



[Back to News](#)

## Eric Macey Helps Panicked Friend Who Learns Her Father Is in Prison in Africa

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*Eric Macey*

[Eric Macey's](#) assistance to a friend when she learned her father had been imprisoned in Africa was reported in the *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* recently in an article about the "first family of Malawi," a country of 17.4 million people in southeast Africa. [Link](#).

The article focused on Moyenda Mutharika Knapp, a shareholder at Johnson & Bell Ltd. and current president of the Chicago-Lincoln American Inn of Court. Ms. Knapp recounted her panic upon learning that her father—a member of parliament in Malawi—had been arrested and charged with treason during a period of political unrest in 2013.

Ms. Knapp called on her contacts, including Eric, a past president and current member of the Chicago-Lincoln American Inn of Court, for assistance in reaching out to the U.S. State Department. The article quotes Eric's recollection of his exchange with Ms. Knapp:

"All of a sudden, out of nowhere—I think it was early morning—I got an e-mail from [Ms. Knapp] about what had happened,' he said, 'and who did I know in Washington or elsewhere to get her access to the State Department or directly to the president so her family could do what they could to, at least, if not get the release of her dad, to get some commitment to his being protected.'" Eric immediately began reaching out to his Washington contacts.

Three days passed, but finally Ms. Knapp's phone rang and her father, A. Peter Mutharika, was free, the article reported. Since then, Mutharika has been elected president of Malawi.

Eric served a president of the Chicago-Lincoln American Inn of Court from 2007 to 2009. The mission of the American Inns of Court is to foster excellence in professionalism, ethics, civility and legal skills.

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