

Message from President Donald A. DiGioia, November, 2009  
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## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As President of the Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers of New Jersey, it is my honor to welcome you to our website. Now in our 25th year, ACDL-NJ remains firmly committed to represent the interests of criminal defense lawyers who fight relentlessly to protect the constitutional rights of persons accused of crime.

Since the inception of our association in 1985, the ACDL's ranks have steadily increased, and we now have more than 450 members. Our group includes defense attorneys from all twenty-one New Jersey counties, which enables us to network with lawyers who are familiar with the various courts and prosecutors' offices throughout the state. Our ACDL-NJ website also includes links to a list serve, a brief bank, and contains specific contact information and visiting hours at all of the county jails in our jurisdiction.

If you practice criminal defense law and do not yet belong to our association, or if you are interested in pursuing this exciting field, we urge you to join us. Whether you are an experienced trial lawyer or a novice, you will benefit by becoming active in our organization. Veteran attorneys must remain current as to all developments in criminal law in order to be effective in the courtroom. Young lawyers must acquire practical knowledge in the art of trial advocacy, in order to properly defend their clients. ACDL-NJ fulfills these needs by offering enlightening seminars to lawyers of all experience levels, and by providing one-on-one instruction to young lawyers through our Mentoring Program. By participating in our organization, you may pick up the phone and get sound advice, or information about a particular county, from a friendly colleague who practices in any corner of the state. As an incentive to encourage newer lawyers to take advantage of this opportunity, membership is free to those attorneys admitted to practice three years or less.

On October 31, 2009, ACDL-NJ held its Twenty-First Annual Super Saturday Seminar at the Woodbridge Hilton in Iselin. This year's successful program featured well renowned speakers on topics including search and seizure issues, changes in the gun laws, immigration implications for non-citizen defendants, a municipal court update, as well as a presentation by a nationally recognized forensic scientist relating to fingerprint analysis. ACDL-NJ has an outstanding Amicus Curiae Committee which strives to make our organization's voice heard in every criminal case which is argued before the New Jersey Supreme Court. Moreover, we are proud of the work performed by our Lawyers' Assistance Program, which provides free legal representation to attorney-members who unjustifiably come under attack for zealously defending their clients within the bounds of ethics. In addition to hosting our annual Super Saturday program, our Education Committee offers a CJA seminar in conjunction with the Association of the Federal Bar each January, and we shall also be in the forefront conducting mandatory CLE courses, which shall be taught by pre-eminent defense counsel. In addition, the ACDL-NJ Legislative Committee monitors pending bills and provides both the New Jersey Assembly and Senate

with input relating to the constitutionality or advisability of pending legislation. This year we have formed a Juvenile Justice Committee which shall address significant issues which arise in that area of law.

On behalf of the entire Board of Trustees, as the 25th President of the Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers of New Jersey, I pledge that we shall continue bringing our beloved organization forward in its effort to support the highest ideals of criminal trial lawyers acting in defense of their clients. I encourage you to join us in this noble quest.

Donald A. DiGioia

President - ACDL-NJ