

Pro Bono Week: Legal Profession at its Best

AS A LAWYER, I'M SURE we've heard every bad lawyer joke there is, every one of which ends with a punch line that disparages us. What is lost in all the jokes and the stereotype of the greedy lawyer is how much lawyers give of their time and expertise to help others, just because it's the right thing to do.

The term *pro bono publico* means "in the public interest," and the public interest bar, which does so much for the poor and downtrodden in our community, relies on the help of pro bono attorneys to handle the overwhelming number of people who walk through their doors in need

By Amy Ginensky



of legal assistance. The Bar Foundation gathers statistics on pro bono each year from the legal services organizations we fund, and they reported that last year more than 60,000 hours were donated by private bar attorneys who handled more than 5,000 cases. Five thousand individuals

and families helped through the judicial system because of the uncompensated efforts of Philadelphia lawyers.

Despite these figures and the astounding contribution of time, talent and energy they represent, there is still more that needs to be done. According to a report issued by the Pennsylvania IOLTA Board,



WebCheck

Please visit the Philadelphia Bar Foundation's new web site at PhilaBarFoundation.org.

Pennsylvania legal aid intake workers must turn away one out of every two people who apply for legal assistance because the legal services organizations lack the resources to handle their cases. And, in this economy, the need for pro bono help is even greater, for at the same time that funding for legal services is shrinking, the need among the poor and working poor for those services is increasing.

Hence, Pro Bono Celebration Week. This week of festivities honors the pro bono contribution of Philadelphia's lawyers and offers an occasion to learn more about the interesting and professionally challenging pro bono opportunities that

exist with Philadelphia's public interest organizations. Coordinated by the Public Interest Section's Delivery of Legal Services Committee and the Law School Outreach and Law Firm Pro Bono Committees of the Philadelphia Bar Association, Pro Bono Celebration Week is planned in collaboration with the ABA's National Pro Bono Celebration.

Sara Woods, executive director of Philadelphia VIP and a co-chair of the DLSC Pro Bono Subcommittee, called the National Pro Bono Week celebration in Philadelphia "a microcosm" of the opportunities volunteers can find here

continued on page 21

Memorial, Honorary Gifts Recognized

From time to time, the Philadelphia Bar Foundation receives contributions or a fund in memory of someone who has died or, on a happier note, to mark a special occasion or honor an achievement. Philadelphia lawyers are a special breed. We honor them when we make a gift to the Bar Foundation that is then used to assist Philadelphia's public interest lawyers and the clients to whom they provide legal services.

In Memory

Given by **Amy B. Ginensky** and **Andrew R. Rogoff** in memory of **Samuel Barson**, father of **Leon R. Barson**, a partner at Pepper Hamilton LLP.

Given by **U.S. District Court Senior Judge Norma L. Shapiro** in memory of **Toby Cutner**, wife of **Clyde Cutner**, of Coffey, Kaye, Myers and Olley.

Given by the **Philadelphia Bar Association** in memory of **Larry Frankel**, who served as Legislative Director for the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania from 1992 through 2008 and Executive Director from 1996 to 2001. At the time of his death, Larry was the State Legislative Counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union in its Washington Legislative Office. A passionate fighter for civil liberties, Larry was a respected member of the Public Interest Section's Delivery of Legal Services Committee.

Given by the **Philadelphia Bar Association** and by **Deborah Gross** in memory of **M. Mark Mandel**, former president of the Philadelphia Trial Lawyers Association who received the association's distinguished-service award in 1976 as "the trial lawyer who does the impossible."

Given by **Deborah Gross** in memory of **Albert W. Schiffrin**, an active member of his community and a respected member of the bar who was inducted into the Philadelphia Bar Association's 65-year club in 2007.

Given by **Amy B. Ginensky** and **Andrew R. Rogoff** in memory of **Henry Tate**, father of **Joseph A. Tate**, a partner at Dechert LLP.

In Honor

Given by **Steven H. Korman** in honor of **Robert Grossman** of Korman Communities.

