is refreshing, with delicate sweetness and flavors of Golden Delicious apples and ripe peaches.

NV Tissot Bugey Blanc Brut (\$26.99): This organic wine is from an area between the Jura and Savoie regions of France and gives us a sub-alpine flavor profile, coming from a blend of Altesse, Chardonnay, Jacquère and Aligoté. It is very dry and elegant, with delicate white flowers on the nose.

2017 Brocard Pierre Saignée Extra Brut Rose (\$64.99): From the Champagne region of France, this organic bubbly is one hundred percent Pinot Noir, and offers a savory celebration of red fruits, jam, rose petals, violets, pepper and cinnamon. Full-bodied and bold, it possesses a thrilling acidity, helping to make it very food centric. It is particularly good with lamb and Indian food.

It was a pleasure in our May column to learn more about how and why our colleague, Eric Feldhake, decided to take his wine geekdom to another level by opening a wine shop and bar known as Wildwood Daze located at 4100 Atlantic Avenue, Wildwood. While there may be other bar leaders with resumes comparable to Eric's, I doubt there are any bar tenders who have three post-college degrees. While I am sure Eric could offer us a sparkling discussion of estate planning or tax issues, that would be a bit off topic, so instead let's hear about some bubbly wines that are available from his store:

NV Guerrieri Rizardi Extra Dry Prosecco (\$16): This is a refreshing and well-balanced prosecco with a clean, crisp palate and pleasant fruit notes. Light bubbles and a slight perceptual sweetness convey tastes of green apple, pear, and citrus, with hints of melon, floral notes, and aromas of honey.

NV Baumard Crémant de Loire Carte Turquoise (\$22): The aromatics are of apples, pears and almonds. The rich palate is a complex mixture of apples, pears, and a hint of almond. It displays a fine mousse, and with a low dosage of 5-6 grams per liter, it is an extra brut.

2020 Black Chalk Classic English Sparkling Wine (\$35): This is a delicious, complex sparkling wine that can compete with most NV Champagnes. It is tense and striking, with orchard fruit and hints of tangy cranberries. There is a nice purity with a textured oaty

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FINANCIAL FORENSICS

Selected Collection Techniques & Tricks

Continued from Page 8

administrative person call the client after 10 to 15 days of closing a matter and so billing. The call, effectively a well disguised "customer service" or "public relations" follow-up, is an excellent time to so remind the client of their payment responsibilities (diplomatically).

- On a similar note, pay attention to inadvertent delays by the attorney(s) of your firm involved in completion of the matter. Since often you may not final bill before the client receives some completed document/notification/follow-up, do not let such files sit on your desk, your associate's, your para-legal's or even your secretary's desk.
- Where permissible, consider requiring:
 - a. Advance Payment
 - b. Evergreen trust deposit
 - c. Payment by credit card
 - d. Installment payment agreement
 - e. Automatic debit memo on bank account
 - f. A standby letter of credit guaranteeing the payment
 - g. Personal guarantees from the client (or even a third party)
 - h. Obtaining a pledge of assets from the client
 - i. Having the client at least pay current invoices on a current basis.
 - j. Applying any excess payments against past due invoices.
 - k. A C.O.D. or advance payments regarding new services.
 - l. Payment of outstanding invoices before starting new matters
- Accept credit cards to make it easy for clients to pay for the firm's services. Today clients and the lawyers themselves, live on plastic and therefore paying legal bills with credit cards is easy for them. Using credit cards can be a tool to reduce your receivables and increase your cash flow. All credit card companies are not alike. Law firms should confer with their accountants and credit card processing consultant to investigate how a particular bank or company charges them.
- Consider putting a "payment button" on the firm's web site. Many people like paying their bills online at any hour of the day. By enabling the client to pay through their website, law firms can take advantage of this. Payment can be made by either ACH from the checking account or by credit card. Many credit card companies have this service and some have varying (even zero) monthly fees or additional transaction fees as do other payment gateways such as Authorize.net, PayPal, Stripe, Square, etc. . To our knowledge it may not be necessary to have a "Shopping Cart" to have this capability, nor is it expensive.

