

# The Legal Intelligencer

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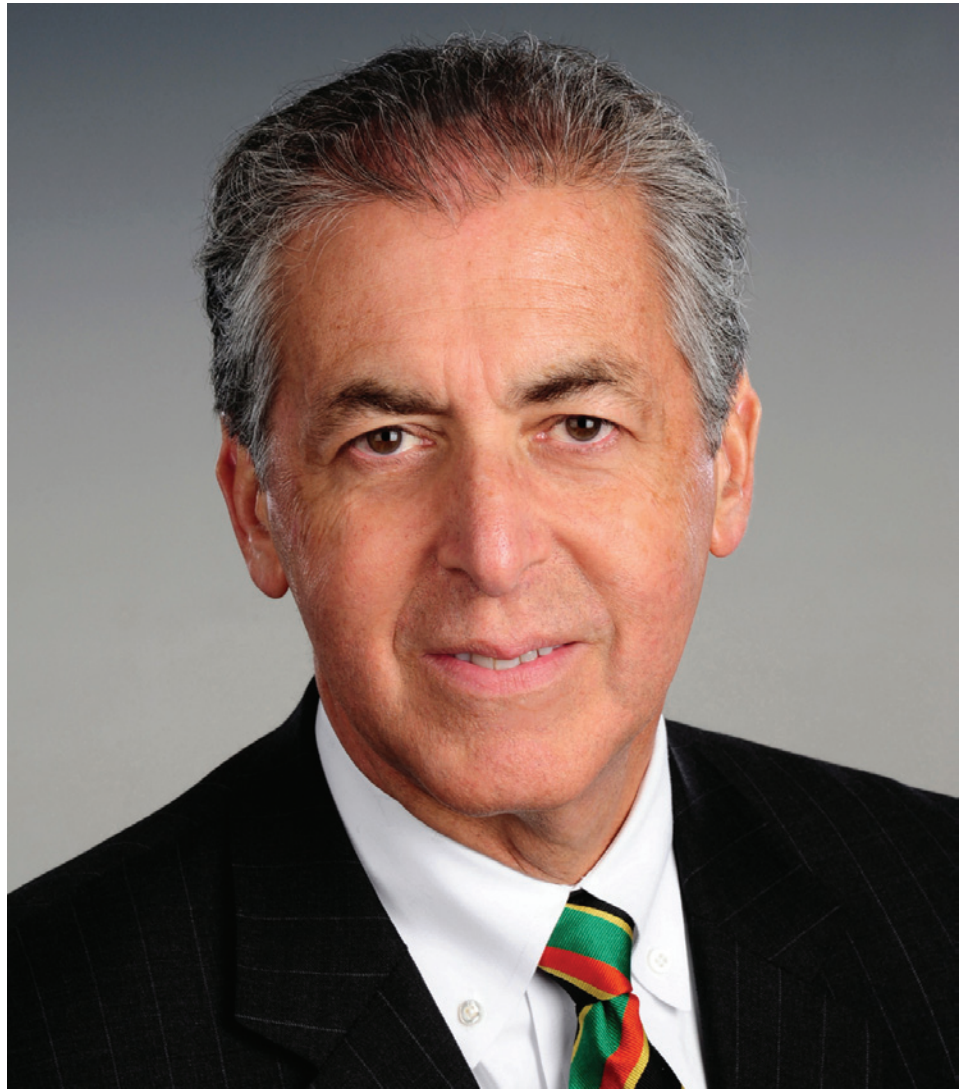
## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

### HOWARD SCHER

Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney

*Scher began his career after a very short stint in the Defenders' Association at the City Solicitor's Office in Philadelphia heading the appeals and special litigation. Within those two years, he had helped try and win a civil rights challenge to the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, lost on appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and had it reversed by the U.S. Supreme Court.*

*Other career highlights include, serving as the head of Jewish Law Day; a witness in the impeachment trial of Justice Rolf Larson; and having obtained numerous successful trial verdicts, including a \$55 million jury verdict that included \$25 million punitive damages in a commercial dispute, which was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court and resulted in complete satisfaction.*



**The legal profession is constantly evolving and that evolution only seems to have accelerated in recent years. What's the biggest change you've seen in the profession during your career?**

The legal profession is a “lagging” indicator of our society. It never reflects our current culture. It always reflects the past. That's because, at its core the profession strives to predict what the law is based on what it

has been. The law is conservative. It relies on stare decisis from our common law tradition.

However, the arch of our profession from 1970 to today has moved quickly. The demographic composition of our profession reflects our society's struggle to include all members of our society. Beginning in the late '60s when law schools began admitting women and people of color in greater than nominal numbers, gender and to a lesser extent racial diversity representation in the profession has grown.

Fifty years ago, when I started practicing law, law firms were categorized by religion or national origin, either Irish, Protestant, Quaker, Jewish or non-Jewish and within Jewish firms, Russian Jewish or German Jewish. That is clearly

no longer the case. Our law firms, judges and juries are beginning to look more and more like our society, which will result in a more equitable and legal system.

### **What is one thing about the profession that has remained unchanged over the years?**

From time immemorial, this quote from Alexis de Tocqueville remains true:

“Lawyers belong to the people by birth and interest, and to the aristocracy by habit and taste; they may be looked upon as the connecting link of the two great classes of society.”

To the extent our governing organizations have reduced numbers of lawyers in their ranks, they are less effective. Lawyers, as a profession, are ideal effective representatives of the people.

### **Name one thing you've learned over the course of your career that you wish you knew as a young lawyer.**

Lawyers have the ability to make changes in our society in ways that I never realized. The capabilities we have and learn to be good practitioners are the very tools needed to make changes in our society. Lawyers are able to make changes for the good of society employing the skills and talents we practice as lawyers.

Over the past 50 years of practice, I've learned that the vast majority of lawyers are intelligent, passionate, dedicated, selfless and tireless professionals working on behalf paying and nonpaying clients, each of whom deserve justice and will be delivered justice by the vast majority of lawyers at the bar.