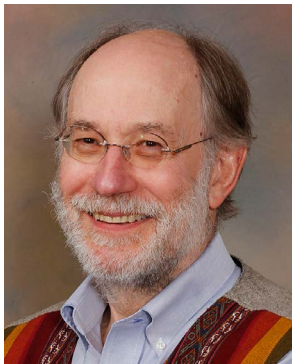


## VIC GLASBERG



Long-time Alexandria practitioners know Victor Glasberg as the attorney with the bumper sticker over his door.

*"Robin Hood Was Right,"* it reads. Although Vic simply thought the sticker was "fun," the words help explain the tenacity behind a lawyer who has dedicated his practice to defending the civil rights of disenfranchised members of society. In 1968, Vic was on track to earn a Ph.D. in European History from Harvard when Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated. He subsequently switched his study to American Race Relations.

"It seemed important," he states simply.

Vic found this cause so important; he decided to go to law school. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1976, Vic sent 150 typed letters to public interest groups, legal aid outfits, and a handful of individuals who did work that interested him. He was eventually hired by the Alexandria firm of Philip Hirschkop, a civil rights leader, and the attorney who brought *Loving v. Virginia*.

A few years later in 1982, he began his own firm and has been an important member of the Alexandria legal community since. His office is in a historic building on Columbus and King. He recalls in those days, when the Federal Courthouse was one block away, he could leave his office two minutes before trial and still make it to the courtroom in time.

While the bulk of his practice is now in the Eastern District of Virginia, he laments that he does not get to practice in Alexandria Court more. Although the majority of his practice is in federal

court, he remains actively involved with the mentorship program of the Alexandria Bar. He cites the library, judges, and mentorship program as highlights of the Alexandria Bar Association.

Vic places great stock in the written word, as testament to this, look no further than the fact that Vic does not own a cell phone.

Vic often writes letters in support of causes he believes in. Recently, he wrote a letter to the Judicial Conference of the United States' Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure revising the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure stressing the need to facilitate equal justice between unequally situated litigants in developing evidence and funding litigation. He also wrote a letter to *Virginia Lawyer's Weekly* after it posted a photo of a lawyer smoking a \$100 bill, which he believed reinforced the profession's preoccupation with money.

Though it was racial discrimination that ignited Vic's legal career, this is only one of many injustices he seeks to right through his work. His longest case to-date was for the treatment of a transgender woman in a correctional facility. The case began in 2003, when she was being given two ibuprofens nightly and was told the facility did not treat Gender Identity Disorder. Vic took the case on appeal, settling on the basis of an agreement that would provide relief including the Department of Corrections' adoption of a protocol to identify and treat inmates with Gender Identity Disorder.

Ten years later, Vic's firm became involved with another appeal for the same woman. This time, the case was

about her right to be assessed for a sex reassignment surgery. Following Vic's successful appeal, the evaluations were completed, but the case ended when the woman was paroled, following assessments of her eligibility for surgery by two expert witnesses.

The second appeal in this landmark case was argued by Vic's colleague, Bernadette Armand.

"Vic is a masterful litigator," Bernadette says, "but many people do not see all that because he makes it look easy."

Armand says she was drawn to the firm because Vic had created an office where people who have been abused know they are going to find an understanding ear. With that ear also comes someone with the experience and the passion to bring their case.

Vic says the use of law to bring about a better world is a special kind of law. He believes people have an obligation to do something to make the world better and calls this "rent for being on earth." Robin Hood would likely agree.

—Christina Brown



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