ATTORNEY BRENT COON AND EVA ROWE, WHO TOOK ON BP, RECEIVE PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD FROM THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR JUSTICE

CHICAGO, IL (JULY 17, 2007) - Attorney Brent Coon and his client Eva Rowe, who settled a hard-fought legal battle against oil giant BP over her parents' deaths at the company's Texas City plant, today received the Steven J. Sharp Public Service award from the American Association of Justice (AAJ) during the group’s annual convention in Chicago.

The award is the most prestigious presented by the AAJ to lawyers and their clients. The award is for those “whose cases tell the story of American civil justice, and help educate state and national policy makers and the public about the importance of consumers’ rights.”

“I have worked with Eva Rowe for more than two years now to take on BP and hold them accountable for what happened at Texas City, and to hold the petrochemical industry responsible for the health and safety of its workers,” said Coon. “Ultimately, the justice system allowed us to prevail. BP’s internal documents, detailing how their operational failure led to the deaths of 15 workers, are now public. And BP was forced to give millions of dollars toward safety training oil workers. Without the justice system, none of this happens. I am thankful to the American Association for Justice for recognizing the important work that we’ve done toward making the oil industry safer for its workers in the U.S. and beyond.”

“I’m proud to have had a lawyer like Brent Coon fight, like a bulldog, to hold BP accountable for killing 15 of its own workers, including my mom and dad,” said Eva Rowe. “BP found out the hard way that
Brent and I weren’t going to go away quietly: we forced BP to contribute millions of dollars to better education and healthcare for our oil workers. And by forcing them to publicly release their documents, we made an entire industry accountable for ignoring dangerous realities and have forced them to – hopefully – learn from their mistakes. I hope people look at our case and become inspired to take on CEO’s who put profits over safety. And I hope they get a lawyer like Brent Coon.”

**Background on Rowe vs. BP**

In March 2005, an explosion occurred at the BP refinery in Texas City, leading to the deaths of 15 contract workers, including Eva Rowe’s parents, James and Linda. Subsequent investigations revealed that, contrary to industry and BP’s own safety standards, the Rowes and their fellow workers were housed in flimsy trailers placed too close to the equipment which subsequently exploded.

BP was fined more than $21 million by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Hazards Administration; meanwhile the U.S. Chemical Safety Board, which called the BP Texas City explosion “the worst U.S. industrial accident since 1990,” blamed “organizational and safety deficiencies at all levels of the BP Corporation” in its scathing report, released on the two-year anniversary of the tragedy.

Like most of the aggrieved parties in the BP Texas City case, Eva Rowe had been offered settlement packages by BP to try and keep the matter from going to trial. But Eva held fast to one demand – that confidential BP documents, from internal memos to the company’s own report on what led to the deadly explosion, be released as part of any settlement.

On November 9, 2006 – the eve of trial – BP relented and settled with Ms. Rowe for an undisclosed financial sum. The company also agreed to provide up to $38 million in funds towards two schools, a major burn center, St. Luke Children’s Hospital (a favorite charity of the Rowes), and even to Eva’s old school district in Louisiana.

But most importantly, it agreed to declassify millions of pages of internal documents which provided damning evidence of missteps and negligence at BP Texas City, leading to the fatal explosion which killed 15 and injured scores of other workers. Many of those documents, along with video depositions
of key BP executives, can be viewed at www.texascityexplosion.com.

Today Eva Rowe and Brent Coon continue their fight to improve health and safety standards for workers in the petrochemical industry. In Texas, they are working with members of the State Legislature to draft key legislation that would overhaul those current standards, while on the national stage, Eva has testified before the U.S. Congress on the need for stronger federal oversight of the industry. Brent and Eva established a website, www.rememberthe15.com, through which people can urge their local elected officials to support and pass such legislation.

About Brent Coon & Associates
Brent Coon & Associates was founded in 2001. Today, with 20 offices spanning the country, it is one of the largest trial law firms in the nation and the epitome of the 21st century law practice. Brent Coon & Associates employs over 60 aggressive litigators, with solid experience in individual and complex multi-party, occupational/environmental, health and personal injury cases. The majority of the firm’s cases are referred from attorneys who have confidence in the firm’s integrity, expertise and solid work ethic. For more information, visit www.bcoonlaw.com.

About the Steven J. Sharp Public Service Award
The award is named for Steven J. Sharp of Richland, Oregon, who lost both arms in 1992 to a defective tractor hay baler when he was 17 years old. The tractor manufacturer knew one person had been mangled, and another decapitated, by this defectively designed product. Yet, company executives did nothing, even though a small 70-cent part would have fixed the problem. For 70 cents, Steven could still have his arms.

At the time of Steven’s case, legislation was pending that would have barred him from taking his case against the manufacturer to court. He spoke out to show lawmakers how legislation to limit access to the courts would deprive people like him of justice.

About the American Association for Justice
The Mission of the American Association for Justice is to promote a fair and effective justice system—and to support the work of attorneys in their efforts to ensure that any person who is injured by the misconduct or negligence of others can obtain justice in America’s courtrooms, even when taking on the most
powerful interests. For more information, visit www.aaj.org.