

ABOUT HAL BRAFF



Hal with wife Elaine

Hal Braff is a Newarker. Born at the Beth, his entire education, from Maple Avenue School through Rutgers Law School (with the exception of four years at the University of Wisconsin) was here at home. He graduated from Weequahic High School in 1952, at the height of that school's glory years, during which it earned a nationwide reputation for the quality of its faculty and the superiority of the education it provided.

He began the practice of law in the city with the firm of Braff, Litvak and Ertag in 1960. The firm moved to East Orange in 1961 and to Livingston in 1981, changing its name to Braff Harris and Sukoneck. He was a partner there until he left in 2003 to become "Of Counsel" to the firm of Margulies Wind in Jersey City, the firm with which he is still affiliated.

In 1982 he was certified as a Civil Trial Lawyer and in 1997 as a Mediator. Since 1977 he has been a professor of Trial Techniques and Negotiation, first at the University of San Diego Law School and more recently at Rutgers Law School in Newark, where he still teaches. From 2001 to 2007 he taught Negotiation Skills in the Beijing International MBA program.

A past member of the Supreme Court's District Ethics Committee, he served for five years as a member of the IOLTA Fund Board, the last as Chairman.

One of the originators of the American Inns of Court in the State of New Jersey, Hal was elected to the Board of Trustees of the American Inns of Court Foundation in 1991 and in 1994 was honored in the United States Supreme Court with the A. Sherman Christensen Award for excellence and service to the legal community. He was elected National Vice-President in 2000.

For his work in furthering the standards of excellence in the practice of law, Hal has been recognized with a Special Merit Award by the Essex County Bar Association and the New Jersey Trial Lawyers Association.

Since 2008 he has been included in New York Magazine's list of the New York Area's Top Lawyers. In 2009 he was elected to the Newark Athletic Hall of Fame.

For Hal Braff, the achievement for which he is most proud is the development, together with Shep Bross, Phil Yourish, Mary Dawkins and a marvelous and generous crew of Board members, of the Alumni Association of Weequahic High School. Their goal was to join together the graduates from the decades since the building opened in 1933, Jew and Gentile, blacks and whites, and tap into the common denominator which brought them all to Chancellor Avenue, to provide opportunity and scholarship funds to assist 21st century graduates to obtain the education essential to fulfill the American dream. The success has been amazing.

Hal states: *"If we save (improve) the life of even one kid, who without our help would not have been able to fulfill a dream, it is as though we saved the universe."*

He resides with his wonderful wife, Elaine in South Orange. They have six children and nine grandchildren

ABOUT SHELDON BROSS



**Sheldon with sons
Kevin & Michael**

Sheldon Bross was born in Newark and attended Newark Schools, receiving his diploma from Weequahic High in 1955. He graduated from Newark's Rutgers School of Business in 1958 and Rutgers School of Law in Newark in 1961.

For fifty years, he has practiced law in Newark. From ages 12 to 24 he sold bananas, first on Prince Street and later on Mulberry Street in Newark, where he contends he learned more about practicing law than in any law school class. Throughout his entire life Sheldon has been involved in Newark's Social, Civic, Cultural and Business life. As a young lawyer in the sixties he volunteered to serve as attorney for many non-profit and civic organizations.

Hal and Sheldon did not know one another at Weequahic. They first met as adversaries in a trial in Elizabeth NJ. *"From the first time I met him, I recognized that Hal was my kind of people - a good lawyer and a good guy."* The creation of the Weequahic High School Alumni Association flowed naturally from their friendship and the many Newark activities in which they had both been involved. Both he and Hal realize how fortunate they were to be at the right place at the right time in what was then among the best high schools in the country.

Sheldon is extraordinarily proud of the accomplishments of the Association since its inception. He personally feels that one of the greater benefits of the organization has been the many friendships he has established with his fellow Board members, while working together to promote student activities and generating fifty thousand dollars per year in college scholarships for the students at Weequahic.

He states: *"We all realize that we can't bring back the old days, but we instinctively know that what we are doing is the right thing. We know that our activities will enable some Weequahic kids to overcome the many detours around which they must navigate in order to create a secure future for themselves"*.

Currently, Sheldon a School Board Member of the Bloomingdale and Butler Boards of Education. He is married to Carolyn, also a Newark Rutgers graduate. They have two children - Michael married to Maria and Kevin married to Jodie. Carolyn and Sheldon have five grandchildren, Mac, Zoe, Willow, Jesse and Sasha. The entire family lives at Glen Wild Lake in Bloomingdale, N J.

Sheldon and Hal also taught a Trial Class together at Rutgers Law School. *"Our students tell us it's one of the best courses in the Law School, and we agree."*