

May 2023

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### Recommended Citation

Neil V. Getnick, *James B. Helmer, Jr. — A Tribute*, 91 U. Cin. L. Rev. 966 (2023)

Available at: <https://scholarship.law.uc.edu/uclr/vol91/iss4/2>

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## JAMES B. HELMER, JR. — A TRIBUTE

*Neil V. Getnick*

This is the third time I have spoken publicly or written in tribute to Jim Helmer. The first was in 2008, when I had the honor of presenting him with the Lifetime Achievement Award of Taxpayers Against Fraud, the leading national advocacy organization for whistleblower laws, lawyers, and their clients. The second was in 2021, when I had the privilege of authoring the foreword to the current edition of Jim's monumental treatise, *The False Claims Act – Whistleblower Litigation* (8<sup>th</sup> Edition).

Others who will write in tribute to Jim will no doubt speak of his instrumental role in rediscovering the federal False Claims Act, successfully resurrecting it on behalf of his whistleblower client in a groundbreaking case against General Electric, and twice guiding Congress' passage of amendments that strengthened and transformed the statute, creating a powerful public-private partnership to fight fraud on behalf of the government. Others will write about his extraordinary legal career successfully representing whistleblowers, including his famed argument before the United States Supreme Court in *Allison Engine Co. v. United States ex rel. Sanders*. Still others will write of his longstanding relationship with the University of Cincinnati College of Law, where he served as Editor-in Chief of the *Cincinnati Law Review* and later received the Law School's Nicholas Longworth III Alumni Achievement Award for Distinguished Public Service, and separate Distinguished Alumni Awards from the Law School, the Law Review, and the Alumni Association. All these milestones are part of Jim's lifelong accomplishments which I leave to others to elaborate.

I would like to add my remarks about Jim as a friend and a colleague. To me, Jim exemplified all that we value in a human being. He was a man with a vision and a mission. He was driven by the highest moral values and his commitment to making them come to life. He was a friend to his clients and the whistleblower bar but, most of all to me, my friend. He was a person I looked up to for guidance, whose camaraderie I cherished, and whose commitment to the law was a beacon that lit the way for so many, especially me. It is with both admiration and sadness that I write this tribute. More than simply a lawyer's lawyer, Jim was a person of integrity and honor, whose friendship was his greatest gift of all.