- Ensure that lawyers and paralegals submit time and expense entries timely and accurately. Errors, even such as misspelling, file number or grammatical, should be avoided. Have the billing people prepare a schedule before dates they will run bills, contemplating holidays and weekends. Assign a partner to ensure such timetables are religiously followed. Prompt review and approval of prebills (draft bills) should be mandated with published turnaround times and performance adhered to. All billing professionals and para-professionals should be held accountable. It may even help to distribute pre-bills on differently colored copy paper so they are readily noticed and segregated from other correspondence, invoices, documents, etc.
- Who says billing must take place right after the month? Establish the billing period to end one to five days before the billing frequency you've established. For example, if you were billing for the calendar month September, consider billing from August 25th through September 24th. Receipt of these bills from the law firm may better match when businesses and even individuals pay their bills.
- Consider immediately billing the client right after a positive outcome. If you invoice when the client is elated because you've negotiated a great settlement or won a motion, they're more likely to pay and pay quickly.
- Prepare accounts receivable statements at least monthly but so separate from your actual billing cycle. Also, do not customize cover letters to coincide billing. Attorneys should send clients a matter update or a progress letter separately.
- Suggest emailing bills in addition to or in lieu of mailed paper bills. Make sure the firm tests e-mail addresses and E-bill formats early on.
- Use window envelopes and include return envelopes with ALL requests for payment (i.e. actual invoices and statements).
- Large receivables should be pursued more aggressively before telephoning or pursuing smaller accounts. Do not fall prey to merely working in alphabetical or file number order. (And that's not because ABO doesn't want to be your first billing effort.)
- Not to downplay the role of the law firm's CPA but, honestly, appreciate that most law firms maintain their books on the "cash basis of accounting" (at least for tax-reporting purposes and often even in the financial statements they submit to their partners or the bank). Thus, neither accounts receivable (fees billed but uncollected) or work-in-process (unbilled and uncollected fees) may be the focus of attention or even revealed to the reader of the financials, often the largest asset of the firm. Such can often mask a receivable problem. One more item, which typically is raised during discussions with your accountant - cash basis taxpayers

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WINE & FOOD

Continued from Page 12

grip that contrasts well with the clean, precise fruit flavors and delicate minerality. The style is a steely, mineral, precise sparkling wine. A traditional blend of Chardonnay, Pinot Meunier, & Pinot Noir.

Thanks to Nina, Jimmy, and Eric for suggesting some very interesting sparkling wines they are selling at their respective stores. One of the best ways to feel comfortable buying wine or expanding your wine knowledge is to rely on the recommendations of experienced wine experts. While it may seem safer to buy a well-branded bubbly, whether for yourself or as a gift, don't be afraid to drink outside the box and explore options beyond those the marketers want you to select. Let's raise a glass and toast to a sparkling holiday season. Cheers!



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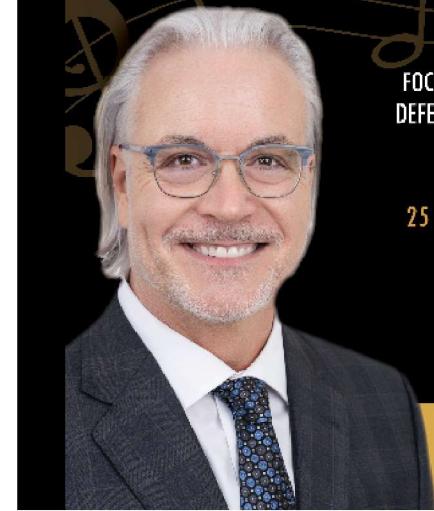
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VERDICTS IN THE COURT

October 2025

Superior Court of New Jersey

VERDICT: No Cause (10/8/2025)

Case Type: Medical Malpractice
 Judge: Michael J. Kassel, J.S.C.
 Plaintiff's Atty: Dominic C. Guerrini, Esq./Bradley T. Beckman, Esq.
 Defendant's Atty: Dominic A. DeLaurentis, Esq.
 L-2636-18
 Jury

VERDICT: No Cause (10/15/2025)

Case Type: Contract/Commercial Transaction
 Judge: Francisco Dominguez, P.J.Cv.
 Plaintiff's Atty: Robert Fink, Esq.
 Defendant's Atty: Pro Se Tina Angeloni
 L-1542-24
 Bench

VERDICT: Total Damages Verdict: \$29,236 - Defendant

Pats Lindenwold LLC (10/30/2025)
 Case Type: Contract/Commercial Transaction
 Judge: Francisco Dominguez, P.J.Cv.
 Plaintiff's Atty: Talbot Kramer, Esq.
 Defendant's Atty: Michael Fekete, Esq.
 L-3349-23
 Jury

VERDICTS IN THE COURT

November 2025

Superior Court of New Jersey

VERDICT: No Cause (11/6/2025)

Case Type: Auto
 Judge: Frank C. Testa, J.S.C.
 Plaintiff's Atty: Charles Nugent, Esq.
 Defendant's Atty: Christopher Marcucci, Esq.
 L-2177-23
 Jury

