

2010 National Pro Bono Week PBA Pro Bono Awards

The Pennsylvania Bar Association honored scores of lawyers as it presented 17 of its Pro Bono Awards during the 2010 National Pro Bono Week that ran from Oct. 24 to Oct. 30. Pennsylvania's celebration of National Pro Bono Week is an opportunity to highlight the difference lawyers make in communities, to recruit and train more pro bono volunteers and to acknowledge the partnerships that form the basis for so many of the private bar's successful pro bono efforts. The awards were presented by Pennsylvania Bar Association leaders and PBA Pro Bono Coordinator David K. Trevaskis from Oct. 26 through Nov. 4 as part of an extended Pro Bono Week series of events.

The Pennsylvania Bar Association Pro Bono Awards recognize lawyers for noteworthy voluntary efforts to provide free or reduced-fee legal representation to low-income Pennsylvanians.

The award winners are as follows:

In Berks County on Oct. 26, **Michael C. Boland** was honored at a lunch and CLE put on by the local Bar for steadfastly supporting MidPenn Legal Services and its clients by participating in pro bono. He accepts cases in a variety of areas, including subsidized housing cases that few private attorneys handle. On more than one occasion he has successfully appealed unemployment compensation losses before a referee to the Board of Review. As well, he accepts family law cases including custody and protection from abuse.

In Franklin County on Oct. 27, **Kevin M. Taccino** was honored at a lunch by the Franklin County Bar for regularly handling pro bono cases for MidPenn Legal Services, Franklin County Legal Services and the Law Offices of WIN Victim Services. Kevin has offered immediate help to pro bono clients. Kevin also participates in the bar association pro bono programs. Kevin was also instrumental in developing the Wills for Heroes program in Franklin County.

Also on Oct, 27, in Bucks County, **Linda Shick** was presented with a PBA Pro Bono Award at the Pro Bono Reception of the Bucks County Bar for going above and beyond in her pro bono commitment as she is often heard telling legal aid folks to "load me up". She will represent five or more plaintiffs in protection from abuse cases, if necessary, on any given hearing date. She always makes herself available for hearing dates around the holidays when it is particularly difficult to schedule attorneys. In the snowstorms over the past winter, Linda called the Legal Aid office to offer her assistance in representing plaintiffs if the court was open as she was "right in town and could walk to the court." Each of the victims of domestic violence she represents receives the benefits of her years of legal experience. She often makes herself available to the victims by phone, even after the hearing date, to answer any follow-up questions and guide them through the maze of the legal system.

In Schuylkill County on Oct. 28, **Jeffrey Bowe** was the honoree as part of the Bench/Bar Conference for the local Bar was given over to celebrating pro bono.. He has participated in the local county pro bono program for several years and he has helped numerous clients obtain divorce decrees. Jeffrey treats all his clients with respect and by supplying pro bono services in the high need area of family law, he makes a huge difference in the access to justice for Schuylkill County.

Also on Oct. 28, Lebanon County hosted a special reception at the Lebanon County Courthouse under the auspices of the local Bar to honor **John H. Witmoyer**. John always agrees to take bankruptcy cases when the local legal aid office contacts him. The clients who have been referred to John are always extremely complimentary of his professionalism and his caring nature. As the economy struggles, the

service of attorneys with John's expertise has been a great gift to the neediest among us. This flurry of award presentations ended with a flourish in Scranton on Nov. 4 when Lackawanna County honored its pro bono work and the following lawyers and law firms were celebrated.

The firm of **Abrahamsen Conaboy & Abrahamsen** demonstrated outstanding commitment to pro bono service. During the past year, each of the attorneys actively practicing in the firm's Scranton office accepted pro bono referrals from Lackawanna Pro Bono. The five attorneys are Edwin (Ned) A. Abrahamsen, Edwin (Chip) A. Abrahamsen, Jr., James Conaboy, Kevin Conaboy and Michael Parker

Powell Law has a commitment to pro bono service that was demonstrated by the fact that, during the past year, each of the attorneys in the firm at that time accepted pro bono referrals from Lackawanna Pro Bono. Those attorneys are James J. Powell III, Christopher T. Powell, Jr., Mark J. Powell, Christopher J. Osborne and Bruce S. Zero.

The **Mazzoni & Karam** firm's outstanding commitment to pro bono service was demonstrated by the fact that each attorney in the firm accepted pro bono cases during the past year. Those attorneys are Gerard Karam, Paul Mazzoni, John Petorak, Rocco Valvano and Christopher Szewczyk.

Kelley & Polishan's outstanding commitment to pro bono service was demonstrated by the fact that each of the attorneys in the firm accepted pro bono referrals from Lackawanna Pro Bono during the past year. Those attorneys are Eugene Kelley, Timothy Polishan, Carrie Buscarini, David Solfanelli and Patrick Walsh.

The firm of **Dougherty Leventhal & Price** demonstrated outstanding commitment to pro bono service. During the past year, each attorney in the firm's Lackawanna County office accepted pro bono referrals from Lackawanna Pro Bono, Inc. Those attorneys are Thomas Cummings, John Finnerty, Sean McDonough, Paul Oven, Joseph Price and Judith Price.

Charles F. Wilson has shown outstanding commitment to pro bono service by representing numerous pro bono clients referred to him by Lackawanna Pro Bono over the years. In one matter, he represented a pro bono client who was being evicted from public housing. Eviction would have been disastrous to this client, because private housing was well beyond his financial means. Because of Charles' dedication and hard work, the eviction was prevented.