



For All Your Legal Needs

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CENTER CITY  
2005 Market Street, 18<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

NORTHEAST PHILADELPHIA  
2981 Grant Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19114

SOUTH PHILADELPHIA  
2149 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19148

1.877.91UNION (1.877.918.6466)

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## FRIEND OF LABOR, JUDGE KEVIN DOUGHERTY, SETS SIGHTS ON HISTORICAL SUPREME COURT ELECTION



After a successful primary election in May, Democratic candidate Judge Kevin Dougherty of the Philadelphia Common Pleas Court needs your votes to fill one of the three open seats on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. This year's election will determine the course of how Pennsylvania's laws will be upheld as an unprecedented three of seven seats must be filled. Judge Dougherty, a long-time supporter of union rights, has been recommended by more than 100 leading officials and organizations.

"Considered fair, open-minded, courteous and a good listener, he also is a hard worker and a consensus builder....the Commission recommends [Dougherty] to serve on the Supreme Court," said the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Judicial Evaluation Commission.

Currently as administrative judge of the Trial Division of the Court of Common Pleas of the First Judicial District (FJD), Judge Dougherty oversees all aspects of the adult civil and criminal divisions of Pennsylvania's largest trial court — a system of 72 judges. Before assuming the position, Dougherty was the Administrative Judge for

the FJD's Family Division, and prior to that, from 2003-2005, was the Supervising Judge of the Juvenile Branch.

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Prior to being elected to the Common Pleas bench in 2001 and retained in 2011 for another 10-year term, Dougherty was in private practice both before and after serving as an assistant district attorney in Philadelphia from 1990-1995. He is a graduate of Temple University and Antioch School of Law.



**The general election will be Tuesday, November 3, 2015.**

**Be sure to get out and vote: make your voice heard!**

# THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW: USA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



## Christina Ford

**High School:** Commonwealth Connections Academy

**About her:** Christina aspires to become an interior designer and eventually obtain her master's degree. She hopes to have a successful career focused on giving back to family, friends and those in need.

[Learn more about Christina here.](#)



## Paul Keppel Jr.

**High School:** St. Joseph's Preparatory School

**About him:** Paul is currently studying pre-pharmacy. He will then transfer to Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, where he has been accepted into the college's doctorate of pharmacy program.

[Learn more about Paul here.](#)



## Michael Robinson

**High School:** Scranton Preparatory School

**About him:** Michael is very involved in athletics and volunteerism. He is a dedicated seven-year Eagle Scout and a Special Olympics swim instructor.

[Learn more about Michael here.](#)

**College:** Philadelphia University

**College:** Edinboro University

**College:** Fordham University



**Apply for the USA Scholarship by April 4, 2016.**  
[Download the application here.](#)

## MEET TWO OF OUR USA LEGAL NETWORK ATTORNEYS



**Sam Pond** is the president of Union Services Access and managing partner of Pond Lehocky Stern Giordano. As THE workers' compensation and Social Security disability firm, Pond Lehocky has helped more than 85,000 Americans in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

[Learn more about Sam.](#)



**Pasquale "Pat" Bianculli** is the founder of his own personal injury practice, Pasquale E. Bianculli, Esquire PC. He specializes in representing union workers, especially in construction, electrical and motor vehicle accidents.

[Learn more about Pat.](#)

## SUPPORTING OUR UNION SERVICES ACCESS MEMBERS



**From left:** USA attorneys attend the annual Peggy Browning Awards, where President Sam Pond and Vice President Pat Bianculli served on the host committee; President Sam Pond speaks to District Council 21 members about their rights to workers' comp and Social Security disability; USA supports CWA Local 13000's annual meeting at the Hershey Lodge.



