

# American Lawyer Names Stephen D. Susman ‘Lifetime Achiever’

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August 17, 2016 — Firm founder [Stephen D. Susman](#) has been honored as a “[Lifetime Achiever](#)” by *American Lawyer*. The publication selected only six attorneys this year that “have had extraordinary careers at some of the country’s most prominent law firms and other legal institutions, and whose public service contributions have had far-reaching impact.”

A Houston native, Susman is routinely recognized as one of the most successful plaintiff’s attorneys in the country. He founded Susman Godfrey in 1980 on the back of a \$550 million-plus landmark victory he won as a plaintiff’s attorney for the victims of a nationwide price-fixing conspiracy. It was the largest jury verdict of its time. Susman went on to be a forerunner in the use of contingency fees in big commercial litigation. His goal, he says, was to focus on results instead of billable hours. His innovative model not only built a litigation powerhouse but inspired a growing number of Am Law 200 firms to embrace the risks and rewards of contingency fees.

*“Steve’s success in the courtroom alone makes him worthy of this award,” said Neal Manne, Susman’s co-Managing Partner. “However Steve’s achievements go far beyond simply winning big cases in the courtroom. Steve has devised and promoted real-world mechanisms to bring more civility to litigation and trials. He has taught lawyers around the country about effective advocacy, crafted and lobbied successfully for reforms in the civil justice system, advocated for creative ways to improve jury comprehension, and helped make trials more efficient and affordable. As long as I have known him, Steve always wanted to have a big impact on the legal field as a whole, and he has succeeded brilliantly.”*

Susman also created the Susman Agreements – a list of pretrial and trial agreements – available at [TrialbyAgreement.com](#). A board-certified civil trial specialist, he serves on the national board of the American Board of Trial Advocates and is co-chair of its Jury Trial Committee.

Last year Susman donated \$2 million to establish and fund The Civil Jury Project at NYU Law School, where he serves as the Project’s Executive Director. He also serves on the Advisory Board of the Center of Civil Justice at NYU Law School, the Federal Judicial Evaluation Committee and co-chair of the Judicial Nominations Task Force of the American Constitution Society. He also serves as co-chair of the Aspen Institute’s Justice Circle.

Steve receives this momentous honor just one year after being named a ‘Lifetime Achiever’ by *Texas Lawyer* magazine – to win these honors back to back is an unparalleled achievement.

[Click here](#) to read AmLaw’s full profile on Steve’s momentous career.