

Presentation of the James K. Carroll Award to Peter Neeson
By Richard P. Campbell

I have the high honor and privilege tonight to present an award in the name of a great personal friend originally from the greater Philadelphia area to another great personal friend also from the greater Philadelphia area.

A professional “Twofer” so to speak.

One friend was a graduate of Villanova, an outstanding Roman Catholic University founded by the Augustinians and said to have great basketball teams; the other is a graduate of Notre Dame, another Roman Catholic University founded by the Congregation of the Holy Cross and said to have great football teams.

But the ABA has turned to an alumnus of Boston College, a Jesuit University said to have won the national championship in hockey a few times over the past several years, to speak about them both.

What possibly could be better than that!

Let me first speak about the person in whose memory this award is given.

By any measure, Jim Carroll was no ordinary man. He was first and foremost a husband and father. He was utterly dedicated to his wife Cindy and his sons, Ross and Taylor. And I remember so well the consummate pride that he manifested in their accomplishments. Taylor, the brilliant and aspiring young lawyer, who would lead the bar in Louisiana, as Jim did for so many years. And Ross, the educator who chose to forego fame and riches, in order to guide and teach youngsters in the public schools of Kentucky. Jim and Cindy were an inseparable team, who loved each other without reservation and who always lived life to the fullest.

Jim was a committed team player who was bonded to his partners, many of whom are here tonight:

- Norman Sullivan
- Gerard Gelpi (whose wife Yvonne is here)
- George Fowler
- Delos Flint
- Todd Crawford
- Cliffe Labord; and
- Stephanie Skinner.

Jim was also a friend who was always eager to help others. Some of his friends are here tonight too.

- Candace Reagle
- Cindy Robbins; and
- David Leefe.

For well in excess of 20 years, Jim Carroll (with Cindy always at his side) gave his time, energy, and attention to the Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section. He held too many offices to list. But I should note that as TIPS financial officer he helped save the Section from financial ruin and almost singlehandedly redirected its finances such that the Section now has a substantial and secure reserve. As Chair of the Section he led it to prominence among all ABA Sections.

Jim Carroll was a leader. Maybe he learned those skills on the basketball courts at Villanova or better yet as a Marine Officer in Viet Nam. He understood people; he could and did motivate others; he led by example.

Marine General John F. Kelly, a Boston native and graduate of the University of Massachusetts, was recently promoted to lead the Southern Command. In a speech to the **SEMPER FI SOCIETY OF ST LOUIS on November 13, 2010**, General Kelly spoke about the character of US Marines that, on reflection, applies to Jim Carroll.

General Kelly said:

- We have a saying in the Marine Corps and that is "no better friend, no worse enemy, than a U.S. Marine." We always hope for the first, friendship, but are certainly more than ready for the second.
- Marines are men and women of character who continue to believe in this country enough to put life and limb on the line without qualification, and without thought of personal gain.
- Marines know the real strength of a platoon, a battalion, or a country that is not worshipping at the altar of diversity, but in a melting point that stitches and strengthens by a sense of shared history, values, customs, hopes and dreams all of which unifies a people making them stronger.
- Marines look beyond their own self-interest and comfortable lives, and go into the darkest and most dangerous places on earth to hunt down... those who would do us harm.

SEMPER FIDELIS is Latin for "Always Faithful" or "Always Loyal".

We could have no better friend than Jim Carroll. He was a man of character who always put it on the line without qualification.

He knew the strength of a team and celebrated diversity in all respects.

He always looked beyond self interest.

He was always faithful and loyal.

Tonight the American Bar Association Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section (TIPS) honors Peter J. Neeson of Philadelphia with its James K. Carroll Leadership Award, for his outstanding leadership qualities and service to the section.

Randy Aliment , our Section Chair, put it best:

Peter has shown longtime support of and leadership within TIPS, having served as chair in 2006, chair-elect in 2005 and vice-chair in 2004. He also served as chair of the section's Products, General Liability and Consumer Law Committee, and served on the section's council.

Peter, in many respects alone and in the face of great odds, spearheaded the development of the National Trial Academy in conjunction with the National Judicial College in Reno, Nev., which is now widely recognized as the premier forum of its kind in which to train young lawyers how to try jury trials.

Peter founded the TIPS Leadership Academy, a diversity program designed to develop and train future community and bar leaders. Many of the Section Council Members and future Chairs of this Section will, in fact, trace their success back to Peter's initiatives.

Peter has also served in other various leadership roles including:

- vice chairman of the U.S. Olympic Committee for Eastern Pennsylvania,
- current member of the board of directors of the Philadelphia Sports Congress, the city's civic/business facilitator for the promotion and development of sporting events in the city,
- past president of the Philadelphia Amateur Sports Corporation,
- general counsel and a member of the Executive Committee for Philadelphia Women's Basketball 2000, the local organizing committee for the NCAA Women's Final Four basketball tournament and
- an Executive Committee Member for the 2003 U.S.G.A. Women's Amateur Golf Championship held in Philadelphia.

Peter received the Award of Excellence from Chair Richard Turbin at the Leadership Dinner at the annual meeting in New York in 2000 and the Outstanding Achievement Award for his efforts as Chair of the CLE Board from at the Leadership Dinner at the annual meeting in Washington, D.C. in 2002.

Peter is a partner with Rawle & Henderson LLP in Philadelphia, where he serves as chair of its Environmental, Toxic and Mass Torts Department.

The University of Notre Dame sets its mission as “cultivating in its students an appreciation for the great achievements of human beings, but also a disciplined sensibility to the poverty, injustice, and oppression that burden the lives of so many. The aim is to create a sense of human solidarity and concern for the common good that will bear fruit as learning becomes service to justice.”

The University met its mission with this Domer.

The University of Notre Dame is renowned for its motto prominently displayed on the stairwell out of the athletic locker room. The athletes are told:

“Play like a champion today.”

Peter Neeson has played like a champion every day of his professional life and we at TIPS are the better for it.

Congratulations Peter.