

🖨 [Click to print](#) or Select 'Print' in your browser menu to print this document.

Page printed from: <https://www.law.com/njlawjournal/2020/06/26/the-fourth-annual-twita-awards/>

The Fourth Annual TWITA Awards

Our nominating committee has spent months scouring the legal landscape in my old Subaru, looking for worthy candidates for this year's "That's What I'm Talking About" awards. Here are the results.

By **Marc Garfinkle** | June 26, 2020



Credit: Andy P / Shutterstock.com

Welcome back, friends. Although last year was only the third year that the prestigious TWITA (That's What I'm Talking About) awards were presented, we dubbed it "The Fifth Annual TWITA Awards," consistent with the hyperbole of the era and reflecting our diminishing concern with factual accuracy. This year, with the hope that 2020 brings a return to normalcy, we return to standard ordinal sequencing to recognize our worthy recipients. So, this is the Fourth.

Once again, our nominating committee has spent months scouring the legal landscape in my old Subaru, looking for worthy candidates—lawyers and organizations who have made extraordinary contributions to the profession and have championed important professional, civic or charitable causes. As in past years, we will award one TWITA to an outstanding organization and one (the "Golden TWITA") to the individual whose

accomplishments and contributions have most impressed our judges. Also, as in past years, we will not announce the winner of the Golden TWITA (Rubin Sinins of Javerbaum, Wurgaft) until after we have presented the organizational TWITA. Thank you for your patience.

This year's organizational TWITA award will be shared by many worthy recipients. To avoid overlooking any, and in the interest of opacity, we are proud to award the Fourth Annual organizational TWITA award to the amorphous collective phenomenon loosely known as "bar associations." Most of us belong to at least one.

All professions have their trade groups, associations of specialists, and ethnic- or religion- or language-based associations. They are called guilds, societies, brother- and sisterhoods, councils, leagues and federations. Lawyers call ours "bar associations" or "inns of court." Most have a core of active members and charge membership dues, which are usually reasonable. Most bar associations offer personal and professional benefits to members and non-members alike, although members often get a discount or a freebie.

The big gorilla in the bar association room is the NJSBA and its related NJ State Bar Foundation. They serve the bar in dozens of ways, but perhaps most importantly by the assistance they offer to smaller, less prominent, and less well-funded bar associations. In addition to providing an outstanding venue in New Brunswick for everything bar-related, the NJSBA is our most reliable ready source of information about all matters that concern lawyers.

Another gorilla is the NJ Association for Justice whose contributions to members and non-members alike have been incalculable. They use their vast professional resources to educate lawyers, the public and the legislature. For members seeking help of any kind, the Association for Justice's listserv and educational offerings could serve as models for professional groups everywhere. Both associations appear as amicus curiae in matters of concern to the bar or to the public. Both offer complete palettes of excellent CLE programming and both host legendary conferences and seminars in Atlantic City in non-pandemic years.

But the gorillas are only part of the story. Our recipients this year include all state, local and county bar associations. There is also a TWITA for each association of African American, Asian, Muslim, Caribbean, Hispanic, Hindu, African, Jewish, senior, Italian, Baptist, newbie, female, Mormon, Arabic, Catholic and Methodist attorneys that is out there doing it right. There is one for each effective bar association based on legal specialty, geography, political leaning, market sector, religion, alma mater, sexual orientation and hobby.

Bar associations unite us and educate us. They offer us opportunities to gain skills and information, to meet colleagues, to talk shop, to connect and reconnect, to profit from another's knowledge and experience, and to socialize. They allow us to polish our leadership skills and to acquire experience in public speaking. They show us how to serve our clients, our practices, our profession, and the greater community.

For all they do for us, the Fourth Annual TWITA Award goes to our bar associations. Please acknowledge this achievement by becoming active in one.

And now, the big reveal—the surprise winner of this year's Golden TWITA award. This coveted accolade has never been bestowed upon one of such tender years as Rubin Sinins of the Javerbaum firm, this year's honoree.

A little about him. In keeping with modern journalistic practice, we limited our factual investigation to one self-serving source of questionable credibility: his law firm's website. Where additional objective information was needed, we visited his LinkedIn profile.

Rubin, the son of personal injury law pioneer Stephen Sinins, is one of those rare scions of prominent attorneys whose professional accomplishments and contributions can rival those of the parent. (Another is Raymond A. Brown Jr., whose late father, civil rights lawyer Raymond A. Brown Sr., is the present front-

runner for next year's TWITA award. Bidding is still open.) Rubin's secret, of course, is hard work and long hours. Out of law school with an Ivy League pedigree, a prestigious judicial clerkship, and a prominent law firm waiting (presumably with open arms), Rubin might not have had to work long hours or to strive for excellence in order to succeed. But he did. In fact, he took success to the next level.

In a very short time, he gained the respect of bench and bar with excellent advocacy in cases both mundane and nationally famous, joining an elite crew that is certified as both Civil and Criminal Trial Attorneys. From the start, he was active in bar affairs. Soon, he was President of the Essex County Bar Association and Chair of their Criminal Bench-Bar Committee. He became Chair of the ECBA's Judicial and Prosecutorial Appointments Committee. He has also been active in the American Association for Justice (where he has served as Co-Chair of the Criminal Section) and the New Jersey State Bar Association, presenting on behalf of both an astonishing amount of CLE programs for colleagues. He has served as member and Chair of the District V-B Ethics Committee, and he continues to represent lawyers in ethics matters. Perhaps a capstone so far, Rubin was awarded the Legal Leadership Award of the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey Foundation.

We are pleased to present the Golden TWITA award for 2020 to Ruben Sinins, less for what he has accomplished than for the accomplishments he has yet to achieve. Congratulations, all.

Marc Garfinkle *practices in Morristown, focusing exclusively on legal ethics, attorney discipline, bar admission and judicial conduct. He is also an adjunct professor at Seton Hall University School of Law in Newark.*