Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan (CDAM) selected **James R. Samuels** (Big Rapids, MI) and **Lisa Kirsch Satawa** (Birmingham, MI) as recipients of their Right to Counsel Award. This award recognizes the amazing contributions of individuals in the form of legal representation or other extraordinary service.

Through years of practice and observance, Jim Samuels and Lisa Kirsch Satawa recognized that new criminal defense attorneys were not receiving the necessary training to be effective advocates in their profession. In fact, many did not receive even rudimentary basics of how to practice criminal defense law. This oversight was so pervasive throughout Michigan that Jim and Lisa decided to do something about it. In 2004-2005, after many months of planning, they created and launched *A is for Attorney,* an all-day training forcriminal defense attorneys with less than three years of practice. *AIFA* is known as a Nuts and Bolts approach to criminal defense practice. It takes students through the importance of client-centered representation, how to set up a law office, what happens at a jail or prison visit, anatomy of a case, motion practice, sentencing, and so much more. More than 1,000 pages of resources and compiled materials (updated twice a year) are distributed to each student.

Now seventeen years later, it is estimated that Jim and Lisa have trained more than 700 attorneys across the state through 32 eight-hour training sessions. This translates into more than 260 volunteer hours that each have given of their time to train and mentor young lawyers. The impact they have had on new lawyers is immeasurable. One award criteria is CDAM members who “provide high quality continuing legal education.” Jim and Lisa, through the creation of *A is for Attorney,* has certainly met and surpassed this standard.

Said CDAM Past President Elizabeth A. LaCosse, “More than seventeen years ago, Jim and Lisa saw a void in training for young defense attorneys. They put their heads and experience together as well as countless hours of their personal time to create and implement a training program called A is for Attorney. This program has impacted hundreds of attorneys across the state.”  She continued, “This dedication and leadership is why they earned a State Bar of Michigan award as well as the respect and accolades of CDAM. We are honored to express our appreciation and esteem for these amazing attorneys!”

CDAM’s Annual Dinner and Awards Banquet is Friday, March 11, 2022, at the Auburn Hills Marriott, Centerpoint Parkway, Pontiac, MI. The Cocktail Reception begins at 6:15 with dinner at 7:00p.m. For those interested in attending, visit [www.CDAMonline.org](http://www.cdamonline.org). Tickets are $85 per person. For more information, contact CDAM at (517) 599-2603.