



**Shanin Specter with Ruben Honik,
then-PaTLA president, who presented the award.**

On July 7, 2007, Shanin Specter was presented by the Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers Association (now the Pennsylvania Association for Justice) with the Milton D. Rosenberg Award “in recognition of those qualities of leadership, service and devotion to the Association cause.”

The prestigious award, given annually by PaTLA, was presented in Hershey, Pa., at the organization’s annual convention. At the awards dinner, Specter delivered the following speech:

Six years and six months ago a shadow fell on our justice system.

We were cast backward to an earlier time. A time when an injured person would kneel on an unlevel field while facing his wrongdoer. A time when the guarantors of justice were hostile to the rights of the ill and injured.

We have been engaged in a great civil war over the past six years and six months. Many old and famous states with vibrant tort systems have fallen. Texas. Illinois. Florida. Our neighbor to the west, Ohio.

A waterfall of misinformation has cascaded downward from state of the union addresses to doctors' waiting rooms to the rooms in which juries deliberate.

Our jury pools are poisoned. We know this, whether we are trying a simple rear-end collision case or a so called complex medical malpractice action.

Juries nullify undisputed evidence. And they do so because they think they should in order to effectuate their own brand of tort deform inspired by the dark and tall tales of angry and bitter men.

Yet in Pennsylvania we have survived. We are bloodied but we are unbowed. We've survived because we are organized; because we are, for the most part, united.

We've survived because we have superb leadership -- people like Nancy Fullam, Ruben Honik and Tim Riley, to point fingers.

Today, six years and six months into this long national nightmare, we are not at the end. We are not even at the beginning of the end. But we may be at the end of the beginning.

Tonight, as I proudly accept the Milton D. Rosenberg award, I recall the paths blazed by the pioneers of this organization. They made it possible for our clients' causes to succeed. I call on each of you to double your efforts as I will mine. Because we can only repay our debts to lawyers such as Milton Rosenberg by making it possible for future lawyers to stand in a room like this in front of a group like this on a night like this and be able to say -- and mean -- these words: "I am proud to be a trial lawyer."

