

Washington State Bar Association

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Donald L. Madsen Receives WSBA Lifetime Service Award

Trial attorney to be recognized for 30-plus years of service to Associated Counsel for the Accused Division, King County Department of Public Defense, improving the quality of justice for marginalized and vulnerable people

SEATTLE, WA [Sept. 27, 2013] — The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) presented Seattle attorney **Donald L. Madsen** with the 2013 Lifetime Service Award. The award is in recognition of over three decades of leadership of Associated Counsel at the Accused Division – King County Department of Public Defense (ACAD), improving the quality of justice for marginalized and vulnerable people and creating mentorship opportunities for lawyers in the criminal justice system. WSBA President **Michele Radosevich** presented the award at the WSBA Annual Awards Dinner on Sept. 26, 2013, at the Grand Hyatt Seattle.

“The [criminal justice] system would literally grind to a halt if there wasn’t a solid working relationship between the [State and defense] parties,” said **Dan Clark**, assistant chief deputy prosecuting attorney for the King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office. “It takes very special people to help establish and maintain these necessary bonds... Don leads by example — he is compassionate, professional, hard-working, and honest.”

Madsen began his legal career at ACAD as a Rule 9 intern just two weeks after graduating from the McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific, in 1979. Since then, he has been a staff attorney, supervising attorney in felonies, and managing director. His work has contributed significantly to ACAD’s mission of providing quality legal representation for people who are accused of crimes, incarcerated, or threatened with the loss of custodial rights to their children. He established and implemented a community outreach program for ACAD attorneys and staff to coordinate their efforts to promote public defense, improvement of the justice system, and community involvement. Madsen has also served as a mentor to hundreds of lawyers throughout his career, making a commitment to including more women and people of color in management roles at ACAD.

When the Regional Justice Center opened in Kent in 1995, Madsen was a founding member of its Court Operations Committee, collaborating with judges, prosecutors, and other defense agencies to advocate on behalf of criminal defendants. He was instrumental during the early years of the drug court, and still serves on the Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Oversight Committee, the Jail Capacity Advisory Group, and the Seattle Community Court Executive Committee.

Madsen is also actively involved in serving his community. He has volunteered to prepare and serve meals at Operation Nightwatch and the Tacoma Rescue Mission, donated toiletries and food to homeless shelters, and volunteers with the Fircrest Kiwanis Club. He hosts exchange students through Rotary International and has volunteered with local schools.

“I am humbled by the award,” said Madsen. “There are hundreds of people working in public defense statewide who are equally deserving. Justice in our legal system will not be achieved without the dedication and commitment of public defenders to help ensure that those without means accused of a crime will receive a fair shake in our Courts.”

About the WSBA Lifetime Service Award

This is a special award given for a lifetime of service to the legal community and the public.

About the Washington State Bar Association

The WSBA is part of the judicial branch and is authorized by the Washington State Supreme Court to license the state’s 35,400 lawyers. The WSBA both regulates lawyers under the authority of the Court and serves its members as a professional association — all without public funding. The WSBA’s mission is to serve the public and the members of the Bar, ensure the integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice.

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