

New York County Lawyers Association Conspicuous Service Award Speech
(April 6, 2022)

I gratefully accept this award on behalf of the Eastern District of New York, not just on behalf of my colleagues who have persevered – despite the difficulties and demands of the pandemic – with dedication and resourcefulness, and who have worked tirelessly to ensure the swift and proper administration of justice for the last two years, but also on behalf of our court’s many support staff without whom none of this would have been possible. Everyone from our Clerk’s Office staff, to the jury department, to the IT department, and to our Pretrial and Probation Service officers who have worked around the clock to expertly manage one of the largest civil and criminal dockets in the country.

I also want to thank all of the lawyers who have had to be patient but persistent to zealously represent their clients in these trying times. Like the Court system, all of you have had to learn new tricks to adapt to litigating under these COVID protocols. Hopefully none of you had a cat filter experience during a Court appearance on zoom; and hopefully,

none of you had to say “Judge, I am not a cat.” None of us asked for this pandemic, and everyone knows that litigating cases in federal court was hard enough without the complications of COVID, but as the saying goes --- whatever does not kill you makes you stronger, and I think we are all stronger now and coming back to ourselves. This is a lot to say after the challenges of the past two years.

Today, we were very fortunate to celebrate the 98th birthday of one of our beloved Senior Judges --- I Leo Glasser. In his remarks, he spoke about his birth 98 years ago and of his wonderful family, including his grandfather --- after whom he is named – who immigrated to the US and became a naturalized US citizen, and then he spoke about having another birth when he was sworn into the Eastern District of New York family 40 years ago ---

Truer words were never spoken --- the Eastern District of New York really is a family.

So, on behalf of the Eastern District of New York family, thank you for this honor.