

UpFront

By Naseem Stecker and Samantha Meinke

Darlow and Bernstein Recognized for Their Help to the Disabled



UM Photo Services, Eric Bronson

Left to right: Richard Bernstein's father, attorney Sam Bernstein; Richard Bernstein; Julia Donovan Darlow; and Richard Bernstein's mother, Susan Bernstein.

The University of Michigan honored two Michigan attorneys for their commitment to and work with the disabled. The awards were presented at an October 28 ceremony in Ann Arbor.

Julia Donovan Darlow, past SBM president and U-M regent, was honored as a "Special U-M Regent" in appreciation for her continuing support of the University of Michigan Council for Disability Concerns.

Darlow presented the 2011 James T. Neubacher Award, the most prestigious award of the Council for Disability Concerns, to U-M alumnus Richard Bernstein for his tireless pro bono advocacy for disability rights. Bernstein was nominated for the award by Francine Cullari, chairperson of the SBM Publications and Website Advisory Committee.

Blind since birth, Bernstein partnered with the U.S. Department of Justice to force Detroit to fix wheelchair lifts on buses, sued the state of Michigan to preserve special education funding, and successfully challenged the University of Michigan to alter the configuration and number of seats for disabled football fans as part of the recent Michigan Stadium renovations. He is currently working to make Detroit Metropolitan Airport more accessible for disabled flyers. Bernstein has received numerous local, national, and international honors, including the SBM John W. Cummiskey Pro Bono Award in 2008.

An avid runner, Bernstein has completed 14 marathons, including six New York City Marathons; the Ironman Triathlon in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho; and the 2011 Israman Triathlon in Eilat, Israel. ■

Blogs By and About the State Bar of Michigan

SBM President Julie Fershtman launched a blog this past September to encourage members to consider becoming more involved in bar association activities. She talks about what other attorneys are doing at the state, local, and affinity bar associations across Michigan and highlights the benefits of being actively involved in bar associations, like forming friendships and contacts, continuing legal education opportunities, serving the public, and improving the legal profession. To check out her blog, visit <http://sbmpres2012.com/index.html>.

SBM Executive Director Janet Welch has also edited a blog since January 2010. SBM Blog offers posts containing commentary, news, and issues of interest to attorneys across the state. It features breaking news stories about cases in the Michigan Supreme Court, Michigan Court of Appeals, and the state's lower courts. SBM Blog also commonly features posts about court proceedings in nearby states and Canada, precedents that have been set in federal courts, and cautionary tales about what not to do as an attorney or judge. To check out SBM Blog, visit <http://sbmblog.typepad.com/sbm-blog/>. ■

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