

# FEDERAL BAR ASSOCIATION CHICAGO CHAPTER



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July 25, 2005

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Dear FBA Colleagues:

The Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association ("FBA") is launching a campaign to endow the **Michael Francis Lefkow FBA Public Interest Fellowship Program** at the Northwestern University School of Law. We urge you to support our effort to establish a memorial to an exceptional attorney and to recognize the extraordinary sacrifice that was forced upon his wife, the Honorable Joan Humphrey Lefkow of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

On February 28, 2005, Judge Lefkow returned home to find her beloved husband and mother shot and killed. A few weeks later, Bart Ross, an unemployed electrician disfigured by cancer, committed suicide, leaving a detailed written account of the murders. His target was Judge Lefkow herself because of her decision to dismiss his malpractice case. Just a few weeks after these events, in an unrelated case, Matthew Hale, a white supremacist, was sentenced to forty years in prison for solicitation to murder Judge Lefkow.

The price exacted of Judge Lefkow for fulfilling her role as a fair and impartial judge is overwhelming. In her May 18, 2005 testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, she said, "Among more than 1,000 letters of condolence my family has received are approximately 200 from judges, state and federal, each of whom knows in their heart, 'This could have been me.' ... I come to you with a plea that each of you exercise leadership to use your voice in support of the vital role of judges in sustaining a society based on the rule of law instead of right being defined by might."

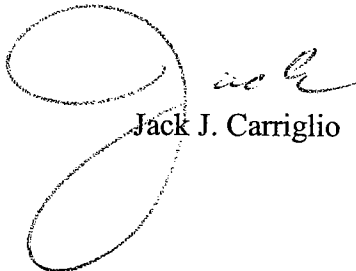
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Michael Lefkow was a distinguished lawyer who, for nearly forty years, dedicated his career to the causes and concerns of the poor and disenfranchised. A 1966 graduate of the Northwestern University School of Law, Mr. Lefkow was an attorney for the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago until 1976, when he became the first director of the DuPage County Legal Assistance Foundation. In 1979, he joined the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Coral Gables, Florida. Two years later, he returned to Illinois and became a labor attorney with the U.S. Postal Service. In 1984, he opened his own law practice, concentrating on social justice issues. He appeared twice before the U.S. Supreme Court in class actions to argue on behalf of public welfare recipients.

The Chicago Chapter of the FBA seeks to galvanize our members across the country to build a fitting memorial to an outstanding lawyer and to establish a sustainable program that will honor judges who face intimidation with courage and integrity. The fellowship will permit law students to accept paid summer internships across the country and represent the poor and vulnerable. I know you will agree that this is a highly worthwhile cause. Please be as generous as you can. If you would like to contribute to this effort, please make your check payable to the "Federal Bar Foundation" and mail it to the Federal Bar Association, P.O. Box 1200, Chicago, Illinois 60690. A successful program will honor both Michael Lefkow and his wife who has borne the most painful of losses in the interest of justice.

Very truly yours,



Jack J. Carriglio

JJC:clf