

## NEWS RELEASE

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### PROMINENT NC ATTORNEY TO LEAD PUBLIC JUSTICE FOUNDATION *WILL MAKE CONSUMER RIGHTS AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE TOP PRIORITIES*

The Public Justice Foundation elected Mona Lisa Wallace of Salisbury, N.C. as president of the 2009-10 board of directors, at the organization's annual meeting on July 27 in San Francisco. Wallace's election marks the fifth time in the organization's 27-year history that a woman will lead the Foundation in its support of one of the country's best known national public interest law firms.

Wallace has practiced for more than 30 years at Wallace & Graham, the Salisbury firm she helped found, representing clients in civil litigation, workers compensation, general and premises liability, insurance coverage, consumer protection, personal injury, mass and toxic torts and products liability including asbestos, coal tar, silica, radiation, chemical poisonings, prescription drugs, and other similar claims. Her work has often involved mass and class claims.

Wallace said that, during her term, she wants the organization to concentrate on advancing court access for consumers with an emphasis on protecting workers' and victims' rights and the preservation of class action litigation.

"Without class and collective action mechanisms," said Wallace, "workers who suffer toxic exposures may have no recourse. Retirees who lose pension and healthcare benefits may have no access to court. Consumers would lack the power to challenge unfair and deceptive practices."

She noted that, through class actions and mass claims, ordinary working people and low income consumers can take on corporations that are too large and powerful for an individual to challenge alone.

Four other attorneys were elected as officers of the Public Justice Foundation at the July 27<sup>th</sup> annual meeting: President-Elect Harry Deitzler of Charleston, W.Va; Vice President Steven E. Fineman of New York City; Treasurer Jack Landskroner of Cleveland, Ohio; and Secretary Ted Leopold of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

Five attorneys were elected to the organization's Executive Committee: Esther Berezofsky of Cherry Hill, N.J.; Alan R. Brayton of Novato, Calif.; Jeffrey M. Goldberg of Chicago, Ill.; Stanley J. Marks of Phoenix, Ariz.; and Kenneth M. Suggs of Columbia, S.C.

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In addition, 22 attorneys were elected or re-elected to the Public Justice Foundation Board of Directors: Raymond P. Boucher of Beverly Hills, Calif.; Linda M. Correia of Washington, D.C.; Eric L. Cramer of Philadelphia, Penn.; Conal Doyle of Oakland, Calif.; Lewis S. "Mike" Eidson of Coral Gables, Fla.; James F. Humphreys of Charleston, W.Va.; Andrew A. Lemmon of Hahnville, La.; Brad J. Moore of Seattle, Wash.; Christopher T. Nace of Washington, D.C.; Stuart A. Ollanik of Arvada, Colo.; Lee J. Rohn of St. Croix, the Virgin Islands; Antonio A. Romanucci of Chicago, Ill.; Frederick S. Schwartz of Sherman Oaks, Calif.; Christopher Seeger of New York City; Stephen M. Smith of Hampton, Va.; Todd A. Smith of Chicago; James F. Szaller of Cleveland, Ohio; Ernest F. Teitell of Stamford, Conn.; Janet Varnell of The Villages, Fla.; C. Andrew Waters of Dallas, Tex; Mikal C. Watts of San Antonio, Tex.; and Perry Weitz of New York City.

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Public Justice is America's public interest law firm, supported by – and calling on -- a nationwide network of more than 3,000 of the nation's top lawyers to pursue precedent-setting and socially significant litigation. It has a wide-ranging litigation docket in the areas of consumer rights, worker safety, civil rights and liberties, toxic torts, environmental protection, and access to the courts. Public Justice is the principal project of the Public Justice Foundation, a not-for-profit membership organization headquartered in Washington, DC, with a West Coast office in Oakland, California. The Public Justice web site address is [www.publicjustice.net](http://www.publicjustice.net).