

Theodore Howard to Receive Wiley A. Branton Award for Civil Rights Advocacy

June 11, 2015

In recognition of his longstanding commitment to and efforts on behalf of the pro bono civil rights legal community, The Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs (WLC) will honor Wiley Rein Pro Bono Partner Theodore A. Howard with its prestigious Wiley A. Branton Award at its annual luncheon on Wednesday, June 17. Mr. Howard is receiving the accolade for his exceptional, impactful pro bono accomplishments and for his leadership of the Lawyers' Committee, including as a member and former co-chair of its Board of Directors.

Mr. Howard is the lead lawyer on the Wiley Rein team that helped secure a favorable landmark settlement on behalf nearly 1,200 prisoners at the Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women (FCCW), a Virginia state prison. After years of litigation, the December 2014 settlement—covered by *Associated Press* and *Virginia Lawyers* weekly—established a framework for significant reforms in the provision of medical care at FCCW, subject to ongoing evaluation by a compliance monitor and the supervisory jurisdiction of the federal district court. The Wiley Rein team included of counsel Michael J. Gridley, Rachel K. Hunnicutt, and Mary Catherine Martin, and associate Laura El-Sabaawi.

"Ted is an inspirational leader in the pro bono field—his passion and commitment to succeeding on his clients' behalf throughout his career are unmatched," said Wiley Rein Managing Partner Peter D. Shields. "We are particularly proud of the results he and his team obtained in the Fluvanna case, and the meaningful impact it will have on people's lives moving forward. We heartily congratulate Ted on receiving this distinguished civil rights award and count ourselves lucky to have him as a colleague and friend."

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“I am deeply honored to receive this recognition from an organization I hold in the highest possible esteem,” Mr. Howard added. “I am grateful to the Lawyers’ Committee and highly value the time I have spent working with its Board members and staff, as well as the Committee’s steadfast support of and commitment to achieving the goal of equal access to justice in the Washington, DC community.”

Mr. Howard has a national reputation as a litigator, in insurance law and within the pro bono community. Formerly a partner in the Insurance Practice, he was appointed Wiley Rein’s first full-time Pro Bono Partner in May 2014, a position created to oversee the firm’s pro bono programs and initiatives and further strengthen its already significant commitment to public service.

Mr. Howard’s pro bono practice has included a death penalty case, consumer protection and landlord/tenant matters, family law matters and extensive prisoners’ rights litigation. He previously served for 11 years as President and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the District of Columbia Prisoners’ Legal Services Project prior to its merger with the Lawyers’ Committee in 2006. He also serves on the Advisory Council of the Legal Aid Justice Center in Virginia. Mr. Howard was recognized by the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia with the Servant of Justice Award in 2006, in recognition of his numerous pro bono contributions.

The Wiley A. Branton Award was first bestowed by the Washington Lawyers’ Committee in 1989. It takes its name from Wiley A. Branton, Sr., an extraordinary lawyer and civil rights leader whose life embodied civil rights advocacy of the highest order.

Thomas W. Brunner, chairman emeritus of Wiley Rein’s Insurance Practice and a former WLC Board Member, received the Branton Award in 2012.