

# PRO BONO EXCHANGE



July, 2011

## Chair's Column



Mark VanderBroek  
Pro Bono  
Committee Chair



Dorothy Jackson-  
Stallworth  
Pro Bono Manager

**“Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.” - 2004 by Marjorie Moore, Minds Eye Information Service, Belleville, IL**

During June, 2011, Troutman's Pro Bono Month, attorneys and non-attorneys together spent over 1,500 hours on pro bono matters that made a difference in the lives of those less fortunate and improved the communities in which we live and work. These matters included eviction defense, consumer rights, immigrant and human rights, drafting wills and advanced directives, assistance to active duty servicemembers and more. In addition to the firm and your pro bono clients appreciating your efforts, the American Lawyer, which annually surveys pro bono performance at the top 200 law firms, also recognized Troutman's pro bono efforts.

Troutman ranked one hundred nine (109) out of the Am Law 200 law firms on American Lawyer's 2010 Pro Bono Report released in July 2011. Firm lawyers performed an average of 31.1 pro bono hours in 2010, with 41.4% of the firm's lawyers contributing 20 or more pro bono hours.

How do we compare with our neighbors? The rankings for some geographically comparable firms are: Hunton & Williams: 26; Kilpatrick Townsend: 29; Alston & Bird: 48; King & Spalding 92; Sutherland: 105; McKenna Long: 130; McGuire Woods 144. The number 1 ranked firm in 2010 was Covington & Burling with 167 average pro bono hours per lawyer and 76.9% of its lawyers with more than 20 hours.

If you have not yet gotten involved with a pro bono matter this year, there is still plenty of time for you to make a difference in someone's life during 2011. And a reminder to partners to open a pro bono file and record your time spent on pro bono matters, which includes giving legal advice as a board member of a church, civic or community service organization, or any other non-profit. It is important that we capture all the time that our lawyers are spending on pro bono matters. Call me (11-3432) or Dorothy Jackson-Stallworth (11-3836) if you are not sure how to get involved.

Mark VanderBroek, Pro Bono  
Committee Chair

### Inside This Issue

### Page

Troutman Pro Bono Committee Visits Capitol Hill.....	2
M. Lisanne Crowley Discusses her Pro Bono Experience With Tahirih.....	3-5
Awards and Recognitions.....	5-6
Troutman Sanders Celebrates Pro Bono Month.....	6-9
Atlanta Pro Bono News .....	9-11
Portland Pro Bono News.....	12
Orange County Pro Bono News.....	12
Richmond Pro Bono News.....	13
Troutman Lawyers Partner with Animal Legal Defense Fund.....	14-15
Chicago Office Partners With TBS to Conduct Research on School Discipline.....	15

# Troutman Pro Bono Committee visits Capitol Hill



Team 5 with Representative Jim Moran (VA)



The group on their way to the Hill



Mark Newman, Wendy Young and Wally Christensen

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, Troutman Sanders and Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) hosted KIND's first-ever legislative Advocacy Day. It was a great success and helped further KIND's advocacy efforts. Twenty (20) lawyers participated. Troutman Sanders partners **Mark Newman** (ATL), Chair, Immigration Practice Group, and **Wally Christensen** (DC) (KIND Board Member), welcomed participants. After an instructive advocacy training by two highly esteemed Hill experts, Bill Kamela, Policy Counsel, Microsoft, and Rob Bradner, Partner, Holland & Knight,

our advocacy teams hit Capitol Hill. Troutman lawyers **Wally Christensen** (DC), **Mark Newman** (ATL), **Barbara Etkind** (DC) and **Clarence Lee** (DC) led several teams to visit the offices of key members of Congress on the appropriations and judiciary committees of each body including Congressmen Tom Graces, GA, Jack Kingston, GA; Jim Moran, VA; Jose Serrano, NY; Frank Wolf, VA; Mario Diaz, FL; Senators Orrin Hatch, UT, Mark Kirk, IL; Al Franken MN; and Chuck Schumer, NY. Pro bono attorneys played a key

role in these meetings by personalizing KIND's asks, describing their experiences representing unaccompanied children, and explaining the immense challenges these children face in the immigration system. The day ended with a reception that featured Jon Comstock, Senior Associate Counsel, Wal-Mart, and Chair and Chief Judge of the U.S. Department of Labor Administrative Review Board, Paul Igasaki. Both speakers talked about the vital importance of pro bono representation, and their own personal commitment to this work.



Advocacy Day 2011 ends with closing words from Jon Comstock, Senior Associate Counsel, Wal-Mart, via live videoconference, and Paul Igasaki, Chair and Chief Judge of the Administrative Review Board, U.S. Department of Labor. After a long day, Advocacy Day comes to a successful and happy end.



