

Thank you. Thank you very much. I begin with a warning: as my family knows well, I cry at episodes of Glee, so I seriously doubt I will get through this next ten minutes without becoming emotional. I pledge to do my best but my best may not be good enough!

I am really honored and humbled to receive the 2013 MBA Professionalism Award and to join the 24 others who have been similarly honored, particularly Randall Kester and Wally Sweek, my fellow Cosgrave lawyers, and Ray Conboy and Jeff Batchelor, fellow appellate attorneys. To be regarded by my peers as worthy of a recognition that has been given to others who I admire so much is very special.

I want to first thank the members of the MBA Professionalism Committee and the MBA Board of Directors. I deeply appreciate your decisions to recognize me with this award.

I want to next thank all the people that I am personally aware of who supported my nomination. My partner Jill Laney, Robert Neuberger (who I'm so sorry is not feeling well enough to be here tonight and who, as many of you know, is facing great health challenges), my friend Jeff Batchelor and two judges who will remain nameless, lest affidavits of prejudice follow from their identification should I appear in front of them in the future. As I've told them all personally, I so appreciate what each one did to help make this special night happen.

I also want to thank my friends and the many Cosgrave colleagues who came tonight. It means a lot to me that you are here.

Finally, I want to recognize all of tonight's other awards winners. Each has contributed significantly to our legal community. I'm honored to be included among them on this occasion.

I want to tell you a little about me and some of the people that have influenced me to be "professional" and then talk some about professionalism. Oh, yea, and I'll teach you a Yiddish word.

I was the fourth of five kids born to Mort and Rose Brown, both of whom are no longer alive, but I suspect are looking down on me right now filled with great parental joy. Two experiences strongly influenced me as a child: The Holocaust, which I saw film clips of and heard about nearly every Saturday morning for 10 years at Temple Israel in Minneapolis, Minnesota where I grew up,

and the deep hurt I experienced from anti-Semitism in the suburban Minneapolis schools I attended. Both experiences led me at a young age to strongly want to be a person who consistently valued and supported others, whether they were like me or different from me.

My parents pushed that commitment along; my mother, through her constant support and unconditional love, and my father, through one of the things he often said to me when the two of us walked together at night around our neighborhood: “Kid, I want you to remember one thing as you go through life; be a mensch” which, for those of you who don’t know, is a Yiddish word meaning a person of integrity and honor; a decent and responsible person.

I’ve recalled my father’s exhortation time and again when faced with opportunities and challenges, both personal and professional. Indeed, just as I did a moment ago before walking up to this stage, before I talk to a group, argue an appeal, lead a meeting, or have important talks with my family, I remind myself to “be a mensch” – to act in those situations as a good and decent person. I don’t always succeed, that’s for sure, but the reminder helps me try when trying seems most important to me.

No one goes through life alone and I’ve been extremely lucky to have many people extend their hands and hearts to me and, by doing so, help me be the person I am. I want to mention just a few.

My wife, Virginia. A year ago she faced a great medical challenge. Through her positive and determined attitude, and her greater concern for the well-being of others than for herself, Virginia showed me, as she has done many times before, how a good and decent person approaches life’s challenges. I am unquestionably a better, happier person because of Virginia’s 34 years of love and support.

My children. Unfortunately, neither of them could be here tonight, but I know they are both here in spirit. Each one has faced life’s challenges with courage and resolve and life’s opportunities with creativity and enthusiasm. They have kept me focused on the well-being of others rather than on myself and determined to always try to be a good and decent parent.

Irv Steinbock. Many of you never knew Irv, a Multnomah County trial judge who I clerked for in law school. Irving was a wonderful person. He was taken from us far too young. Among many things, Irv showed me that humor,

humility, respect for others and good common sense all contribute to professional success and satisfaction. And Irv also showed me that a good and decent person, who gives of himself to others, can positively affect peoples' lives every single day.

Bill Richardson. Many of you may also not know Bill, who I had the honor to clerk for at the Oregon Court of Appeals. He is a quiet, thoughtful, and deliberative person. Bill showed me that such a person could become both a professional success and a leader of other highly successful people.

Randall Kester. Some of you knew Randall. For those that didn't, that's too bad. He was a giant among lawyers. Randall showed me that it one could be successful as a lawyer while being kind, caring, and committed to helping others. More importantly, Randall showed me that a good and decent person – a “*mensch*” – must sometimes sacrifice one's own professional ambition for a family's needs.

And, finally, Wally Sweek. I'm sure that most of you do know Wally, and you are all better for it. Wally, like Randall, showed me that professional success is enhanced, not compromised, by being a good and decent person. And Wally, like Randall, showed me something else very meaningful: making hard choices based on what your heart tells you is correct reveals an essential characteristic of a truly good and decent person.

All of these people – along with many, many others -- have helped me try and be what I wanted to be as a child – and what my father urged me to be – a “*mensch*.” I'm very grateful to each one of them for their wisdom, support and guidance in that life-long endeavor of mine.

Enough about me. Now a few words about professionalism. I think we are very lucky to practice law in Oregon. I work with attorneys across the world and I know that we have a very uniquely professional bench and bar. I have encountered very few exceptions in my almost 33 years of practice. We should all be proud of our consistent commitment to – and near universal success in being – professional in our dealings with each other, our clients, and the courts.

But professionalism has another feature. Distrust of and lack of respect for lawyers is common among non-lawyers. I'm convinced that some of that deep distrust and lack of respect is of our own making, borne by overvaluing billable hours, revenue creation, and personal wealth acquisition, and undervaluing service to and education of non-lawyers about how important the work we all do is to the

preservation of the precious rights, freedoms and opportunities lawyers and non-lawyers alike enjoy day-to-day.

So, professionalism, in the sense I'm using the term now, refers to actions we each take that help create public understanding of and support for lawyers and for a fair, impartial and well-funded judicial system. And whether you are beginning as an attorney, well along that professional road or, like me, nearing that road's end, I believe that if we act like "menschs" – good, decent, responsible, trustworthy attorneys – when dealing with non-lawyers, we will bring about that critically needed understanding of and support for the legal profession and justice system to which we have devoted – judges and lawyers alike -- our life's work.

Well, thankfully, my time in the spotlight now comes to an end. Thanks again to all who helped me stand here tonight. I appreciate all you've done more than I can say. I will always remember this very special recognition from my peers and this equally special evening. Goodnight.