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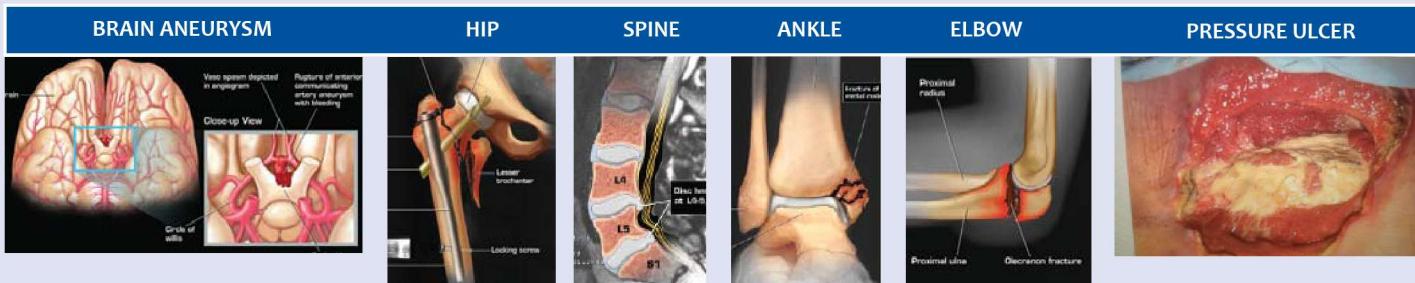
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- \$400K Recovery – Pain & Suffering for Fatal Fire (Verdict of \$375K plus \$25K Settlement)
- \$500K Jury Verdict – Excess Over Remainder of \$100K CSL Policy Against Allstate Insureds with Offer of Judgment for Policy – Herniated Discs
- \$500K Nursing Home/Hospital Neglect – Pressure Ulcers
- \$750K Nursing Home Neglect During Rehab Admission-Infected Pressure Ulcer – Surgery
- \$950K Nursing Home Neglect – Failure to Recognize and Act Upon Signs of Stroke
- \$400K Nursing Home Neglect – Pressure Ulcer Developed on Cancer Patient During Rehab Admission
- \$400K Hospital and Nursing Home Neglect – Pressure Ulcers
- \$550K Nursing Home Neglect/Violations of Rights – Fractured Hip During Transfer – Pressure Ulcers
- \$850K Nursing Home Neglect/Violations of Rights – Bed Sores
- \$1 Million – Nursing Home Neglect/Violations of Rights – Pressure Ulcer and Fracture
- \$350K Judgment After Jury Verdict – Nursing Home – Hyperglycemia – No Permanency
- \$400K Plus Judgment After Jury Verdict – Nursing Home – Violations of Rights and Negligence Proven

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The Bar Foundation's **Public Benefits Committee** is again teaming up with the **Young Lawyers Committee** to make the 2025 Christmas holiday special for underprivileged families in the city of Camden. Your generous outpouring of support last year allowed us to "adopt" 100 families and we hope to meet that number this year.

It's easy to participate! Just tell us the size of the family you wish to adopt and we'll let you know the ages of the children, clothing sizes and, in some cases, their "wish list". Then all you have to do is shop and feel good knowing you are sharing the joy and spirit of the holidays with a family you will never meet, but who will be touched by your kindness. We are also asking that you include enough food for their Christmas dinner. The amount you spend on food and gifts is up to you. **The donation drop off will be from 8:30 - 10:30 am, Monday, December 22 at St. Joseph's Pro Cathedral Church in Camden.**

You will receive details and directions with your family assignment.

We hope all Bar members will commit to adopting a family either through their law firm or individually. Your participation is guaranteed to make you feel wonderful (and it's tax-deductible)!

Please contact **Kara Graser** at kara@camdencountybar.org for family assignments. Call Bar Headquarters at 856.482.0620 if you have any questions.

**THANK YOU AND
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**



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Melissa Osorio Dibble, Esq.
Archer & Greiner, P.C.



Donald P. Craig, Esq.
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Colin P. McHugh, Esq.
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A link and any materials will be emailed the morning of the program.

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Tuesday, January 13



12 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.



Zoom Webinar

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Wednesday, January 21
 2:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.
 Zoom Webinar

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CANCELLATION POLICY: Full refunds will be given to registrants whose cancellations are received at Bar Headquarters at least 48 hours prior to the event. Refunds WILL NOT BE GRANTED THEREAFTER. Substitute attendees, however, are welcome. This policy also applies to pay-at-the-door registrants who will be invoiced if proper cancellation is not provided.



BINGO

Night

Join us for a night of games and laughs!

Tickets \$45 each

HURRY - Tickets WILL sell out!

Light food & refreshments will be served

10 games of Bingo
Games 1-9 = \$200 Prize
Game 10 = \$500 Prize
Plus raffle baskets,
50/50 & option to purchase additional game sheets. Each sheet contains 3 boards per game.

**In the event of a tie, the prize will be divided equally.*

**GLENDORA
FIRE HALL**

**6:30 P.M.
DOORS OPEN AT 6 PM**

**JANUARY
30**

**To purchase tickets, call 856-482-0620 or
register online: www.camdencountybar.org**

If gambling is a problem for you or someone in your family, call 1-800-GAMBLER

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The Camden County Bar Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not for profit charitable organization registered with the Office of the Attorney General of New Jersey. Contributions to the Foundation are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by current IRS regulations. Donation and sponsorship opportunities available on the next page.



