

# Michael Bloom to Receive Annual Robert Hooker Criminal Justice Award

By J.M. Stanlee  
West-Watt

The Robert Hooker Criminal Justice Award is given each year to an attorney and member of the Pima County Bar Association who has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to service within the community, and who embodies the highest standards of professionalism, innovation and selfless dedication to the improvement of the criminal justice system.

Our 2017 award recipient is Michael Bloom. Mike is a longtime criminal defense attorney in Tucson, well known to prosecutors and defense alike as a strong and compassionate advocate whose impact on our community over the years has been significant and demonstrable as he has moved from young, tenacious attorney to elder statesman in the criminal defense world.

Mike came to Tucson more than 35 years ago, a young, fresh and tenacious attorney ready to take on the toughest of cases and work them tirelessly to a resolution he believed was fair and just. When he first arrived in Tucson, Mike worked with Bob Hirsh for a year before moving into the public defender's office where he stayed for six years defending the most difficult cases in the office. In 1983, Mike moved into private practice and has been there since. During his years as a private defense lawyer, Mike has handled thousands of cases ranging from simple DUIs to complex white-collar cases and homicides, all receiving the same kind of unrelenting and effective advocacy tempered with his motivation to ensure that no undue harm comes to his clients in their process through the judicial system. Mike is interested in his clients and in their lives, caring deeply about the end result of each client's legal matter and working to obtain them the best option possible within the confines of the system.

Beyond being known for zeal and tenacity in representing his own clients, Mike has developed a reputation among other defense attorneys of being not only highly ethical and diligent, but someone who can be completely relied upon and trusted. If Mike helps you with a case, he helps you 100% and his work product is nothing short of excellent. And often ground-breaking. In 1994, Mike was named Trial Lawyer of the Year by the American Trial Lawyers for Public Justice, honored for his work in uncovering the then-existing policy of the Tucson Police Department to interrogate suspects in violation of their right to counsel. Most recently, Mike co-counseled a case in which the reliability of the testimony of the government's arson experts was challenged and, in one of the first arson cases to do so, the expert testimony was thrown out.

One of Mike's most notable service accomplishments in our community has been his 30-year co-production of our annual Arizona Attorneys for Criminal Justice DUI conference. Asked by Mike Piccaretta to set up a one-time seminar on DUI defense with Steve Barnard, Mike did that and more. He and Steve turned that seminar into a successful annual event. Mike's math major background is readily apparent in the presentation of this seminar and in his highly-detailed understanding and knowledge of current scientific and technical advances in DUI law. This DUI seminar is now regarded as one of the best in the country. Mike's dedication to this endeavor and hundreds of hours of donated time to accomplish the annual event is all in the interest of educating attorneys and ensuring that Defendants in Arizona receive the highest quality legal representation.

Mike's enthusiasm for teaching others is not limited to the DUI seminar. He regularly presents at conferences both for local defense organizations and for the State Bar Association, and on a wide variety of topics involving criminal defense. Mike also has an interest in Arizona Public Records law, particularly as it relates to criminal defense, and recently represented a private investigator when the Pima County Sheriff tried to use public records laws to prevent an investigation from moving forward. Mike was successful and now speaks to attorneys, journalists and the community



*Michael Bloom, PCBA Member & 2017 Recipient of the Robert Hooker Criminal Justice Award*

about understanding and challenging the broad reach of public records laws.

Mike's dedication to providing thorough and individual attention to each case, with an understanding that his representation affects his client's possible loss of freedom, career, rights and reputation, has earned him the respect of attorneys on both sides of the courtroom. Since 2000, Mike has been listed in *The Best Lawyers in America* and is listed in the Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers and Southwest Super Lawyers. He is acknowledged to be one of the premier practitioners of criminal defense law in the state of Arizona.

Mike ranks among the few who are truly well-deserving of this award and the Pima County Bar Foundation is proud and honored to name him the 2017 Robert Hooker Criminal Justice Award Recipient.