

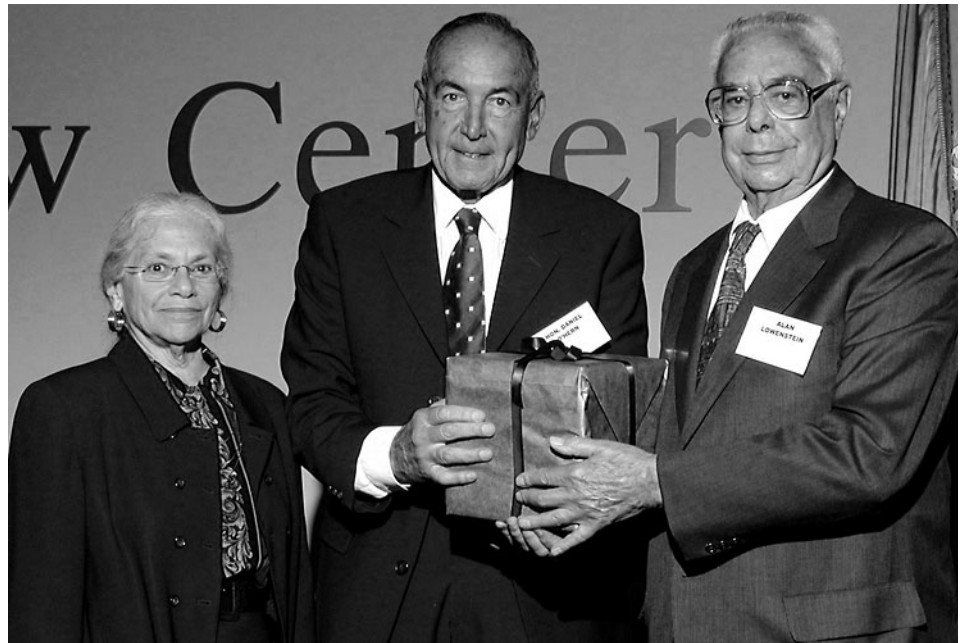
The COMMISSION QUARTERLY

News from the New Jersey Commission on Professionalism in the Law

Commission Honors Alan Lowenstein and Other Lawyers at Professionalism Awards Luncheon

The New Jersey Commission on Professionalism in the Law honored over two-dozen distinguished lawyers from across the state at its Professionalism Awards Luncheon on Sept. 26 that filled the Law Center auditorium in New Brunswick. New Jersey Attorney General David Samson delivered the keynote address (excerpted on page 2). The honorees were headed by Alan V. Lowenstein of Lowenstein Sandler in Roseland, who was presented with the 2002 Daniel J. O'Hern Award for career achievement and commitment to the highest ideals of professionalism. The award is named for retired Justice Daniel J. O'Hern of the New Jersey Supreme Court, who has served as an advisor to the Commission since its inception in 1996.

Chief Justice Deborah Poritz, Chair of the Commission, considers Lowenstein the ideal choice for the award due to "a noteworthy career, outstanding *pro bono* contributions, service to the community, and an exceptional reputation." Lowenstein has been a major figure in New Jersey's legal community for decades, having founded one of the state's premier firms, Lowenstein Sandler. He played a key role in reforming statutes governing banking and corporate law and was an important figure in Newark's charter reform movement that changed the city's governmental structure. Long active in community organizations, his efforts helped the development of Liberty State Park and the transformation of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra into a nationally recognized institution. He has been recognized for contributions to legal services programs and in encouraging *pro bono* service within the bar. In the words of



The Commission on Professionalism recently recognized the distinguished career of Alan V. Lowenstein (right) with the 2002 Daniel J. O'Hern Award. Chief Justice Deborah Poritz and retired Justice Daniel J. O'Hern presented Lowenstein with the award that acknowledges career achievement and commitment to the highest ideals of professionalism.

the Chief Justice, "he did it the right way — with grace, dignity, and respect for others." New Jersey State Bar Association President Richard Badolato called Lowenstein "one of my heroes" and pointed to years of achievement in the law and community service, and a "willingness to get involved in the issues of the day, regardless of the time and energy that may be expended."

As it has done since 1997, the Commission presented Professional Lawyer of the Year awards to members of the bar designated by bar associations. The awards rec-

ognize lawyers for their outstanding professional conduct, competence and demeanor. In her remarks at the luncheon, the Chief Justice applauded "outstanding lawyers who embody the professional ideals that we all cherish." Ronald Riccio, former Dean at Seton Hall Law School described the award winners as "true professionals...who have succeeded while observing the highest standards of conduct, with their values and ideals intact." The awards were presented by Chief Justice Poritz.

Bar Urged To Help Raise Standards Of Business Morality

Attorney General David Samson, the guest speaker at the Professionalism Awards Luncheon, focused on recent corporate scandals and called on lawyers to help restore legal and moral standards by promoting basic values of honesty and integrity. His remarks are reprinted here in part.

As a member of the bar who has worked a very long time in private practice and now on the public side, it is personally rewarding to take part in an event that reminds us that attorneys can, and do, serve their clients and their communities with competence and integrity. It is particularly satisfying to participate in recognizing excellence and professionalism today – at a time when our daily news accounts detail greed and the corruption it breeds washing over the corporate world, and unfortunately, the profes-

sions that serve it. The stories that dominate our news range from fraudulently reported earnings, to companies being looted by their leaders, to conflicts of interest in the extreme. And in many of those instances, the violations of the law, not to mention the betrayal of trust, have been actually committed by attorneys, or with their knowledge and approval.

As Americans, we respect and even honor individual ambition and achievement. We should. It is part of our history, and continues to be a part of our basic cultural values. But, as we have seen, greed and corruption can become perversions of ambition and achievement, and if allowed to spread unchecked, they can infect and erode our general moral standards. I think we need to re-balance ambition and our current definitions of success against other values like honesty, integrity and basic standards of busi-

ness and professional morality.

Which leads to the question of what we as attorneys should be doing to restore society's moral values and adherence to legal standards. I should say that no one understands better than I the pressures that lawyers in private practice are subjected to, the pressures clients generate, and the economic pressures of building and maintaining a strong practice. But against the current backdrop of increasing corporate and public corruption, we, as lawyers, have an opportunity and an obligation to be leaders in promoting the values of honesty and integrity – to raise the standards of business morality. In short, we need to stand up against this wave of business corruption, and for those same values that caused us to become lawyers in the first place. As a profession, we must become part of the solution to the problem. ➤

New Jersey Commission on Professionalism in the Law

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The 2002 Professional Lawyer of the Year Award winners

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Mel Narol

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Phoebe Scham

Thank You!

The Commission thanks the *Lawyers Diary and Manual* and New Jersey Lawyers Service for their continuing support and financial contributions toward the professionalism luncheon.