

STEWART J. EISENBERG '80 ESTABLISHES SCHOLARSHIP

*PTLA president establishes fund
for future trial lawyers*

After more than 25 years representing victims of catastrophic injuries and death, Stewart J. Eisenberg '80, newly elected president of the Philadelphia Trial Lawyers Association and a founder and senior partner at Eisenberg, Rothweiler, Winkler, Eisenberg & Jeck, P.C. decided it was time to make a substantial contribution to the law school where the foundation for his career was laid.



Eisenberg's pledge establishes the Trial Lawyer Scholarship Fund at Temple Law. The proceeds from the fund will make a significant difference in the life—and loan repayments—for future students aspiring to careers in trial law.

The progression towards a career as a successful trial lawyer was for the most part a logical one. Eisenberg grew up in Bala Cynwyd, outside of Philadelphia, and stayed local after graduating from Lower Merion High School, choosing the University of Pennsylvania for his undergraduate degree. A motivated student, Eisenberg graduated *cum laude* in three years, and decided to head to Paris to study film.

"I knew I was going to go to law school," says Eisenberg. "My father always wanted to be a lawyer and he wanted me to achieve what he was unable to do. I even took the LSATs in France." At Temple, Eisenberg was on the law review and was awarded the Barristers Award for Excellence in Trial Advocacy. He honed his trial skills under the mentorship of Marshall Bernstein, with whom he worked as an associate and partner at Bernstein, Bernstein, and Harrison for ten years

before starting the practice of complex personal injury litigation in his current firm.

Eisenberg has never questioned his choice to be a plaintiff's trial lawyer. One particular case best describes the difference he feels he can make in people's lives and in society: "In 1994, I represented a seven-year-old girl—the same age as my daughter at the time—who was in the back seat

of a car wearing a 'lap belt only' seatbelt when her grandmother, who was driving, ran off the road and hit a tree. At the time, very few cars had shoulder harnesses in the back seat, and her 'lap belt only' seatbelt did not prevent her from suffering paralyzing injuries to her spinal cord.

"I was able to achieve a settlement that enabled her and her family to receive the medical treatment and therapies she needed. Recently, I received an e-mail from her asking me to sponsor her at the Miss USA Wheelchair competition. I, of course, agreed immediately and she is now the reigning Miss USA Wheelchair winner and will be graduating college in 2010. To be able to see how a trial lawyer's advocacy makes a difference in people's lives is one of the most rewarding parts of my career." And of course, as a result of this and other similar lawsuits, backseat shoulder harnesses are standard in most automobiles and children riding in them are safer.

The presidency of the PTLA will give Eisenberg a platform to continue his lifelong emphasis on "giving back." He wants to encourage his 1,100 strong membership to engage more than ever in *pro bono* work, and he wants to make their accomplish-

ments visible to the public. He also sees his role as advocating for the courts in Harrisburg to insure that state and county courts are well staffed and well funded. Because of the budgetary crisis and shortfall for the Legal Services community, he is encouraging his membership to participate in programs where they do *pro bono* work and help those most in need.

"Public service has always been at the center of what I do," says Eisenberg. "I enjoy inspiring people to give back to the legal community." Eisenberg is past president of the Pennsylvania Association of Justice (formerly the Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers Association), Lawyers for Consumer Rights and the Law Academy for the School District of Philadelphia. Currently, Eisenberg serves on the Board of Governors of the American Association for Justice. His generosity and service extends beyond the legal community. He was instrumental in founding his Elkins Park synagogue, Congregation Kol Ami, and is committed to Jewish charities, especially funding scholarships for teens to travel to Israel.

Eisenberg's passion for the law seems to have been shared by those closest to him. As the eldest of four boys, Eisenberg has two brothers, Fredric '87 and Matthew '96, who trained for their legal careers at Temple as well. For his two children, both recent college graduates, legal careers are also not out of the question. Michael works in Washington, DC for the majority leader of the House of Representatives, and Rachael recently began work in the juvenile division of the Philadelphia Public Defender's office.

"I decided to set up a scholarship fund for aspiring trial lawyers to expand the already great opportunities at Temple Law School," says Eisenberg. "I have been doing this work for almost thirty years, and I'm proud of what I do. I want Temple Law students to understand what it is a trial attorney can accomplish and help them work towards that goal."