Air Allergen and Founder Richard Johnson Named AVLF?s 2025 Partner of the Year

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Posthumous honor recognizes over a decade of service providing safe housing solutions for vulnerable Atlantans

Atlanta, GA ? The Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation (AVLF) has named Air Allergen and Mold Testing Inc., along with its late founder Richard Johnson, as the recipient of its prestigious 2025 Partner of the Year Award. The announcement, made during AVLF?s annual awards ceremony, celebrated a decade-long collaboration that has significantly advanced housing justice in Atlanta and beyond.

The award, typically a moment of celebration, was imbued with a deep sense of gratitude and loss following Johnson?s unexpected passing just two weeks prior. The evening transformed into a moving tribute to a man whose legacy is etched into the lives of the hundreds of families he helped and the housing systems he challenged.

The collaboration between AVLF and Air Allergen began in 2013 when AVLF?s then-rising attorney Michael Lucas reached out to Richard Johnson for assistance. Lucas, frustrated by the deplorable and hazardous

housing conditions facing many low-income tenants, needed scientific expertise to support what his clients already knew: their homes were making them sick.

That initial phone call marked the beginning of a transformative partnership. Johnson, a mold and indoor air quality expert, immediately understood the urgency of the situation and committed to offering his services in support of AVLF?s mission. What started as a single outreach soon blossomed into a decade of unwavering support, advocacy, and boots-on-the-ground engagement.

Over the years, Air Allergen has performed more than 870 mold tests for AVLF clients, often at deeply discounted or no cost. These tests have played a crucial role in legal proceedings, empowering tenants with irrefutable scientific evidence in negotiations, court hearings, and advocacy efforts.

AVLF attorneys and staff spoke passionately at the awards ceremony about the impact of Johnson?s work and character. He wasn?t just a service provider; he was a partner, an ally, and a friend. He was often described as a ?true mensch??a man of integrity, kindness, and deep moral clarity.

?He didn?t just hand over a report,? said AVLF attorney Ethan Grossman, ?Rich showed up in the courtroom, explained the science to clients in plain terms, and made sure they were heard and protected. His voice was often the one that tipped the scale toward justice.?

Johnson?s work was frequently the key piece of evidence enabling AVLF attorneys to secure improved housing, damage compensation, and in many cases, relocation for families living in unsafe environments. Beyond courtrooms, he was a relentless advocate for broader policy changes, working to support new ordinances and legislative efforts to hold landlords accountable and improve indoor air quality standards across Georgia.

The numbers only scratch the surface of Johnson?s impact. His testing services, often provided free of charge or at steep discounts, represent hundreds of thousands of dollars in donated value. But his true legacy lies in the lives improved.

?Many of our clients had spent years being ignored,? said AVLF paralegal Angel Caldwell. ?Landlords dismissed their concerns, calling black mold ?just mildew.? But when Rich came in, he validated their voices. He gave them credibility and hope.?

Caldwell fondly recalled Johnson?s frequent last-minute emails and phone calls as he prepared for court appearances?double-checking attorney assignments, confirming room numbers, or following up to say, ?Never mind, the attorney just called me.? These moments, though small, demonstrated his consistency, reliability, and passion.

Though he was set to attend the awards ceremony and accept the Partner of the Year Award in person, Johnson?s passing came just weeks before the event. In his absence, AVLF?s team and representatives from Air Allergen gathered on stage to honor him, sharing stories, shedding tears, and celebrating a life lived in service.

In a particularly emotional moment, a longtime collaborator?referred to as Johnson?s ?partner in crime??accepted the award on his behalf. ?Rich would have wanted this partnership to continue,? they said. ?Even in his final weeks, he was working on expanding the work, deepening the mission. His legacy is not finished?it?s just beginning.?

Founded by Richard Johnson, Air Allergen and Mold Testing Inc. has been a leader in mold identification and indoor air quality for over two decades. Based in Atlanta, the company is known for its scientific integrity, community partnerships, and unwavering advocacy for healthier living conditions. Air Allergen continues to serve families, legal professionals, and community organizations with reliable, evidence-based services to identify and remediate environmental health risks in homes and workplaces.

The Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation is the largest provider of free legal services to low-income Atlantans. Through its flagship programs?such as the Safe and Stable Homes Project?AVLF works to ensure tenants have access to safe, healthy, and stable housing. The organization partners with attorneys, volunteers, and community advocates to support tenants facing unsafe living conditions, wrongful evictions, and unresponsive landlords.

In 2024 alone, AVLF served thousands of clients, many of whom would not have had legal representation without the foundation?s support. With partners like Air Allergen, AVLF continues to make significant strides in promoting justice and health equity throughout the region.

In naming Air Allergen and Richard Johnson the 2025 Partner of the Year, AVLF not only honored a professional collaboration?it paid tribute to the life of a man who truly lived his values. Johnson?s work lives on in every courtroom victory, every repaired home, and every family finally able to rest in safety.

?We often say we want to give people their flowers while they?re still with us,? said one AVLF speaker, voice trembling. ?We wish Rich were here to receive his. But in his absence, we offer this award as a symbol of our eternal gratitude and commitment to continuing what he started.?

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For more information about Air Allergen & Mold Testing, contact the company here:Air Allergen & Mold TestingRichard Johnson770-938-4861pr@airallergen.com

Air Allergen & Mold Testing

Air Allergen & Mold Testing provides comprehensive indoor air quality and mold testing services throughout the South East.

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