

**The National Consumer Law Center
Honors
Mark A. Chavez**



**With the 2016
Vern Countryman Consumer Law Award**

The National Consumer Law Center (NCLC) is proud to honor California attorney Mark A. Chavez with the 2016 Vern Countryman Consumer Law Award. The Countryman Award is presented each year to a legal services or other public interest attorney whose special contributions to the practice of consumer law have strengthened and affirmed the rights of low-income Americans.

Mark A. Chavez is an exceptional advocate who has devoted his career to working on behalf of, in the words of Leslie Bailey of Public Justice, “People who work hard for less money, people who’ve been cheated, people who are disadvantaged. People whose luck is about to change because Mark Chavez just became their champion.”

Early in his career, Mark became involved in prisoners’ rights work, notably in a case involving prison conditions in California. When he began concentrating on consumer protection class actions, he specialized in force placed insurance, successfully winning damages for many clients who had been cheated and exploited. “I will always know Mark as the champion who through private litigation ended the nationwide forced placed insurance excesses that I had only dealt with as best I could as a legal aid lawyer in individual cases,” recalls New Mexico attorney Dick Rubin.

“His post repossession cases resulted in over a *billion* dollars of debt being wiped out for California consumers... and he brought cases against subprime lenders after the mortgage crisis, forcing entire industries to change their practices,” adds Leslie Bailey.

“I can’t think of anyone whose combination of legal skills, contributions to the cause, and kindness and generosity of spirit to those in the consumer advocacy community better suits them to the recognition this award bestows,” writes NCLC Partners Council member John Roddy in support of Mark’s nomination.

A founding member and former Co-Chair of the National Association of Consumer Advocates, Mark currently serves on the board of Public Citizen, and is a former board member of the National Consumer Law Center.

A graduate of Stanford Law School, he served as a Judicial Extern for the Honorable Mathew O. Tobriner of the California Supreme Court. Mark was also a co-founder and the first Managing Editor of the Stanford Environmental Law Journal and a founding member of the Stanford Public Interest Law Foundation. He was selected through the Attorney General’s Honors Program and joined the Civil Division of the United States Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. after graduating from law school.

“I can think of no better person to receive the Vern Countryman Award than Mark,” says Partners council member Mike Malakoff. “He has dedicated his career to protecting those who cannot protect themselves.”

We at NCLC are pleased to honor Mark A. Chavez with the 2016 Vern Countryman Consumer Law Award.