

2004 ABA Pro Bono Publico Awards

Four lawyers and one law firm received the ABA Pro Bono Publico Award during the 2004 ABA Annual Meeting in Atlanta. Sponsored by the Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service, the award recognizes the work of those who have enhanced the human dignity of others by improving or delivering volunteer legal services to the poor.



The 2004 recipients include: **Roy E. Barnes** of Atlanta, who served a six-month tenure as a volunteer staff lawyer

for the Atlanta Legal Aid Society at the end of his term as governor of Georgia, exemplifying his long-time commitment to providing legal services to the poor. During his time with the Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Barnes devoted his formidable litigation skills to helping clients, particularly elderly and disabled victims of predatory lending practices. Beyond donating his legal services, Barnes also shared his considerable legal knowledge and experience by participating in ongoing training programs at Legal Aid, and leveraged his excellent reputation among Atlanta's lawyers to improve the delivery of legal services to low-income people and to increase pro bono involvement in the city. Since returning to private practice, Barnes has committed to spending at least 10 percent of his firm's billable hours to pro bono matters.



Stephen Cullen of Towson, Maryland, who has dedicated himself to improving pro bono legal services for children caught in international

custody disputes. His work has been particularly helpful to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in Alexandria, Virginia, a national leader in locating and returning abducted children. In the past five years, Cullen has traveled around the world working on more than 45 international child abduction cases as a pro bono lawyer under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.



Toby H. Hollander of Portland, Maine, who received the Ann Liechty Child Custody

Pro Bono Award (named in memory of dedicated child law advocate and previous Pro Bono Publico Award Ann Liechty). Throughout his law career, Hollander has displayed unwavering dedication to providing outstanding pro bono guardian ad litem services for children caught in custody cases. His solo practice now focuses exclusively on providing guardian ad litem services. Working through the Maine Volunteer Lawyers

Project, Hollander has handled more than 50 guardian ad litem matters on a pro bono basis. These include complex custody cases involving high conflict and domestic violence. In addition to donating his time and services, Hollander launched a brown bag lunch educational series for guardians ad litem where he leads discussions about the resources available to low-income children. He has also served as a mentor to other volunteer guardians ad litem.



Warren Sinsheimer of New York, who after retiring from practicing law for nearly 50 years, now volunteers as president

and managing attorney of Legal Services for Children, Inc. (LSC), an organization he established in 1999 to bring free civil legal services to disadvantaged New York children. Since opening its doors, LSC has provided pro bono legal representation to more than 2,500 children, most of whom had no other access to legal assistance. In addition to his leadership of LSC and his pro bono work, Sinsheimer has recruited, trained and utilized more than a dozen retired and other no-longer-practicing lawyers to volunteer at LSC two to four days a week representing children in need. Sinsheimer and his wife also endowed a public interest fellowship at New York University School of Law for students pursuing careers in public interest law upon graduation.

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New York State Bar Association Sponsors First Conference on Law Firm Pro Bono

The Honorable Judith Kaye, chief judge of the New York Court of Appeals, and A. Thomas Levin, president of the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA), welcomed 60 law firm attorneys and pro bono program managers to the Law Firm Pro Bono Conference in Albany, New York. The conference was a joint venture of the NYSBA, the Albany County Bar Association, the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, and The Legal Project of the Capital District Women's Bar Association. The conference was presented for free and provided 4.5 CLE credits

for attendees, who were able to attend workshops focused on invigorating the practice of pro bono in law firms throughout the state of New York.

The conference offered practical workshops on developing law firm pro bono policies, identifying appropriate pro bono projects for specific groups, and methods for promoting pro bono within law firms and in the media. The Law Firm Pro Bono Policy session high-lighted a model policy that has been developed and refined by numerous law firms around the state. This tool provides law firms with a road map for

articulating a law firm's commitment to pro bono, definition of pro bono, coordinator functions, and procedures for opening and following cases through to completion. Media-savvy approaches to recruitment and education were the focus of the session on promoting pro bono.

The daylong gathering was warmly received by both the law firm attorneys and the pro bono program directors, and the New York State Bar Association expects to partner with county bar associations and local pro bono programs annually to re-convene the conference.

Pro Bono Award

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ARNOLD & PORTER LLP

Arnold & Porter LLP of Washington, DC, which has committed itself to setting a national example of law firm excellence in providing pro bono legal services. Pro bono work has been a core value of the firm since its founding almost 60 years ago. In the 1950s, Arnold & Porter was the principal law firm representing the victims of McCarthyism, and in 1963, the firm's most famous case, *Gideon v. Wainwright*, established the right to legal counsel of poor persons accused of serious crimes. In addition to averaging more than 130 pro bono hours of legal services per lawyer at the firm,

Arnold & Porter also established a number of innovative new pro bono programs in 2003, including criminal defense of the indigent, federal appellate advocacy, and a resource center

for the D.C. Landlord Tenant Court. The firm also took on a number of new pro bono cases in a variety of areas such as discrimination against undocumented aliens, First Amendment issues, technology sharing among countries, assistance to the arts, medical services to minority communities, domestic security and human rights, and fighting HIV/AIDS discrimination.

In addition to presenting its annual Pro Bono Publico Award, this year the Pro Bono Committee also recognized the outstanding work of **Kenneth Feinberg**, who served in a pro bono capacity as Special



Master for the Victims Compensation Fund (VCF). The VCF was enacted by Congress after the terrorist attacks of September

11, 2001 and was established to provide a no-fault legal process to compensate the victims of the attacks and their families. As the special master, Feinberg has carried the major burden of implementing the directive of Congress to provide a fair and efficient process of compensation to over 7,000 claimants. He has worked diligently, without any personal compensation, carrying out his work in an exemplary manner.