

Honoring Debbie Blum: Mental Health Pioneer



On February 16, 2005, The Office of the Mental Health Advocate, along with the Georgia Public Defender Standards Council, honored Ms. Debra J. Blum for her 10 tireless years of dedication to the Mentally Ill Defendant. A ceremony was held in the conference room at the GPDSC headquarters, with Ms. Blum's husband, Mr. Robert G. Rubin, accepting the award on her behalf. In a touching speech, Mike Mears expressed the loyalty that Ms. Blum has for her clients and the courage she showed in protecting the rights of those that were accused of violent crimes. During the ceremony, Ms. Sabrina Rhinehart, the Interim Director of the Mental Health Advocate, welcomed guests, family and co-workers to the event and emphasized that even in times of failing health she has and does remain faithful to protecting the rights of the mentally ill client.

Mr. Jim Bonner, an attorney with GPDSC and a friend of Ms. Blum, explained to the onlookers that the Council designated this award to honor Ms. Blum's distinguished career as a pioneer for mental health advocacy in the courts of Georgia. The Debra J. Blum Award will be presented annually to honor exemplary service in protecting the legal rights and interest of the mentally ill within the criminal justice system. Debra's accomplishments have shaped the paths and broadened the rights of those that are mentally challenged.



Bob Rubin accepts the award on behalf of his wife, Debra J Blum.