



## NACDL NEWS

By Jack King, NACDL Director  
of Public Affairs & Communications

### Houston Attorney Jim E. Lavine Receives NACDL's Top Award

**J**im E. Lavine, a noted criminal defense attorney in Houston, Texas, was awarded the 27th annual *Robert C. Heeney Memorial Award* by the National Association of



Past President Martin S. Pinales (on left) presented the Heeney Award to Jim E. Lavine

Criminal Defense Lawyers at the association's Annual Meeting in San Francisco Aug. 4. Established in 1981 to honor NACDL's 18th President, Robert C. Heeney, the award is the most prestigious honor given by the association and is awarded annually to one criminal defense attorney who personally and professionally best exemplifies the goals and values of the association and the legal profession.

The award was made by outgoing NACDL President Martin S. (Marty) Pinales, with the advice and consent of a group of former *Heeney* recipients. When presenting the award, President Pinales remarked that Lavine had the unanimous acclaim of the nominators. Lavine, surprised and visibly emotional, said he was honored and humbled by receiving the award, especially in the presence of some of the greatest defense lawyers who had walked this road before him. He promised to continue to fight for the rights of his clients, the profession, NACDL, and the goals of due process and equal justice, and promised to continue to conduct himself with the highest ethical standards.

A 1974 graduate of Illinois Institute of Technology - Chicago Kent College of Law in Chicago, Ill., Lavine was the

association's parliamentarian for 2006-07 and chair of the task force on financial resources. Lavine is a former member of the NACDL Board of Directors, a former director of the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, and a former president of the Harris County Criminal Lawyers Association. He has been board certified in criminal law since 1985 by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and since 1986 by the National Board of Trial Advocacy. Lavine has been named a Super Lawyer by Texas Monthly magazine every year since 2003. In addition, he was one of two attorneys named attorneys of the year for 2005-2006 by the Harris County Criminal Lawyers Association and one of two also named as the outstanding lawyers in the state for 2005-2006 by the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association.

For the past few years, he represented former Enron Broadband chief financial officer Kevin Howard, whose convictions for fraud, conspiracy and false bookkeeping were thrown out by the trial court earlier this year. Lavine also has acted as lead counsel and co-counsel in numerous other high profile cases including the reversal on a writ of habeas corpus of a triple death penalty case in Oklahoma in which the charges were later dismissed; a complex white-collar case in which the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, finding that the district judge's finding of fact was clearly erroneous, reversed the conviction and ordered the charges dismissed; and a case involving a Duke Energy executive charged with nineteen counts of conspiracy, wire fraud, mail fraud, and falsifying books and records in which the defendant was acquitted on seven counts and twelve counts were dismissed after the jury deadlocked.