

# The National Consumer Law Center

## Honors

### David L. Leen as the 2012 Recipient of the Vern Countryman Award



*“No one has been more intimately involved in his cases, his anger and heartbreak over injustice, his financial sacrifices and investment in the interests of protecting his clients and advancing consumer law regionally and nationally.”*

The Senior Counsel of the Consumer Protection Division in his State’s Attorney General’s office had this to say: *He has contributed to every significant development in consumer law in this region for the last thirty years. He noted the recipient as fearless when it comes to protecting consumers and told of him recently representing a pregnant, single mother taking care of her own elderly mother and disabled brother who was about to lose her home. He prevented foreclosure, won a significant monetary settlement and made sure the family then owned its own home free and clear of debt. The lender who was known to carry a firearm threatened our recipient but that did not deter him.*

Another colleague lauds our award winner *for currently launching a regional consumer law center in order to provide a consumer law clinic that will both provide a haven for consumers facing foreclosure*

*and other sources of economic ruin as a result of fraud and to educate, mentor and groom the next generation of consumer lawyers.*

One friend and former colleague notes he has known David for over forty years working together initially as legal service staff attorneys, litigating a variety of consumer cases and advocating for protective legislation on non-judicial deed of trust foreclosures, fair credit reporting and consumer protection. Our recipient was then a staff attorney at the Federal Trade Commission office in his state before starting his own, successful firm. He goes on to say that our award winner's 1985 work on one case described the fiduciary duties that trustees owed to borrowers in non-judicial foreclosures for the first time in his state. It was a seminal case and set an invaluable precedent.

Again, David's law partner describes *an elderly woman who had been taken advantage of by a couple posing as caretakers. Their forged document enabled them to run through all of her savings, all of her assets. She was left crying in her driveway explaining that they were going to sell her house. David got the caretakers convicted for their direct theft of funds and ended up bringing his clients meals when he found she was eating the same cat food she was feeding her cats. This was in addition to his uncompensated dedication to her case.*

And, finally, this same partner talks about a homeless, recovering drug addict who he helped recover her home and for whom he is still pursuing rightful monetary damages. This client's words are these: *David is obviously a talented lawyer but he is also a wonderful man who leaves a trail of beauty in his wake.*