

# Outstanding Lawyer: Llew Pritchard

By David Keenan and James Austin

Llewelyn ("Llew") Pritchard was recently contacted by a young lawyer, fresh out of law school, looking to hang out his own shingle and in need of some mentoring. The young lawyer picked Pritchard in part because Pritchard's bar number - 14 - is possibly the lowest of any practicing lawyer in Washington. Though Pritchard's good friend Bill Gates, Sr., has bar No. 12, Pritchard good naturedly points out that "Bill Senior" is no longer actively practicing.

And while Pritchard and his latest mentee are separated by more than 50 years in practice and almost 50,000 bar numbers, Pritchard's passion for service and mentoring outshine even the newest members of the profession.

Pritchard arrived in Seattle more than 50 years ago with a freshly minted law degree from Duke, class of 1961. He and his wife Jonie would eventually raise four children in the Pacific Northwest, and would begin decades of service on both a national and local level that continues to this day. Pritchard's early work on legal issues relating to diversity, immigrant rights and sexual minorities, were ahead of society's, but entirely consistent with Pritchard's character and strong belief in civil rights.

As to diversity, Pritchard worked with Gates and the late Judge Betty Fletcher to establish the minority scholarship program that the King County Bar Foundation carries on today and which has provided more than \$2 million to minority law students at our local law schools. Pritchard was also a founding member of the Advisory Board for QLaw, advancing the rights of GLBT individuals.

As an early advocate for diversity in the legal profession and for the rights of sexual minorities, it is fitting that Pritchard has pursued his career in a county named in honor of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and a state that has been at the forefront of the movement to recognize the right of same-sex couples to marry. As chair of the ABA's Section on Individual Rights and Responsibilities, Pritchard was an advocate for ABA's stand against anti-sodomy laws, a fight foreshadowing the U.S. Supreme Court's current consideration of the constitutionality of prohibitions against same-sex marriage. Although thrilled with the progress he has seen on these issues during his decades of involvement with them, Pritchard says it is far too soon to declare victory, particularly on diversity in law school admissions.

As he was on diversity and GLBT rights, Pritchard was ahead of the curve on the plight of immigrants and their legal needs. During the Clinton Administration, Pritchard worked with the ABA Immigration Commission to reform immigration detention and deportation processes, helping to raise some \$5 million to assist in the effort. While Pritchard applauds some of the strides being made on behalf of the many immigrants working hard in the United States without



status, he cautions that the fight is nowhere near over, and he is currently actively working with many other dedicated attorneys to address the tremendous civil legal needs of unaccompanied minors in immigration proceedings.

Pritchard's work on behalf of marginalized populations also includes previous service as chair of the ABA Legal Aid and Indigent Defense Committee, where he helped secure expanded funding for the Legal Services Corporation, a federal entity that helps fund civil legal aid for organizations such as the Northwest Justice Project. Pritchard also worked on the ABA's Survey of Legal Needs to assess the legal needs of low-income and modest-means populations. As with so many other issues on which Pritchard has been at the forefront, he cautions that the work is not done, especially when funding for, and the very existence of, the Legal Services Corporation is threatened each year.

In addition to his service to the community regarding civil rights, Pritchard's service to the profession as a bar leader is an embarrassment of riches. Indeed, it might be easier to list the positions Pritchard *has not* held than to recall those he has. Having served in no less than 12 positions with the ABA, including four chairs and stints with the Board of Governors and House of Delegates, Pritchard has advocated at a national level for issues that find their roots in the values of the King County Bar Association. He has been a governor of the WSBA and chair of the state bar's Young Lawyers Committee.

Pritchard's community service is no less stellar. Few individuals in or out of the practice of law have had such significant involvement in such a wide array of community organizations: Allied Arts; the YMCA; Fifth Avenue Theatre; Planned Parenthood; Seattle Art Museum; Seattle Symphony Orchestra; Seattle Public Defender Corporation; Deaconess Children's Home; and the United Methodist Church, to name a few.

Asked what advice he might have for young lawyers interested in service to the bar, Pritchard recalled attending a memorial service for a fellow lawyer a few years back. "All they talked about was her billable hours," Pritchard remembered. Pritchard urges young lawyers to do more than bill time. "Get involved and your life will be forever changed," Pritchard says.

Pritchard has been celebrating a lot of anniversaries recently. Pritchard's law firm, Helsell Fetterman, recently celebrated its 125th anniversary - just a short time after KCBA reached that milestone. And in 2013, Pritchard celebrated 50 years in the practice of law, during which he has become known for the quality of service he provides to his clients and his consummate professionalism.

Pritchard's lifetime has been one of achievement, in which he has earned a reputation that deservedly extends well beyond his superb skills as a lawyer and the billable hour. And he has no interest in slowing down in his practice or in his service to his profession, his country and his community.

David Keenan is a managing associate at Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe and, like Pritchard, is a past chair of the KCBA YLD. James Austin is a shareholder at Karr Tuttle Campbell, and a current trustee and former president of the King County Bar Foundation. It was Llew Pritchard who delivered to Austin the good news that he had passed the bar exam.

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