## **M. Lisanne Crowley, DC Partner, Handles Immigration/Domestic Violence Case with Assistance of Tahirih and Multi-Office Troutman Team**

I found Tahirih through my former law partner, Susie Hoffman, the public service partner at Crowell & Moring. I think of Susie as the most dedicated, best connected, and most knowledgeable pro bono practitioner in DC, and asked her for recommendations of organizations that are good to work with and have non-litigation opportunities. Susie enthusiastically recommended Tahirih. I was attracted by her description of the close attorney mentoring and co-counsel relationships Tahirih fosters with outside counsel, as well as their holistic approach to client service. Having had a number of pro bono cases over the years where legal resources were inadequate to address the clients' social, medical, and psychological needs, Tahirih's approach to client service was particularly attractive.

The subject matter—immigration law—was daunting for me. My experience was limited to helping my nanny bring her Filipino husband to the United States. I was stunned at the complexity of the process, the confusing rules, multitude of forms, and amount of red tape. I was fortunate that one of my Troutman partners practices in the area and was very generous with his time in helping me navigate the process. That one foray was eye-opening about the value of having experienced counsel, but at the same time a reminder of what a difference *any* lawyer can make in helping a non-native English speaking, non-US educated client through this complex process.

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Mark Newman (ATL)



Seth Erickson (ATL)



Lance Alford (ATL)

My pro bono case was probably very similar to a lot of other Tahirih [Violence Against Women Act \(VAWA\)](#) cases—the client, Amira\*, came to the United States in an arranged marriage and quickly learned that her husband had not only misrepresented his affluence, but was also an abuser whose violence eventually caused her to flee the marriage and end any further contact with him. Our biggest asset was the fact that she had had the courage to call the police after a beating and her husband was criminally prosecuted for domestic battery. As we mined the court records, we found more evidence of his abusive and unrepentant nature, which was very helpful in corroborating Amira’s story. Our biggest challenge was the fact that several years had passed since she fled the marriage and we lacked key information about her husband’s immigration status or even his current whereabouts.



Easily the biggest “highlight” of this case was Amira herself. Though she had been through a terrible ordeal that left deep wounds in her self-image and confidence, she is very bright and highly educated, and played a large role in the development and prosecution of our case. She was a pleasure to work with in every way—providing input and documents promptly, contacting relatives and friends to serve as supporters, making multiple trips to see me and collect other supporting materials. With Tahirih’s help, she had sought psychological counseling, which I perceived as a clear asset not only to our presentation but, more importantly, to Amira herself as she embarks on her new life in the United States.

Another highlight for me was the opportunity to work with colleagues at my firm, as well as at Tahirih, in a new area. I received valuable input from my Atlanta immigration partner, **Mark Newman**. Amira had lived with her husband in Illinois, and luckily my firm recently gained a Chicago office through a merger with another firm. I got to work with a junior associate in that office, **Seth Erickson**, who volunteered to comb through the court records for information about the husband’s immigration status. I also learned that our Atlanta office has a private investigator on staff, **Lance Alford**, and he provided some great insights as well as research assistance as we gathered facts to respond to USCIS questions. It was great to be able to tap the resources of our big firm to help Amira. And of course there was the wonderful support and expertise offered by Tahirih attorneys, who were incredibly knowledgeable, patient, and generous with their time and counsel.

As someone who has practiced law in the same field (federal energy regulation) for over 25 years, I am very comfortable in my narrow field of practice. It was both humbling and energizing to step into a totally foreign field and work collaboratively with people who are much younger than me but also are a lot more knowledgeable and experienced in this field. I learned so much, especially from Tahirih's attorneys, but also from my young Chicago colleague, who offered some great advice he picked up from a friend who had worked on a VAWA case like mine. It was a good reminder to seek out and be open to different ideas and approaches.

Personally, I have so much admiration for Amira—a respected professional in her own country, she went through a terrible, degrading ordeal in this country. She has suffered emotional and economic hardship here, and yet is full of optimism and determined to put the past behind her and start a new life. She's an inspiration to me, and I'm so proud to have been able to help her reach her goals.

*\*Name has been changed to protect privacy.*

## Awards and Recognitions



DC Partner **Merril Hirsh**  
accepting DC Appleseed Award

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, DC Appleseed honored Troutman Sanders at its annual awards dinner for the Firm's pro bono work on the DC Attorney General project in which DC Appleseed advised DC's City Council on how it might change the method of selecting its Attorney General. This project led to last year's referendum on electing the DC Attorney General.



