

HCCLA PRESIDENT SPEECH—MAY 10, 2007

--Last year when I stood before you I gave you my word that I would do my best to fight those who would unjustly deprive us of our liberty.

--In the last year, I have tried to keep my word.

--To summarize this year's HCCLA activities, I think it's simplest to say that

--We fought injustice where we found it;

--We tried to provide public service where we could;

--And we tried to serve our members.

--To be certain many of this year's accomplishments would never have been possible without the hard work of past HCCLA President's and Boards.

--This year the HCCLA Board worked almost entirely by consensus.

--We put aside historic differences between those that were ex D.A.'s and those that were not.

--We realized and that as defense lawyers, it did not matter where we came from, what mattered was where we were going.

--So we worked hard together and I want to commend every member of the Board of Directors.

--Whatever we accomplished this year, was in large part due to the hard work of our outstanding Board of Directors.

--This year we threw off whatever shackles we may have had in the past and we stepped out of the shadows and directly into the light.

--So what did we do this year?

--This year, we engaged in active, provocative civil resistance when we encountered injustice in the Criminal Justice System.

--This year, we fought City Hall and we won.

--At City Hall the “powers that be”, decided to withhold funds from the investigation into HPD’s corrupt Crime Lab.

--HCCLA responded in force.

--Some 15 HCCLA members went to City Hall and demanded the HPD investigation be fully funded.

--Craig Washington, Troy McKinney and I spoke.

--We demanded that City Hall fully fund the HPD Crime Lab investigation.

--Within a week, City Hall gave in, and voted to fully fund the crime lab investigation to the tune of \$1.5 million.

--By our actions, we helped make certain that the HPD crime lab investigation would be properly completed.

--This year, we received complaints that district court judges were illegally revoking bonds.

--We received a specific complaint that a sitting District Court Judge had illegally revoked a defendant's bond.

--We learned the Judge had revoked the defendant's bond because the defendant had the audacity to come to court, after making bond, without hiring an attorney.

--We investigated this allegation and found that the defendant spent 10 days in jail because of the court's illegal order.

--Witnesses were interviewed and supporting documents and an affidavit were obtained.

--The HCCLA Board filed a judicial complaint against this sitting Harris County District Court Judge.

--Our friends at TCDLA joined us.

--Grant Scheiner, Troy McKinney and Stan Schneider were instrumental in this complaint.

--James Stafford accompanied me, when I hand delivered a copy to the judge.

--While we await the Ethics Committee results, they do not matter.

--What matters is this year we put the judiciary on notice that “enough was enough”.

--This year, Judge Keeshan illegally arrested our member, Norm Silverman in Montgomery County.

--HCCLA again swiftly responded.

--Troy McKinney, Kelly Case, myself and others went to Norm's aid.

--Keeshan recused himself and the Board has already voted to file a complaint against Judge Keeshan.

--This year we received numerous complaints about judicial misconduct.

--Most we handled quietly behind the scenes.

--Joanne, Mark Bennett, Jay Burnett, Steve Halpert, James Stafford all pitched in to help quietly resolve these issues.

--Many of the judges are our friends.

--But they are not the law.

--This year we sent a clear message:

--We offer our friendship;

**--But we will stand up and fight those judges
who violate the law;**

**--And we will stand up and fight those judges
who mistreat defendant's or our members.**

**--For many years, the spirit of the Constitution has been
missing from the courthouse.**

**--This year, HCCLA proudly donated replicas of the
Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the**

**Bill of Rights to the Harris County Criminal
courthouse.**

**--In February, we held a ceremony dedicating these
documents.**

**--JoAnne Musick and I worked together to make this
vision a reality.**

**--Now these beautiful documents are in the foyer of the
courthouse, serving as a constant reminder that we are
a nation of laws not men.**

**--This year, we continued to sponsor our T.V. Show
“Reasonable Doubt” in an effort to reach out and
educated the public.**

--Todd Dupont and Tate continued the fine hosting traditions of Danny Gerson, Cindy and Kevin.

--This year HCCLA provided public speakers for schools and other events.

--Wendy Miller did an outstanding job organizing these events.

--In addition to public service this year HCCLA has continued to provide services for our members.

--This year, HCCLA has provided ongoing quality CLE for our members.

--Nicole DeBorde has done an outstanding job in organizing CLE's that were interesting and useful.

--Tomorrow, we have a seminar planned on dealing with the media.

--Mark and Jennifer Bennett, Danny Easterling, JoAnne, Nicole and our friends at TCDLA including Joseph and Melissa have done a great job planning this seminar.

--Of course you are all invited.

--This year, HCCLA has expanded the website to provide more and more useful information regarding the District Attorney's office and Police Officers.

--Mark and Nicole have done an outstanding job building our website to serve the membership.

--This year, we have also had some pretty good parties.

--Todd and Tucker organized our first ever Halloween party.

--We also had a great Holiday party organized by Sean and Cindy.

--Finally this year, you are attending the largest banquet HCCLA has ever had.

--With some 360 guests, this banquet represents where we are at as an organization.

--We have grown and we are stronger.

--We know what our duty is and it is clear.

**--We must continue to stand up against injustice in the
criminal justice system.**

**--We must fight that injustice no matter what the
consequences.**

--I am proud to have been part of this years fight.

**--I pledge to our new President, my friend Pat McCann
my assistance in the year to come.**

**--I know that with the help of our great Board of
Directors, he too will have a good year.**

**--Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as
your President.**

**--It has been one of the greatest pleasures and highest
honors of my career.**

**--I thank each and every one of you for allowing me this
opportunity.**