

# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

## YOU EARNED IT

By Michael J. Dennin



Do you feel like you are not good enough? Do you doubt your accomplishments of getting into and through law school, passing the Bar, getting your JD, and then actually practicing law? Are you just lucky? Are you tricking everyone about your accomplishments? Well I know that you are not just lucky. I know you earned it.

Let me say that you all reading this, whether you are lawyers or just the general public, may know what I am talking about. You may suffer from imposter syndrome. I will also say that you are not imposters. You are where you are for very good and truthful reasons. You are doing a very good job each day at work, at life, at home. You are not just lucky. You deserve what you have achieved. You are not tricking people. Please know this and understand it.

Many people, young and old, men and women, feel like they are imposters. Back in September I attended the Rutgers Mary Philbrook awards. I had a chance to talk to the students, and I also got to listen to Lloyd Freeman. Lloyd won an award that night that he truly deserved. He spoke about many things, one of which was 'imposter syndrome'. He spoke about that in relation to race and the law. However, I believe that this syndrome is one which many accomplished lawyers suffer from. It takes a long time, and a lot of self-talk and accomplishments for some people to stop suffering from this syndrome. Myself included.

Some lawyers may not come out to Camden County Bar Association events because of this reason. Be sure, however, to know that we are all in the same boat. We all put our pants on one leg at a time. No one is better than the other. We are all valuable and important. What we do, we deserve. Know that we understand what you may be going through. On that note I encourage you to flourish. Come out to our events. Let us help you give back to yourself. Have a wonderful holiday season and remember to give back to yourself as well as giving back to others. Give yourself the gift of knowing that you earned it and are real.

# FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARD FEATURE OF THE MONTH



The Camden County Bar Foundation sponsors numerous high school and law school scholarships, totaling nearly \$25,000 each year. To spread the word about these great opportunities, and to let our members know about the people for whom the scholarships are named, we will be featuring information on our different named awards each month. Law student scholarship applications for 2020 are now available on our website. Spread the word!

### Hon. Joseph W. Cowgill Memorial Award

**Joseph Cowgill** was born and raised in Camden, graduating from Camden High School and then from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and its law school. Upon graduation, he opened a Camden law practice. He became very involved in local politics, serving as a Camden County Freeholder, Camden County Surrogate, New Jersey State Assemblyman and ultimately a New Jersey State Senator. As a state senator, Sen. Cowgill served two terms as minority leader. He was the chairman of the county Democrat Party for an extended period and was a strong supporter of President John F. Kennedy's campaign and he became a welcome guest at the White House. During his later years, Sen. Cowgill was a leader of the Delaware River Port Authority. Sen. Cowgill was a former president of the Camden County Bar Association and received its highest honor, the Peter J. Devine, Jr. Award. He also was a trustee of the United Fund and served on the board of directors of United Jersey Bank. Although an Episcopalian, Sen. Cowgill was called upon to chair a committee charged with raising funds to stave off the possible collapse of the Catholic schools in Camden County.

### Hon. Ralph W.E. Donges Memorial Award

**Ralph Waldo Emerson Donges** – May 5, 1875 – September 21, 1974 – age 99 – was born in Pennsylvania and resided in Camden, Collingswood and Oaklyn, New Jersey. In his late twenties he studied law with a lawyer, read for the bar and commenced practice in Camden. Following in his doctor father's footsteps, he became interested in community affairs and politics. Donges served as legal aide to Woodrow Wilson prior to his election as president. The year 1913 saw him as presiding officer of the Loyal Order of Moose, he was a Freemason, and member of Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, in addition to various bar memberships. As World War I approached, he became a member of the Camden City Draft Board and the Public Safety Committee. In 1918 he joined the Army and rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. From 1920 he served the state's judicial system as a Circuit Judge until 1930 when he was named an Associate Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court. After the Constitutional Convention of 1948, which changed the New Jersey Court system, he became a member of the Camden County Superior Court. In business, he was a founding member of the South Camden Trust Company and served as its first president in 1921. In recognition of Ralph W.E. Donges' service, subsequent to his death, Camden County Bar Association established the Ralph W.E. Donges Memorial Scholarship Award to be given annually to an evening student attending Philadelphia Metropolitan area and New Jersey area law schools. In response to changing demographics, in 2008 the committee redefined the criteria from "evening student" to "part-time student."

## 34<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY PARTY

CLICK HERE to jump to the Record-Breaking 2019 Children's Holiday Party