

PARK RIDGE HERALD-ADVOCATE

Shout Out: Jim Argionis, attorney and Park Ridge 'Community Star'



Jim Argionis (Jim Argionis)

By **Jennifer Johnson** · **Contact Reporter**

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His volunteer work with Maine South High School students and the city of **Park Ridge** earned Jim Argionis recognition this year as a recipient of a Community Star award from the Park Ridge Chamber of Commerce.

Argionis, an attorney with the Chicago firm of Cozen O'Connor and father of three, was credited for his service on the Park Ridge Planning and Zoning Commission and the city's O'Hare Airport Commission, as well as for mentoring Maine South's Mock Trial Team in a state and national competition.

Q: How did you get involved with the Maine South Mock Trial Team?

A: My oldest daughter is a freshman now at Maine South and when we were at one of the parent orientations, the principal came over and we started talking. He had heard I was an attorney. A few weeks later, I received an email that the mock trial team coach, Don McArthur-Self, was looking for a lawyer to help out because they didn't have one this year. I was asked to help. I said, "Yes. That's my thing." I love trials. I've been a trial attorney for 24 years.

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Q: What do you help the team with?

A: I'm helping them out substantively and with stylistic techniques in the courtroom. Like things you say in opening and closing arguments, direct and cross exams. It's coaching trial skills.

Q: What other school-related volunteer work have you done?

A: There was a community finance committee that was put together in District 64 a couple years back, and I served on that. Aside from that, I've been part of some PTO programs, including the Playmakers at Washington School.

Q: You have been chairman of the O'Hare Airport Commission for several years. Why is this group important to you?

A: Living this close to the airport, I think it's always going to be an issue in terms of ensuring the community is educated about what is going on with O'Hare and what we can do to help mitigate noise and be sure O'Hare is a good neighbor. I think it's a long-term issue, given our proximity to the airport, that we're going to have to deal with. I was encouraged that Park Ridge had such a commission. Since [it was formed], other municipalities have put together similar commissions modeled after what we do.

Q: What does the O'Hare Airport Commission do for the community?

A: The main thing is we try to educate exactly what is going on with O'Hare and how O'Hare impacts the residents of Park Ridge. Even after so many years with the O'Hare Modernization Plan going on, there are still community residents who come to our meetings and are not sure what's going on. I don't blame them; it's a complex issue. It's hard to tell where these runways are lining up in relation to our streets. We're also pushing — whether it's through the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission or lobbying federal officials — to get mitigation measures for Park Ridge.

Q: What are some of your other interests?

A: Spending a lot of time with my wife and kids. The kids have been taking golf lessons, which is always fun. We also like to bike-ride and just spend time together.