

The State Bar of California

CALIFORNIA YOUNG LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

2003 JACK BERMAN AWARD

of Achievement for Distinguished Service to the Profession and the Public



Eric Lifschitz

Eric Lifschitz became a volunteer with Volunteer Legal Services Program (VLSP) in March 2002. As a member new to VLSP, Eric has helped four clients and contributed over 175 hours in pro bono service. He accepted these cases consecutively, sometimes having two cases open simultaneously.

Eric Lifschitz received his Juris Doctorate in May 2001 from the University of San Francisco School of Law and was admitted to both the State Bar of California and the Federal Patent Bar later that year. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from the University of Michigan in 1995. Eric started his career as a chemist working in both medical research and diagnostic fields. Eric recognized a means of providing empowerment to the disadvantaged through the legal profession and so decided to pursue a career in law. In taking on toxic mold cases, he has combined his passion for the sciences with his compassion for low-income families who face legal injustices. This holistic combination has led to a prospering legal practice that provides full access to the law for these under-served communities.

Soon after receiving his licenses, Eric decided to become a solo practitioner finding the independence rewarding. Eric's principal legal areas of practice include personal injury associated with toxic mold exposure as well as aiding artists and inventors in protection of their intellectual property rights. Eric has found that regular pro bono representation of tenants often reveal compensable claims arising from their substandard housing conditions. The successful pursuit of these claims has provided the foundation of Eric's growing practice. Through his focus on tenants' rights, Eric has aided in the prevention of homelessness and further promoted the general well being of these tenants by encouraging landlords to keep low-income units habitable and mold-free.

In addition to his contributions to the community through VLSP, Eric finds time to offer his services to other under-represented communities through organizations such as the California Lawyers for the Arts, the San Francisco Tenants' Union, and Bay Area Legal Aid; further he supports high school youth through the Barristers' Law Academy Mentoring Program at Mission High School in the San Francisco Unified School District.

When not practicing law, Eric is an artist and an inventor. He has one patent issued as the sole inventor for an ultra-violet light sterilizing canteen, which he is working to license. His artistic talent won him third prize in the State Bar's annual attorney artist show in 2002 and Eric will be including art in this year's exhibition. To learn more about Eric and his growing practice go to www.SFlegalaid.com.



The California Young Lawyers Association established the Award of Achievement for Distinguished Service to the Professional and the Public to recognize the public service of a young lawyer. The CYLA Board of Directors named the award in memory of Jack Berman, who demonstrated outstanding service to the profession and the public by providing substantial pro bono legal assistance. Mr. Berman tragically died in the 101 California Street shooting.