



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
**HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**  
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**WASHINGTON DC 20350-3000**

MCO 1650.62  
SJA  
11 JUN 2018

MARINE CORPS ORDER 1650.62

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps  
To: Distribution List

Subj: BRIGADIER GENERAL MICHAEL E. RICH LITIGATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Ref: (a) SECNAV M-5210.1 CH-1  
(b) 5 U.S.C. 552a  
(c) SECNAVINST 5211.5E

Encl: (1) Biography of Brigadier General Michael E. Rich

1. Situation. This Order provides information regarding the subject award, and instructions for nominating eligible candidates. The Brigadier General Michael E. Rich Litigator of the Year Award is presented annually in memory of Brigadier General Rich, U.S. Marine Corps (Retired). Brigadier General Rich was the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant from 1988 to 1990. Over his 30-year career, Brigadier General Rich served as an infantry officer, a staff judge advocate, and the Deputy Director of Judge Advocate Division. He retired from the Marine Corps on a Friday and reported for duty the following Monday where he prosecuted cases at the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Eastern District of Virginia for the next 27 years. His last contested trial closed less than two weeks before his passing on July 14, 2017. He was an exemplary litigator, and he set a standard for litigation that is worthy of emulation. The enclosure presents a biographical summary of Brigadier General Rich's professional accomplishments.

2. Mission. On behalf of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (SJA to CMC) and the President of the Marine Corps Association and Foundation (MCA&F) will present annually the Brigadier General Michael E. Rich Litigator of the Year Award. The award is presented to recognize the winner of the annual Marine Corps Trial Advocacy competition who has demonstrated superior advocacy skills across all phases of the competition - opening statement, direct examination, cross-examination, and closing arguments. The competitors are nominated to participate by their respective Legal Service Support Section (LSSS) officer-in-charge (OIC) or staff judge advocate, and are approved to attend by the SJA to CMC based on merit, that is, on proven litigation capabilities.

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3. Execution

a. Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations

(1) Commander's Intent

(a) Marines nominated to participate in the competition by their LSSS OIC or staff judge advocate should be recognized by seniors, peers, and subordinates as individuals who best exemplify superior litigation skill and acumen.

(b) Through both personal and professional example, nominees must set the standard for others to emulate.

(2) Concept of Operations

(a) Nominations to participate in the annual Marine Corps Trial Advocacy competition are due to the SJA to CMC by a date to be announced via an annual MARADMIN.

(b) Nominations must include the nominee's biography, a summary of performance demonstrating the nominee's qualifications, and an official photograph of the nominee taken within six months of the start of the Marine Corps Trial Advocacy competition.

(c) The SJA to CMC will establish a panel of judges representing the various military justice communities—defense, trial, victim's legal, and appellate government/defense.

(d) The SJA to CMC and the panel of judges will select the winner of the annual Marine Corps Trial Advocacy competition. The winner will receive the Brigadier General Michael E. Rich Litigator of the Year Award.

(e) The SJA to CMC and the President of the MCA&F will present the Brigadier General Michael E. Rich Litigator of the Year Award at an appropriate ceremony.

b. Coordinating Instructions. All active duty Marine Corps judge advocates (and Coast Guard and Navy lawyers assigned to Marine Corps units) may be nominated to participate in the annual Marine Corps Trial Advocacy competition.

4. Administration and Logistics

a. Previous award recipients are ineligible for any subsequent nomination. Nominees not selected as recipients in previous years are eligible for subsequent nominations.

b. Records created as a result of this Order shall be managed according to National Archives and Records Administration approved

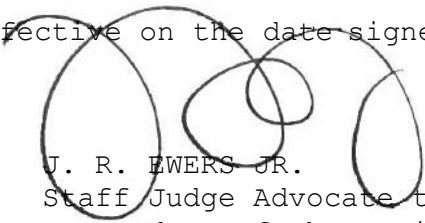
dispositions per reference (a) to ensure proper maintenance, use, accessibility and preservation, regardless of format or medium.

Privacy Act. Any misuse or unauthorized disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) may result in both civil and criminal penalties. The DON recognizes that the privacy of an individual is a personal and fundamental right that shall be respected and protected. The DON's need to collect, use, maintain, or disseminate PII about individuals for purposes of discharging its statutory responsibilities will be balanced against the individuals' right to be protected against unwarranted invasion of privacy. All collection, use, maintenance, or dissemination of PII will be in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (reference (b)) and implemented per reference (c).

5. Command and Signal

a. Command. This Order is applicable to active duty Marine Corps judge advocates.

b. Signal. This Order is effective on the date signed.



J. R. EWERS JR.  
Staff Judge Advocate to the  
Commandant of the Marine Corps

Distribution: PCN 10202257700

BIOGRAPHY

BRIGADIER GENERAL MICHAEL E. RICH, USMC

Michael E. Rich was commissioned in the Marine Corps Reserve in December 1961 after completing Officers Candidate School, and became an infantry officer after graduating from the Basic School in June 1962. For the next two and a half years, he served as an infantry platoon commander, company executive officer, and assistant battalion operations officer in the 1st and 3rd Marine Divisions. He deployed with the 7th Marine Expeditionary Brigade to the Caribbean during the Cuban Missile Crisis from October to December 1962, and was subsequently promoted to first lieutenant in June 1963.

In September 1964, Brigadier General Rich reported for duty at Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, where he performed a variety of duties appropriate for an infantry officer serving with an aviation command. During this tour, he was promoted to captain.

In 1967, Brigadier General Rich assumed command of Company F, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines ("Hell in a Helmet"), in the Republic of Vietnam, where, he was awarded the Purple Heart, and earned a Bronze Star with Combat "V" and Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V." Not surprisingly, Brigadier General Rich was the only applicant present when he took his Law School Admission Test in Da Nang.

Brigadier General Rich entered the University of California, Hastings College of Law, in August 1968, graduating with honors in June 1971. He was promoted to major in November 1969. After taking the California Bar and completing Naval Justice School, Newport, Rhode Island, he reported to the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, where he served as chief trial counsel, chief defense counsel, and military justice officer. In May 1974, he transferred to Marine Corps Base, Barstow, where he served as staff judge advocate until June 1977.

From July 1977 to July 1978, Brigadier General Rich served as a special court-martial judge in Okinawa. Thereafter he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and served as the Staff Judge Advocate, 1st Marine Division, until his transfer to Headquarters Marine Corps in August 1981 to head the Research and Policy Branch, Judge Advocate Division. He was promoted to colonel in July 1983.

In August 1983, Brigadier General Rich was reassigned as a student to the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. After graduating in June 1984, he served as Staff Judge Advocate, III Marine Amphibious Force/3d Marine Division in Okinawa. In July 1985, he returned to Headquarters Marine Corps as the Deputy Director, Judge Advocate Division. In September 1988, he was promoted to brigadier general and assumed the duties of the Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant of the Marine Corps and Director, Judge Advocate Division.

Brigadier General Rich's personal decorations and medals include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V," Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal with bronze star in lieu of a second award, Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V," and the Combat Action Ribbon.

In August 1990, Brigadier General Rich retired from the Marine Corps on a Friday, and, on the following Monday, he began work as an Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA) in the Eastern District of Virginia, where he served his country for an additional 27 years. During that time, AUSA Rich served as a prolific investigator and prosecutor of violent crimes, including armed robberies, gang murders, arson, and complex frauds.