Sponsorship Opportunities

Raffle basket donations greatly appreciated!

Hall Sponsor - \$500 - Sponsored by Fowler Law LLC

includes 4 tickets to event, two raffle basket auction sheets

Hall Sponsor - \$500 - Sponsored by Archer & Greiner P.C.

includes 4 tickets to event, two raffle basket auction sheets

Hall Sponsor - \$500 - Sponsored by Keating Law Firm, LLC

includes 4 tickets to event, two raffle basket auction sheets

Hall Sponsor - \$500 - Sponsored by Kulzer & DiPadova, P.A.

includes 4 tickets to event, two raffle basket auction sheets

Hall Sponsor - \$500 - Sponsored by Law Office of Lynda Hinkle

includes 4 tickets to event, two raffle basket auction sheets

Refreshment Sponsor - \$300 - Sponsored by Tate & Tate Court Reporters

includes 2 tickets to event, one raffle basket auction sheet

Refreshment Sponsor - \$300 - Sponsored by Famulari Mediation

includes 2 tickets to event, one raffle basket auction sheet

Refreshment Sponsor - \$300 - Sponsored by Porchlight Estate Solutions

includes 2 tickets to event, one raffle basket auction sheet

Refreshment Sponsor - \$300 - Sponsored by SJ Paralegal Association

includes 2 tickets to event, one raffle basket auction sheet

Game 1 Sponsor - \$200 - Sponsored by Hagner & Zohlman LLC

Game 2 Sponsor - \$200 - Sponsored by RF Group at Ringler

Game 3 Sponsor - \$200 - Sponsored by Costello & Silverman

Game 4 Sponsor - \$200 - Sponsored by Law Office of Christopher St. John

Game 5 Sponsor - \$200 - Sponsored by O'Neill Wealth Management

Game 6 Sponsor - \$200

Game 7 Sponsor - \$200

Game 8 Sponsor - \$200

Game 9 Sponsor - \$200

Game 10 Sponsor "Cover All" - \$500 - Sponsored by Law Office of Maisie Chin Smith

*includes 4 tickets to event, two raffle basket auction sheets

To reserve your sponsorship, contact
Bar Headquarters at 856-482-0620 or
email Nicholas DeMarco at
ndemarco@camdencountybar.org

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2025 CAMDEN COUNTY HARVEY M. MITNICK PROFESSIONAL LAWYER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Sponsored jointly with the New Jersey Commission on Professionalism in the Law

Your nomination for the 2025 Professional Lawyer of the Year should be one who is:

1. Well recognized in the community for character and competence;
2. Respected by all;
3. Considered to be a model of professional behavior.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS:

<u>1997</u> Arthur Montano	<u>2011</u> Michael P. Madden
<u>1998</u> Harvey M. Mitnick	<u>2012</u> Robert N. Agre
<u>1999</u> George F. Kugler, Jr.	<u>2013</u> Ann M. Gorman
<u>2000</u> James D. Hamilton, Jr.	<u>2014</u> Brenda Lee Eutsler
<u>2001</u> Warren W. Faulk	<u>2015</u> Michael S. Berger
<u>2002</u> Ira R. Deiches	<u>2016</u> Michael A. Kulzer
<u>2003</u> Gladys E. Rodriguez	<u>2017</u> Jules A. Lieberman
<u>2004</u> Hon. Michele M. Fox	<u>2018</u> Robert G. Harbeson
<u>2005</u> Edward D. Sheehan	<u>2019</u> Gary W. Boguski
<u>2006</u> Frank D. Allen	<u>2020</u> Steven K. Mignogna
<u>2007</u> Andrew B. Kushner	<u>2021</u> Jenifer G. Fowler
<u>2008</u> Justin T. Loughry	<u>2022</u> Luke Griffith
<u>2009</u> Joseph A. McCormick, Jr.	<u>2023</u> Richard A. DeMichele, Jr.
<u>2010</u> William J. Thompson	

Nominations due December 31, 2025!

Complete the form below and email/mail/fax your nomination for the 2025 Harvey M. Mitnick Professional Lawyer of the Year Award. Please include information as to why you feel the nominee should be the recipient of this award (attach additional sheets). Please type or print clearly.

I am pleased to nominate _____ for the 2025 Harvey M. Mitnick Professional Lawyer of the Year Award.

Nominated by _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Return form to: Devine Award Nominations
c/o Camden County Bar Association
1939 Marlton Pike East, Suite 120
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

OR EMAIL TO: kara@camdencountybar.org
OR FAX TO: 856.482.0637

Nominations due Devember 31, 2025!