



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**New Jersey Institute for Social Justice Honors Founding Board
Member with Fellowship**

New position will provide career opportunities for public interest lawyers

Newark, New Jersey—Today, in honor of the late Dickinson R. Debevoise, United States District Court Judge and founding board member, the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice (“Institute”) announced the creation of a fund to support a new social justice fellowship for public interest lawyers.

“For more than 35 years, Judge Debevoise served with unparalleled distinction as a federal judge until his recent death at 91,” said Ryan P. Haygood, Institute President and CEO. “A brilliant jurist, Judge Debevoise dedicated his life to pursuing justice and equality. We honor his life and legacy by providing an opportunity for young lawyers to advance social and racial justice through this fellowship.”

Judge Debevoise passed away peacefully at his home on August 14, 2015. Upon his passing, Jerome B. Simandle, Chief United States District Court Judge for the District of New Jersey, said, “Our court has lost one of its greatest judges ever.”

Judge Debevoise began his lifelong public service in the United States Army during World War II, for which he earned a Bronze Star Medal. He also became active in the civil rights movement, representing and recruiting attorneys to represent civil rights workers in Mississippi during the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer. Reflecting on his life’s work, Judge Debevoise later explained that one of his proudest professional accomplishments was establishing Newark Legal Services in 1965, an organization (now known as Essex-Newark Legal Services) that provides free legal services and advocates for New Jersey’s poor and marginalized residents.

Consistent with his commitment to public service, Judge Debevoise served as the Institute’s founding board vice-president, trustee, and ultimately trustee emeritus. In that capacity, he helped to create, shape, and advance the Institute’s mission.



Judge Debevoise’s daughter, Molly Debevoise Rennie, said, “My father never lost sight during his long career of the potential for Newark with its rich history and diversity. His work with the civil rights movement during the early 1960s made the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice a natural focus for his energies. The Institute was a great source of pride for my father. He was particularly proud of the work being done to research, represent, and understand the prison population and the challenges of reentry into the workforce and society for those with a criminal record. The Institute's work fighting structural poverty and racial inequality will continue long after his passing. Our family is delighted that the Honorable Dickinson R. Debevoise Fellowship has been established to help advance the vital work of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice.”

The Honorable Dickinson R. Debevoise Social Justice Legal Advocacy Fellowship offers an attorney a significant opportunity to help advance the Institute’s cutting-edge work in expanding access to social justice and economic opportunity and advocating for criminal justice reform in urban communities across New Jersey. To view the fellowship brochure, please visit <http://www.njisj.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Debevoise-Request-Brochure-3.pdf>

Donations in support of the fellowship may be sent to the NJ Institute for Social Justice, 60 Park Place, Newark, NJ 07102; by calling 973.624.9400; or online at <http://www.njisj.org/2015/08/njisj-remembers-judge-dickinson-r-debevoise/>

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About the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice:

The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice (“Institute”) is a leading social justice organization that empowers residents of urban communities to realize and achieve their radical potential. Established in 1999 by Alan V. and Amy Lowenstein, the Institute’s dynamic and independent advocacy is aimed at toppling load bearing walls of structural inequality in order to create just, vibrant, and healthy urban communities. The Institute employs a broad range of tools to advance its ambitious urban agenda, including strategic public education, grassroots organization, policy analysis and research, legislative campaigns, the development of pilot programs, direct services, and litigation.