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## NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Deborah Mathis

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(202) 797-8600 ext. 246

### **NEW YORK LAWYERS NAMED FINALISTS FOR NATIONAL AWARD**

A precedent-setting ruling that saved about 42,000 Hurricane Katrina and Rita families from homelessness has won the notice of one of the one of the country's most influential legal organizations and put three New York attorneys and their co-counsel in the running for the Public Justice 2007 Trial Lawyer of the Year Award.

**Howard O. Godnick, Jeffrey S. Sabin and Daniel L. Greenberg** of Schulte, Roth & Zabel; disaster relief expert Stephen E. Ronfeldt of The Public Interest Law Project in Oakland, Calif.; and John C. Brittain of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law in Washington, D.C., were named by the Public Justice Foundation as finalists for the award bestowed annually to the lawyers who made the greatest contribution to the public interest by trying or settling a precedent-setting case.

Because of their partnership in *McWaters v. FEMA*, the Federal Emergency Management Agency was forced to continue providing housing assistance to tens of thousands of victims of the catastrophic 2005 storms well beyond FEMA's original cutoff for aid.

It was the first time that a court had ordered FEMA to change the manner in which it administered disaster relief, including abolishing a requirement that evacuees apply for small business loans to remain eligible for housing aid. As a result, FEMA has to pay as much as \$500 million to \$1 billion more for desperately needed housing assistance.

Godnick, Sabin, Greenberg, Ronfeldt and Brittain are among 37 lawyers in eight cases named as finalists for their committed work in the public interest. The cases that were nominated this year involve a range of issues, from worker safety and environmental protection to juvenile justice reform and the rights of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita victims. Detailed summaries of each case are accessible on the Public Justice website at [www.publicjustice.net](http://www.publicjustice.net).

The winner of the nationally prestigious award will be announced on July 17 at the Public Justice Foundations 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Awards Dinner and Gala in Chicago.

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Public Justice, America's public interest law firm, is dedicated to using trial lawyers and other attorneys' skills and resources to advance the public good. Founded in 1982 (as Trial Lawyers for Public Justice), Public Justice utilizes a nationwide network of more than 3,000 attorneys to pursue precedent-setting and socially significant litigation. It has a wide-ranging litigation docket in the areas of civil rights and liberties, consumer rights, worker safety, 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. It has offices in Washington, D.C., and Oakland, California.