

In Memoriam

Howard Irving Rosenberg

April 10, 1927–February 25, 2024



Howard Rosenberg, longtime professor at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law (Denver Law), died on February 25, 2024, at his home in Denver. He was 97.

Howard was born on April 10, 1927, in Chicago, Illinois, the son of Phillip and Lena Rosenberg. After high school, he reported for duty to the US Army the day the Japanese surrendered and served 15 months in Germany. After his military service, he graduated from Roosevelt University and received his law degree from DePaul University.

In the 1950s Howard moved to Denver, where his pursuit of social justice flourished as a staff attorney and then as executive director of the Legal Aid Society of Metropolitan Denver. During his 17 years with the Legal Aid Society, Howard had the opportunity to work with students from Denver Law. Then, in 1967, he accepted a position at Denver Law, teaching classes and helping students gain courtroom experience in his role as director of the student law office. He became widely regarded as a foremost expert regarding clinical legal education—most particularly in the area of criminal law—and received Denver Law's Outstanding Faculty Award in 2002. In 2014, at age 87, he retired as professor emeritus after 47 years with the school.

Howard's service to the greater Colorado legal community was also extensive. He was one of four attorneys who founded the Thursday Night Bar (now known as Metro Volunteer Lawyers), which provides pro bono legal services to low-income clients. He served as president of the Denver Bar Association and received the


organization's highest honor, the Award of Merit. He received the Colorado Bar Association's Jacob V. Schaetzel Award, conferred on those who have made significant contributions in the delivery of legal services to low-income citizens of Colorado. And he was a longtime member of the Colorado Supreme Court Civil Rules Committee.

In recognizing Howard's lengthy and distinguished career, Denver Law Dean Bruce Smith stated:

Although the clinical program at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law proudly dates from 1904—the first at any US law school—it was Howard Rosenberg who brought our clinical program into its modern age. With vision, passion, and an unflinching commitment to social justice, Howard taught decades of law students that law is a noble, mission-driven, and transformative profession. He will be dearly missed by his many grateful students, colleagues, friends, and clients.

Howard is survived by his wife Kristen Dutton; children David Rosenberg (Suzanne Kent Rosenberg), Paul Rosenberg (Mauge Wevar Rosenberg), and Hyla Rosenberg; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his stepson Matthew Dutton Simcox (Leslie Hakze).

A celebration of life will be held at a later date at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law. (For more information, please email elizabeth.fatta@du.edu.)

Memorial contributions may be made to the University of Denver Sturm College of Law (Clinical Program Endowed Fund), P.O. Box 910585, Denver, CO 80291-0585, or the Legal Aid Foundation of Colorado, 1120 Lincoln St., Ste. 701, Denver, CO 80203. 

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