DC Associate **Whitney Lindahl**  
at the Appleseed Awards Dinner

## Awards and Recognitions (cont'd)



Nicole Edmonds



Rebecca Blitstein

AARP Legal Counsel for the Elderly recognized D.C. associates **Nicole Edmonds and Rebecca Blitstein** in its newsletter for their pro bono work preparing Last Will & Testaments and/or Financial and Health Care Powers of Attorney for low-income, older D.C. residents. Scores of disenfranchised seniors would be unable to ensure that their affairs would be handled according to their express wishes as specified in their will without the assistance of volunteer attorneys like **Nicole and Rebecca**.

## Troutman Sanders Celebrates Pro Bono Month

“Billable, Pro Bono: I Do Both” was the theme of this year’s pro bono month. Firmwide, we distributed 78 blue, 107 red and 12 white ribbons in June. The yellow ribbons, new to pro bono month, were provided to folks who have billed both billable and pro bono hours this calendar year. If you have not yet been able to “do both” this year, please ask your neighbor who has a yellow ribbon to share the secrets to their success or give me a call.

– Mark VanderBroek (ext. 11-3432)

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On June 21, the Diversity Committee, the Pro Bono Committee and **Steve Riddell, Atlanta office Managing Partner**, hosted a Reception to celebrate the upcoming start of construction of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights (“the *Center*”). *Doug Shipman*, the Executive Director of the Center, provided an update on the construction plans, as well as a report on where the Center’s fundraising stands. Doug also spoke about

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Ira Genberg



Meredith Watts



Frank Riggs

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what exhibits the Center will highlight initially, as well as about the programs/conferences the Center plans to host to make it an active player in Atlanta (rather than just a museum) once it is open and operating. Steve briefly discussed the pro bono legal work that **Ira Genberg** (ATL), **Meredith Watts** (ATL) and **Frank Riggs** (ATL) did with respect to the construction contracts relating to the Center.



National Center for Civil and Human Rights  
Atlanta, Georgia

## Troutman Sanders Celebrates Pro Bono Month (cont'd)

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Atlanta held the most widely attended CLE this year. Facilitated by partner **Jeff Nix** (ATL) and **Gwen Coubertier** (ATL), DeKalb Cancer Project Coordinator, the June 7<sup>th</sup> Wills CLE attracted over 65 lawyers, paralegals, staff and clients. Guest speakers included Atlanta Legal Aid Society Breast Cancer Legal Project Director Haley Schwartz and DeKalb Medical Center's Oncology Social Worker Marjorie Osheroff.

Thank you to **Raul Castro**, the pro bono committee's volunteer photographer.



As part of Pro Bono Month -- and as one more way to encourage everyone to get involved (or get more involved) in pro bono -- everyone in Atlanta who provided any pro bono legal work during the month of June (and who already parks in the building) was entered into a drawing to receive upgraded parking (at no additional cost) to a reserved spot for the month of July! Congratulations to Atlanta associates **Michael Wall** and **Byron Kirkpatrick** who were selected to receive their own "rock star" reserved parking spot in the building for the month of August.



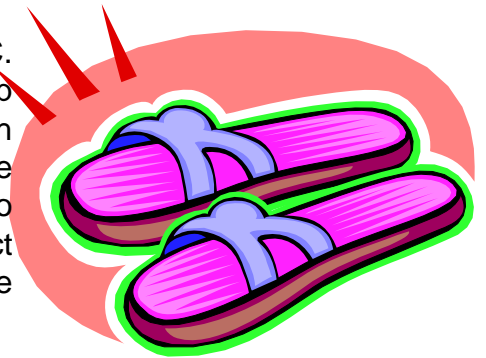
## BILLABLE PRO BONO

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In addition to raffling tickets to the August 2<sup>nd</sup> Atlanta Dream (women's Basketball) to several lawyers, paralegals and staff, the Pro Bono Committee donated two tickets to the August 2<sup>nd</sup> Atlanta Dream basketball game to a pro bono client, Sporty Girls. Sporty Girls' mission is to cultivate, enrich and challenge young women to participate in non-traditional sports, while developing and fostering lifestyle skills.

In honor of Pro Bono month, the D.C. office had a "pro bono jeans or flip flop day on June 30 and raised \$527 which was donated to the Tahirih Justice Center, one of the firm's pro bono clients. Tahirih's mission is to protect immigrant women and children who are fleeing from domestic violence.



## Atlanta Pro Bono News



Jeff Nix

Atlanta partner **Jeff Nix** was the guest speaker at the Atlanta Legal Aid Society's Annual breakfast. Jeff passionately spoke of the personal satisfaction he receives from his pro bono work preparing wills and advance directives for stage Cancer patients.