## 5 THINGS ALL UNION MEMBERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY AND RETIREMENT

- 1. You've paid into the system.** You have a right to collect Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Of every paycheck you have earned, 6.2% has gone into the Social Security trust fund for your retirement and disability.
- 2. You can receive SSDI in addition to your full union pension.** This can mean an extra \$1500-2500 per month in benefits.
- 3. Most union members suffer from an injury or medical condition that qualifies them for SSDI.** Common conditions include: back pain, neck pain, shoulder, hand or knee issues, headaches, fatigue and carpal tunnel. Remember: your condition does not need to be job-related.
- 4. You will receive Medicare within 24 months of being found disabled.** Those who qualify for SSDI will also receive health insurance coverage under Medicare.
- 5. You do not have to wait for early retirement.** Avoid being penalized by collecting Social Security retirement at 62 and thus receiving a reduced rate and not being Medicare eligible.

**Fill out the contact form on this page to get assistance applying for SSDI.**

## SNOW BLOWER SAFETY 101

The temperatures are falling and winter is coming. Remember these safety tips to make snow removal with a snow blower less painful.

- Read the instructions and all precautions.** Make sure you're confident in using the snow blower if you've never used one before, because serious injuries could occur. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, since 2003 more than 9000 Americans have lost fingers because of snow blowers.
- Never attempt to remove objects or ice/snow build up while the machine is on.** This is how most injuries and amputations occur. If you need to remove something from the machine, make sure it is shut off and use a long screwdriver or garden tool to clear obstructions. NEVER use your hands!
- Take breaks to prevent overexertion.** Overexertion is common for people of all ages when removing snow and can even lead to heart attacks. Each year, about 100 Americans die from cardiac arrest due to snow removal.
- Ensure your property is clear of objects that could get pulled into the snow blower.** Objects that get pulled into the snow blower could explode from the chute, causing injury.

## RETIRED CEMENT MASON STILL SEARCHING FOR SON'S KILLER

Fliers with the image of a smiling man that urge passersby to think about the question, "Who shot and killed me?" are scattered around Society Hill, Queen Village, South Philadelphia and Center City. For three years, retired Cement Mason Mike Hagan and his wife Carol have been searching for their son's killer.

On July 1, 2012, near South Street, the couple's 32-year-old son, Michael, was found shot in the chest. With no witnesses or footage of the incident, Michael's murder remains unsolved. Police suspect it was an attempted robbery. The Hagan's hope that as their son's murder heads to the cold case unit there may be a break in it.

There are very few details the police can confirm from the evening. Michael spent a night out with two friends at Morgan's Pier. The group decided to take a cab to South Street, but because of the large crowd that night, they split up and walked. Michael was walking along dimly lit Fourth Street, past St. Peter's Church. A homeless man reported to police that he thought he heard a gunshot and loud voices. A bicyclist then found Michael lying on sidewalk, bleeding from his chest.

Despite offering a \$50,000 reward for tips, knocking on doors, searching for witnesses or surveillance footage, and purchasing billboards on I-95 and ads on the Market-Frankford El, the tip line never rang.

If you or anyone you know has information about Michael Hagan's murder, call **215.686.TIPS (8477)** or text a tip to **PPDTIP (773847)**.



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## REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD CONSULT A PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEY AFTER AN ACCIDENT



- **Accident scene investigation.**  
Professional accident investigators will gather the vital information needed to prepare your case.
- **Witness interviews.**  
Memories fade – that’s why our attorneys will interview witnesses to the accident as soon as possible.
- **Evidence.** We will take prompt action to secure evidence in a controlled environment so that it cannot be spoiled.

### DID YOU KNOW?

**MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS ARE THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AND INJURY IN THE U.S.**

- **Statements against your interests.**  
Insurance companies are pros at tricking injured parties into making statements that can hurt their legal cases after an accident. With an attorney on your side, we will protect your rights and advise you not to speak directly with insurance companies.
- **No recovery, no fee.**  
If you do not receive a settlement or verdict, you do not pay anything.

**You may be eligible for compensation if you’ve been involved in a car accident. Fill out the contact form on this page to get in touch with a personal injury attorney.**



Electricians  
Local 98



CWA Local 13000



Iron Workers  
Local 405



Cement Masons and  
Plasterers Union  
Local 592



We remain grateful for the support

of all of USA’s member unions.



District Council 21  
Painters and Allied  
Traders



IATSE Local 8



CWA Local 13301



Sprinkler Fitters  
Local 692