



COLUMN FOUNDATION PRESIDENT



RECOGNIZING AND APPRECIATING DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVANTS

BY LARRY W. ZUKERMAN

On September 8, 2022, 13 public servants received well-deserved recognition at the 76th annual CMBF Public Servants Recognition Reception for their decades of service to the public and to the various courts throughout Cuyahoga County.

These hardworking, unsung heroes of the legal system amassed more than 330 combined years of dedicated service to the courts and to the public.

During the event, each nominator recognized the individual recipients with accolades describing his/her service over the decades. Kudos to these hardworking, selfless individuals for their dedication and for setting, and being, great examples for others. Without these people, our legal system would grind to a halt.

In my quest for overpreparation, I always arrive early to court to ensure I have sufficient time to set up for a hearing or trial and to make sure I am prepared to begin on time.

Recently, my docket required me to appear for a trial in the old courthouse starting at 8:30 a.m. When I arrived at 8 o'clock, I attempted to enter the building though to no avail. Security informed me that the courthouse opened to non-employees starting at 8:30 a.m.

As I waited, I witnessed a cadre of people enter the building through the garage security entrance, most of whom I had never seen before. I was a bit surprised because, given my practice in Cuyahoga County for over three decades, I am used to knowing or at least recognizing most of the employees in the courthouse.

But then, I had a moment of profound realization, that facilitating the smooth functioning and day to day operations of the court requires vast amount of people.

These particular employees were heading in to work at the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas Domestic Relations Division and Probate Division. Sure, I knew the court had support and administrative staff, but until that moment, I really did not appreciate just how many people are required to keep our courts and courthouses running like well-oiled machines.

And then, I realized something even more profound that the lawyers are arguably the least important people when it comes to the functional running of the court.

It appears that we take these situations for granted and don't recognize that the court cannot operate smoothly without all these hardworking people who work behind the scenes. They are the backbone of our justice system; the glue that holds everything together.

As a trial court lawyer for the past 37 years, I have witnessed firsthand the invaluable service rendered to the courts by public servants from the bailiffs, schedulers, court reporters, security staff, prosecution, public defenders, and judges, just to name a few. The selfless dedication of these people ensures the seamless administration of justice and access to the equal application of the legal system by all.

Located at the entrance to the old courthouse at One Lakeside Avenue, the CMBA maintains a plaque with the names of hundreds of people who have received recognition over the past 76 years. The CMBF has maintained this plaque and has, in conjunction with Milano Monuments, ensured that the people honored by the CMBF are eternally visible to the public and all those who enter the courthouse for their hard work and dedication to public service. The next time you are nearby, take some time out of your day to go and see this plaque to appreciate the many great people who dedicated their lives and careers to the smooth and equal administration of justice.

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