Jen Blackburn

Atlanta Associate **Jen Blackburn** was appointed in April 2011 to the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation's newly formed Junior Board of Directors. The Board was being created to help raise the profile of the Foundation with young legal professionals. Partner **Rebecca Shanlever** is a member of AVLF's main board.



Rebecca Shanlever



## Atlanta Pro Bono News (cont'd)

Shakara Barnes



Erin Graham

“Ms. W.” is an elderly woman who takes care of three grandkids, despite being immobile for health reasons. In early 2010, Ms. W., a Section 8 housing recipient, and her family moved into a home in College Park, Georgia. At the time of her move-in, Ms. W. paid an \$800 security deposit to the landlord. The home was a disaster. The client complained about a terrible smell, and there were even flies entering the home through the air-conditioner! Mildew abounded in the home. Despite several attempts to have the landlord repair the house, the landlord failed to do so. Ms. W. received some help when a Section 8 inspector, representatives from Healthy Grandparents, and eventually Congressman John Lewis intervened on her behalf. She and her family were transferred to another house.

After the move-out, however, the landlord refused to return Ms. W.’s security deposit. Ms. W. reached out to the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation

(AVLF). Because of her injury, Ms. W was unable to attend the AVLF Saturday Morning Lawyers session, and sent her son in her place. There, the son met with Atlanta associate **Erin Graham**, who guided him through the intake process and gathered all pertinent information. This was the first key step in the security-deposit recovery process.

Later, Ms. W.’s case was given to Atlanta associate **Shakara Barnes**, who met with the son and discussed strategy. They agreed on an aggressive approach. **Shakara** sent a demand letter which detailed Georgia’s security deposit laws—among them, a provision that would have provided for treble damages in this case. After a couple of telephone conversations with the landlord, **Shakara** was able to recover the full \$800 security deposit for Ms. W. Upon hearing the news, Ms. W. began to cry and told **Shakara**, “God’s surely going to bless you. You don’t know how much this means to us.”

# Atlanta Pro Bono News (cont'd)



Atlanta Associate Brad Davis featured on CNN



## Illegal No More: Georgia Teen Leaves U.S. to Try to Become American “The Right Way”

Atlanta associate **Brad Davis**' pro bono representation of Dalton, Ga., high school soccer player Bernabe Rangel obtained widespread media coverage in May, including appearances on [CNN](#) with host Don Lemon, Univision's [Primer Impacto](#), and in print in a *Mundo Hispanico* [article](#).

Rangel, who was brought to this country when he was six years old and had since made a life for himself with the hopes of going to college, was an illegal immigrant that had ended up in the hands of U.S. immigration authorities after a run in with the law last year. **Davis**, a friend of

Rangel's high school soccer coach, helped him navigate current legal immigration laws and sign his voluntary departure back to Mexico in the hopes of allowing for legal reentry into the U.S. in the future.

“We wanted to do everything possible as to not negatively impact Bernabe's future return to this country,” said **Davis** in *Mundo Hispanico*. “Unfortunately, we are working with the current existing laws of this country; the DREAM Act is not yet a law and cases in which students get to stay in the country are the exception and not the majority.”



Southeast Whitfield High School's Bernabe Rangel plays in his last soccer match before returning to Mexico.



## Portland Pro Bono News



Kim Medford, Of Counsel

The Portland office has recently begun a relationship with a local pro bono coordinator. The Lewis & Clark Law School's Small Business Legal Clinic (SBLC) provides business transactional legal advice to new and emerging businesses, primarily those owned by women, minorities, and recent immigrants. The SBLC works closely with other [small business service providers](#) to help complete the circle of support to new and emerging businesses. Portland attorneys **Kim Medford** and **Jasmine Hites** recently attended an initial session with the SBLC and have been matched with a pro bono client – a vegan cheese-making enterprise that, while in its infancy, has the potential to create its own distinctive niche in the natural foods market. Should the relationship with SBLC work well, we are hoping to continue to help aspiring entrepreneurs in the Portland area.



Jasmine Hites, Associate

## Orange County Pro Bono News



Melissa Perez, Associate

During pro bono month, Orange County Associate **Melissa Perez** and her sister-in-law volunteered to participate in the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law pro bono initiative at the Cherokee Point Elementary School in San Diego. Volunteers participated in a ½ day consultation clinic for parents on discipline, special education, district policies, and discrimination. Volunteers provided parents with advice on site and were asked to follow-up with the parents via phone to determine if the parent's questions had been answered.

