

In Profile

Richard Wintory



RICHARD WINTORY
AND SON, MICHAEL

IT IS HARD TO DESCRIBE RICHARD WINTORY without using superlatives. Using anybody's yardstick you can say that he is one of the brightest and most engaging, energetic, persuasive, popular and entertaining prosecutors and presenters you will ever encounter. For those who have heard about his recent accident, do not fear. Richard fell from a ladder several weeks ago but is regaining all his faculties and range of motion. He will be back and lecturing in his fields of expertise in the very near future.

Richard comes from Oklahoma where he served as president of the student body while attending the University of Oklahoma. He later obtained his law degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Law. He has spent his entire career in prosecution, having worked as an assistant district attorney for Oklahoma County for 20 years before moving to Tucson and serving as a deputy county attorney in Pima County.

In Oklahoma County, Richard specialized in narcotics prosecution and prosecuted Oklahoma's first state wiretap cases. Working as a special assistant U.S. attorney, he tried RICO cases and designer drug cases. He helped draft drug trafficking laws in the state of Oklahoma. As the Oklahoma County senior assistant district attorney, Richard prosecuted death penalty cases featured in books by Barry Scheck on the Innocence Project. In those cases, DNA exonerated those originally convicted and incriminated different suspects. Richard prosecuted the new defendants and, despite predictions that jurors would not convict after learning that others had been wrongly convicted for the same crime, Richard obtained convictions and the death penalty.

Richard was the lead prosecutor in the longest trial in Oklahoma history, which resulted in murder convictions and the death penalty for a defendant who brutally murdered his infant daughter and her mother. He successfully defended the death sentences in those crimes in the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals.

In 1990, Richard was appointed director of NDAA's (formerly the American Prosecutors Research Institute's) National Drug Prosecution Center where he helped draft the Uniform Controlled Substances Act and other model legislation.

As a member of the NDAA Board of Directors, Richard

represented state prosecutors in negotiations with the Department of Justice and congressional leaders to reform habeas corpus laws and shorten death penalty appeals. The National Association of Attorneys General presented him with its Marvin Award in 1996 for "demonstrating leadership, expertise and achievement in organizing victims and survivors of the Oklahoma City Bombing in support of the successful effort to reform death penalty appeals."

Since 2004, Richard has served as a deputy county attorney in the Pima County Attorney's Office in Tucson, where he is assigned to the Arizona HITDA Center. He prosecutes racketeering cases against criminal enterprises trafficking in drugs, operating identity theft and money laundering rings and who engage in violent crimes, including rape, kidnapping and murder. In 2005, he was named Arizona Prosecutor of the Year by the Arizona Narcotics Officers Association.

In 2007 Richard temporarily returned to Oklahoma to keep a promise to an Oklahoma family to prosecute their case in the event of a reversal of the conviction of the man who raped and murdered their daughter and then framed two innocent men for his crime. After achieving a second conviction of the killer, Richard returned to Arizona and successfully prosecuted a series of unique drug cases utilizing Arizona's racketeering laws to convict more than 41 defendants in a case in which the leader continued to run his gang from jail. Richard achieved both a conviction and a life sentence for the leader. In another 39-defendant case, Richard also convicted the leader of a brutal gang that robbed, kidnapped and murdered participants and attempted to attack and murder innocent bystanders, including a police officer. For these achievements, Richard received an unprecedented second Prosecutor of the Year award from the Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council.

Richard lives with his three-year-old son, Michael, and his wife, Lisa, who requires 24/7 in-home care due to a heart attack she suffered a few weeks after giving birth to their son. Everyone in Richard's life is mighty grateful that his recent accident did not leave him with any lingering scars. His wife, his son and the criminal justice system need Richard Wintory to come back strong and healthy, fighting and winning against the bad guys.