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Attorney describes Edmond Marine's defense Murder charges dropped in March

BY JAY F. MARKS

Published: November 21, 2008



Jack Zimmerman

A [Houston](#) defense attorney on Thursday exhorted peers in [Oklahoma County](#) to embrace their "special responsibility."

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[Jack Zimmerman](#) said it is vital for attorneys to be willing to stand between the government and those overmatched individuals it tries to put in prison.

"When you're dealing with liberty, and not money, you have a special responsibility," he said.



Zimmerman on Thursday discussed one of his recent cases — involving a former [Edmond Marine](#) accused of murdering civilians in [Iraq](#) — at the annual meeting of the Oklahoma County Criminal [Defense Lawyers Association](#) at the [Cox Convention Center](#).

He detailed his defense of [Lance Cpl. Stephen Tatum](#), one of several Marines who faced criminal charges after a Nov. 19, 2005, raid in [Haditha](#), a western Iraq village known as a hotbed of insurgency.

Zimmerman maintained Tatum only did what he was trained to do that day. The case ended in March when military prosecutors dropped all charges against Tatum, who has since left the [Marine Corps](#) and is looking to go to college in January.

Tatum, who was at the meeting with his parents, drew a standing ovation from the crowd of more than 60 lawyers when Zimmerman introduced him as a "hero."

More Info

OTHER CASE

Jack Zimmerman, who said he does not discuss pending cases, also represents "another young hero who is from Edmond." Army 1st Lt. Michael C. Behenna, Behenna is accused of premeditated murder in the May 16 shooting death of an Iraqi detainee. "We're going to give him the same full-court defense," Zimmerman said.

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