## Richmond Pro Bono News



David Cohn



Bill Derry



Fred Palmore

### Goodwill Community Development Financial Institutions

Goodwill Industries is a network of 165 community-based, autonomous non-profit organizations in the US and Canada under the umbrella of Goodwill International Inc. (“GII”) located in Washington, D.C. They together provide educational, training and job placement services to people with obstacles to employment. To fund their mission, individual Goodwills collect donated clothing, household items, computers and automobiles to sell in more than 1,500 retail stores and bargain outlets, and at weekly auctions, and provide services on a fee basis to public and private businesses and to government.

To better fulfill its mission, GII proposes to have individual Goodwills double their network of stores over the next 5 years. However, individual Goodwills expect to have difficulty arranging adequate bank financing for this effort.

In response, a group of Goodwills including our client Goodwill Industries of Central Virginia, Inc., with GII’s support, has asked our Firm to help it form a Community Development Financial Institution (“CDFI”) under the US Department of the Treasury. Its mission will be to provide risk capital, technical assistance and commercial loans to individual Goodwills so that they can, in accordance with CDFI Certification Criteria, develop facilities such as retail stores and jobs centers to serve Target Markets having high poverty, high unemployment and low-income Targeted Populations. Gil expects that this CDFI will grow quickly from closing 20 loans nationwide during its 1<sup>st</sup> year to more than 100 such loans during its 5<sup>th</sup> year and will have by its 5<sup>th</sup> year at least \$200 Million in capital from government, banks, foundations and others. Examples of successful CDFIs include the Local Initiatives Support Corporation formed by the Ford Foundation and the Enterprise Fund formed by the Rouse Corporation.

A team led by **David Cohn**, **Bill Derry** and **Fred Palmore** in our Richmond office will undertake the legal work to form the CDFI and close its loans. Goodwill will pay our Firm for a substantial part of this work and our Firm will undertake the remainder on a pro bono basis.



Cherokee Point Elementary School

## Troutman Lawyers Partner with Animal Legal Defense Fund

Atlanta partner **Jeff Nix** is supervising a multi-office effort working with the Animal Legal Defense Fund to petition the U.S. Dept of Transportation for a rule change pertaining to reporting animal deaths. Team members include: Atlanta Associates **Robert Madayag** and **Jen Blackburn**, **Andrea Sullivan** and **Lynne Rhode** in Richmond, and **Mary Katherine Houston** in New York. This action came as a result of the following incident:



It was already hot in Tulsa -- over 85 degrees -- when the 15 puppies were loaded into the cargo hold of an airline jet on the morning of August 3, 2010. After the flight reached Chicago, the people who unloaded the plane clearly realized they had an emergency situation. The puppies were rushed to a veterinarian but for almost half of them, it was too late. Seven of these defenseless animals died.

## Troutman Lawyers Partner with Animal Legal Defense Fund (cont'd)



Jeff Nix (ATL)

As the legal arm of the animal protection movement, ALDF is determined to insure that no more animals share the sad fate of death in the cargo hold of an airplane. Not only do they want to hold the individuals who sent these animals to their deaths responsible, but they want to ensure that policies are implemented that will hold airlines accountable for the death of all animals on their planes.



Jen Blackburn (ATL)



Robert Madayag  
(ATL)



Andrea Sullivan  
(RIC)



Lynne Rhode (RIC)



Mary Katherine  
Houston (NYC)

## Chicago Office Partners with Turner Broadcasting Systems, Inc. to conduct Research on School Discipline



Better Attendance. Better Students. Better Life.



John Costello (CHI)



Kendrah Mathews  
TBS Paralegal

Chicago associate **John Costello** supervised summer associate Bill Pipal and Kendrah Mathews, a paralegal with Turner Broadcasting Systems, Inc. Employment Group in Atlanta, on a project referred by the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. The Lawyers Committee identified the largest 25 school districts in the country and the team conducted research on school discipline, dress codes, English language learners, ability grouping, and graduation requirements for the Chicago Public Schools as most of the policy/regulations are set at the local level. Other firms have taken on this project for the other 24 largest 25 school districts in the country.

One of our clients, Turner Broadcasting Systems, Inc., has expressed an interest in partnering with us on many of pro bono initiatives. Kendrah Mathews also participates along with other Turner paralegals and attorneys in the firm's Wills Pro Bono Project. When I asked Kendrah to describe her experience, she said, "The whole experience was informative and enlightening. I was able to research and better understand the Chicago Public Schools requirements for various issues and compare it to the Illinois statewide guidelines. It reminded me that some information is given but the rest is discovered."