

2003 PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

*Recognizing Outstanding Leadership
in the Delivery of Pro Bono Legal
Services in the State of Ohio*

RICHARD A. CORDRAY is the 2003 recipient of the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation's Presidential Award. On a *pro bono* basis and over a period of several years, Richard, as Counsel of Record submitted a series of *amicus* briefs defending the constitutionality of the use of interest on lawyers' trust accounts (IOLTA) revenue to fund legal aid programs. In March 2003, these efforts were rewarded with a U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding the IOLTA funding system (*Brown v. Legal Foundation of Washington*). The value of Richard's *pro bono* contribution on behalf of Ohio's low-income citizens is enormous. Ohio's statutorily created IOLTA program generates \$8 to \$9 million annually to support the work of ten regionally-based legal aid societies, which serve over 148,000 households annually.

Past OLAF Presidential Award Recipients

Volunteer Lawyers Project of the Volunteer Lawyers for the Poor Foundation and Magistrate Stephanie Clark of the Licking County Court of Common Pleas, General Division (2002); Attorney General Betty Montgomery (2001); the Greater Dayton Volunteer Lawyers Project (2000); Sternberg, Newman, Shifrin & Associates of Akron, Barkan & Neff of Columbus, and Gilliam & Ireland of Dayton (1999); Denis Murphy (1998); Bill Weisenberg, the Ohio State Bar Association's Government Affairs Director, Ohio State Bar Association (1997); the Columbus law firm of Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease (1996).



Professionalism

Enthusiasm

Leadership

Service



OHIO LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION

RICHARD A. CORDRAY

Richard Cordray is the recipient of the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation's 2003 Presidential Award for Pro Bono Legal Services. The Foundation presents Richard with the Presidential Award in recognition of his outstanding leadership in the delivery of pro bono legal services in the state of Ohio and appreciation for his volunteer contributions to promote the values of fairness and justice in Ohio.

On a *pro bono* basis, and over a period of several years, Richard served as Counsel of Record and submitted a series of *amicus* briefs defending the constitutionality of the use of interest on lawyers' trust accounts (IOLTA) revenue to fund legal aid programs. Richard initially took on this role in the challenge to the Texas IOLTA program (*Phillips v. Washington Legal Foundation*). Writing on behalf of Ohio's legal aid societies, local bar associations, social service agencies, and religious organizations, Richard submitted an *amicus* brief when *Phillips* was considered before the U.S. Supreme Court, and again when the case was remanded to the 5th Circuit.

When a subsequent challenge to Washington State's IOLTA funding system arose in the 9th Circuit, Richard again led Ohio's *amicus* effort, this time on behalf of a national coalition of 49 state bar associations and the National Association of IOLTA Programs. Richard's initial "read" of the merits of the case ultimately proved to be correct when the U.S. Supreme Court held earlier this year that there is no violation of the Takings Clause because compensation due, as measured by the owner's pecuniary loss, is zero.

Richard currently serves as Treasurer of Franklin County. Prior to being elected to that position in November 2002, Richard maintained a private law practice in constitutional and appellate litigation. A former U.S. Supreme Court Law Clerk to Justices Byron R. White and Anthony M. Kennedy, Richard has argued three cases before the United States Supreme Court by special appointment from the U.S. Department of Justice. Richard

served as Ohio State Solicitor from 1993 to 1994 and supervised the State's appellate work for the Ohio Attorney General. Since 1989, he has been an Adjunct Professor at The Ohio State University College of Law, teaching

courses in State Constitutional Law, Separation of Powers, Legislative Process, and U.S. Supreme Court Practice. Richard served as State Representative from the 33rd Ohio House District between 1991 and 1992.

Richard received his Juris Doctor with Honors from The University of Chicago Law School where he was a Mecham Scholar (full academic scholarship), Order of the Coif, and Editor-in-Chief of the Law Review. He earned a Master of Arts with First Class Honours in Philosophy, Politics & Economics from Oxford University, where he received the George C. Marshall Scholarship and earned Varsity "Blue" in Basketball, British Champions. Richard also earned a Bachelors of Art, *Summa Cum Laude*, from Michigan State University, where he majored in Legal and Political Theory, earned a full academic scholarship and Phi Beta Kappa honors, and was Captain of MSU's "College Bowl" team and national all-star.

Richard grew up in Grove City, Ohio. He is married to Margaret M. (Peggy) Cordray, who is a Capital University Law School Professor and a nationally-recognized authority on the United States Supreme Court. They have four-year-old twins, Danny and Holly. "Jeopardy" fans will also remember that Richard is also an undefeated five-time champion and Tournament of Champions semifinalist!



OHIO LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION

The Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation is a private, non-profit organization created by the Ohio Legislature in 1994 as a response to the serious deficiencies in meeting the civil legal needs of all Ohioans. In partnership with the state and local bars, elected officials, and local legal service providers, the Foundation continues to coordinate statewide resource development, support the delivery of legal services by local legal aid providers, and promote innovative approaches to ensure justice for all.

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