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White House Correspondents' Association Honors Troutman Pepper's George Lehner With President's Award for Exceptional Service

Award Recognizes Lehner's 18 Years of Pro Bono Counsel to WHCA

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WASHINGTON – In recognition of his 18 years of service as pro bono counsel to the White House Correspondents' Association (WHCA), Troutman Pepper Senior Counsel [George Lehner](#) has received the association's President's Award for Exceptional Service. It is only the third time the WHCA has awarded the honor since its 2014 creation. Lehner, who volunteered countless hours as a champion of the First Amendment and the White House press, is set to retire from his WHCA post in July.

Lehner advised the WHCA on critical issues ranging from news coverage during challenging periods at the White House, membership during a time of explosive growth, and entertainer agreement questions for the WHCA annual dinner.

"George Lehner has provided wise counsel and deep insight that helped our board be more effective in service to the press corps and the association," Kelly O'Donnell, president of the association, said in a [news release](#). "I am grateful for his steady influence and generous spirit. His knowledge and passion for a free press and the First Amendment have made a huge impact. 18 years of volunteer service to the WHCA is an extraordinary gift that has made many iterations of our board stronger and better."

Among his many contributions highlighted by the WHCA:

- Filed Amicus briefs in both federal courts regarding the denial of access to White House journalists;
- Was a key adviser in opposition to the White House exclusion of press photographers and video journalists in favor of White House-managed photos and videos;
- Advised and coordinated numerous By-Laws updates that govern the association;
- Advised on the financing of the recent renovation of the press workspace and briefing room at the White House;
- Defended the association in court over claims of discrimination in the WHCA annual dinner.

Lehner, who served as a partner at Pepper Hamilton for nearly three decades, is currently a senior counsel at Troutman Pepper and a fellow of [The Pepper Center for Public Service](#), which draws on the talents of the firm's retired partners and senior attorneys to wrestle with tough problems facing communities. Lehner also helps to lead

several notable nonprofits, including [RefugePoint](#) and [The Fund for Peace](#).

Founded in 1914, the WHCA exists to ensure robust news coverage of the president and the presidency, and to promote excellence in journalism and journalism education. The association comprises hundreds of members from the worlds of print, television, radio, and online journalism. Learn more at [whca.press](#).

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