

LAWYERS WHO LEAD BY EXAMPLE 2014 AWARDS

• LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

• PUBLIC SERVICE

• PRO BONO



RICHARD MANCINO
PARTNER, WILLKIE FARR & GALLAGHER LLP



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AS A PARTNER in Willkie Farr & Gallagher's litigation department, Richard Mancino specializes in complex commercial and corporate cases.

Mancino is known for getting New York's Congressional map redrawn, for helping keep religion out of the classroom and for assisting dozens of immigrants to obtain asylum.

A 1982 graduate of Ohio State University College of Law who then went to work at Willkie, Mancino said his pro bono cases represent "core principles," are challenging, and raise interesting legal arguments. "Digging into that draws out the best of me from a lawyer's standpoint. And equally significant, by doing this work, I'm having an impact on people's lives," said Mancino, whose commitment to pro bono began in his associate days.

Mancino, 58, led a team of Willkie lawyers who argued New York's Congressional redistricting was "an exercise in partisan self dealing and incumbent protection." They called on federal courts to oversee the creation of a new map. Despite opposition by state legislative leaders, the civic groups that brought the case in 2012 prevailed.

"The result was district lines that are far fairer in New York Congressional elections than they have been in



decades," he said "at least until the next Census in 2020."

Mancino has worked with the Center for Science Education to prevent religion from being taught in school. In 2007, he represented a New Jersey teen who complained about a teacher proselytizing in class, comments that included dinosaurs were on Noah's ark and that evolution was without basis. The student, Matthew LaClair, faced retaliation from students and school officials. The school district eventually relented, praised Matthew for his courage and agreed to train teachers to keep church and state separate.

In early 1991, Mancino persuaded the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit to overturn a ruling that had denied political asylum to a man from El Salvador. Since then he's worked on dozens

of political asylum cases and mentored and trained scores of associates. The firm has helped people from Tibet, Nepal, Mexico and other countries. "These are flesh and blood clients. We meet with them, we see the impact our work has had on their lives, and it is so positive, it keeps me going working on these."

—Len Maniace

Photo by Rick Kopstein