



CHRISTIAN D. SEARCY: Inaugural Recipient of the Legate Award

In ancient Rome, a legate (legatus) was more than just a military commander. Appointed by the emperor and often drawn from the Senate's most respected ranks, the legate led legions into battle and shaped the direction of Rome's military conquests. They were trusted stewards and figures of strength, strategy, and service.

The FJA's Legate Award recognizes those who have not only stood on the frontlines in protecting and preserving Florida's civil justice system, but who have invested extraordinary personal resources to safeguard its future. It is a distinction reserved for those who lead not only by example, but with action.

Fittingly, the inaugural recipient of the Legate Award is Christian D. Searcy—a trial lawyer whose career has defined what it means to be both a champion in the courtroom and a commanding force in the preservation of justice. Through his lifetime contributions exceeding \$1 million to the FJA's EAGLE program, and a decades-long legacy of advocacy, Christian D. Searcy exemplifies the spirit of the legate: a leader appointed not by title, but by trust, loyalty, and service to the cause.

As President and CEO of Searcy Denney Scarola Barnhart & Shipley, P.A., Christian D. Searcy has dedicated more than 46 years to representing victims of catastrophic injury and wrongful death. His legal career is distinguished by a relentless pursuit of justice and a profound impact on the legal community.

At just 29 years old, Searcy achieved national recognition as the youngest attorney in the United States to secure a \$1 million verdict in a single-plaintiff personal injury case.

This early milestone set the tone for a career marked by significant verdicts and settlements, many exceeding \$1 million, reflecting his exceptional trial skills and dedication to his clients. He made history again in 2007, when he achieved four 8-figure verdicts in one calendar year, totaling over \$100 million recovered for his clients.

Searcy's contributions to the legal profession extend beyond the courtroom. He has served as President of the Academy of Florida Trial Lawyers, the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, the National Trial Lawyers Association, and the Florida Supreme Court Historical Society. Inducted into the National Trial Lawyers Hall of fame in 2015, his leadership roles have influenced legal practices and policies and have fostered a more just legal system.

His accolades include the FJA's Perry Nichols Award, the highest honor bestowed by the Association recognizing a lifetime of outstanding service to the cause of justice. He also was the first recipient of the FJA's "Passionate Gladiator" award, presented to an attorney with over 30 years of experience exemplifying the persistence and intensity needed to effectively represent consumers. Additionally, he received the "War Horse Award" from the Southern Trial Lawyers Association, honoring his extraordinary contributions to the legal field.

Searcy's commitment to education and mentorship is evident through his extensive lecturing and writing on civil litigation, personal injury, and wrongful death. He has lectured at countless FJA CLE events, including FJA's John Romano Workhorse Seminar, Annual Convention, Masters of Justice, and the FJA REF Steve Yerrid Ski Seminar, to name a few. His namesake CLE program, the FJA's



- ▶ Christian D. Searcy presenting at the FJA's Christian D. Searcy Voir Dire Institute in Orlando, FL.
- ▶ John Romano and Christian D. Searcy at the FJA's Christian D. Searcy Voir Dire Institute in Orlando.
- ▶ Christian D. Searcy presenting at the FJA's Annual Convention in 2024.

Christian D. Searcy Voir Dire Institute, teaches attorneys in the field how to excel not only at *voir dire*, but also in their practices. Over the course of his career he has influenced countless legal professionals, shared his insights, and fostered the development of future trial lawyers.

A champion for civil justice, Searcy also makes time to support his community and local philanthropic efforts. Searcy supports numerous nonprofit organizations dedicated to assisting others living with a disability, enhancing education, and promoting community advancement. His generosity and civic engagement exemplify the values that the Legate Award seeks to honor.

The Legate Award celebrates individuals whose lifetime contributions have significantly advanced the mission of the Association. Christian D. Searcy's unwavering dedication to justice, his exemplary legal career, and his substantial support of the FJA EAGLE program embody the spirit of this award.

As the first recipient of the Legate Award, Searcy sets a high standard for future honorees. His legacy serves as an inspiration to all who strive to uphold the principles of justice and advocate for the rights of the injured.

The Florida Justice Association extends its heartfelt congratulations to Christian D. Searcy on this well-deserved recognition and expresses profound gratitude for his enduring contributions to the legal community and the pursuit of justice.

CHAMPION OF JUSTICE

CREATE LASTING CHANGE!

As an EAGLE member, you are the backbone of the Florida Justice Association. Your commitment safeguards Floridians' right to justice and a fair trial by jury, while also fueling critical resources like the FJA Journal, Trial Lawyer Email List, and Florida Justice PAC, which elects pro-justice candidates. Thank you for your continued EAGLE membership and increased contributions, empowering the FJA's noble mission.

**DON'T WAIT! RENEW YOUR
EAGLE MEMBERSHIP TODAY!**