Given by **David Minkoff** and **Deborah Minkoff** to honor the kindness and generosity of **Ed Hazzouri** and **Mary Viclas**.

Given by **Steven H. Korman** in honor of **Henry Kuller** of Blank Rome LLP.

Pro Bono Week Calendar

Monday, Oct. 26

- **Chancellor's Forum on Prisoner Pro Bono Projects:** 12 p.m., Philadelphia Bar Association, 1101 Market St. Register at philadelphiabar.org.
- **Pro Bono Open House Fair:** 5 p.m., Duane Morris LLP, 30 S. 17th St. To register contact Nicole Friant at anfriant@duanemorris.com.

Tuesday, Oct. 27

- **VIP Pro Bono Opportunities Day:** 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., Montgomery, McCracken, Walker, & Rhoads LLP, 123 S. Broad St. Program will feature CLE training in mortgage foreclosure, public housing and quiet title. To register, call 215-523-9550 or e-mail phillyvip@phillyvip.org.
- **Homeless Advocacy Project Legal Clinic,** 10 a.m., UHCH, Penn Center, St. Agatha/St. James, 38th and Chestnut streets. Register with Marsha Cohen at marsha@philalegal.org.

Wednesday, Oct. 28

- **Support Center for Child Advocates CLE training program on How to Handle a Child Abuse Case:** 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., The CLE Conference Center, Wanamaker Building, 13th and Market streets, 10th floor. Register with PBI at 1-800-247-4724.
- **Homeless Advocacy Project Legal Clinic:** 10 a.m., Kirkbride/Traveler's

Aid, 111 N. 49th St. Register with Marsha Cohen at marsha@philalegal.org.

Thursday, Oct. 29

- **SeniorLAW Center HelpLine volunteer training program:** 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Fox Rothschild LLP, 2000 Market St., Register with Sue Wasserkrug at 215-701-3216 or swasserkrug@seniorlawcenter.org.
- **Homeless Advocacy Project Legal Clinic:** 10 a.m., Eliza Shirley Shelter, 1320 Arch St. Register with Marsha Cohen at marsha@philalegal.org.

Friday, Oct. 30

- **SeniorLAW Center training program Personal Planning 101: Wills, Living Wills, and Powers of Attorney for Older Pennsylvanians:** 12 to 3 p.m., Duane Morris LLP, 30 S. 17th St. Register with Roxanne Crowley at rcrowley@seniorlawcenter.org.
- **Capstone CLE Forum - Pro Bono: Where Do We Go From Here:** 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., University of Pennsylvania Law School, 34th and Chestnut streets. 3 CLE credits (pending approval). Register with Arlene Finkelstein at arfinkelstein@law.upenn.edu.
- **Homeless Advocacy Project Legal Clinic:** 10 a.m., St. John's Hospice, 1221 Race St. Register with Marsha Cohen at marsha@philalegal.org.

Foundation

continued from page 20

all year round. "There are public interest agencies in Philadelphia that work with those most in need in our community. Whether a volunteer attorney is interested in helping disadvantaged children or the homeless or in working on women's issues or housing concerns, this week will introduce all the different ways there are to get involved," she said.

The week kicks off Monday, Oct. 26 with a lunchtime Chancellor's Forum on prisoner pro bono projects, moderated by Bar Association Chancellor Sayde Ladov. Also on Oct. 26, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Morris Café at Duane Morris, attorneys from across the city will meet over food and beverages at the Pro Bono Open House to network with legal services

VIP Honors Stanley Askin

THIS MONTH PHILADELPHIA VIP recognizes Stanley R. Askin, MD, JD, of



Dr. Stanley Askin

the Law Office of Stanley R. Askin, for his outstanding volunteer assistance to VIP clients.

Since 2003, Askin has assisted VIP clients in a variety of matters. He makes time to represent VIP clients amidst his demanding schedule as a practicing hand surgeon. He often takes cases outside of his general practice area to ensure VIP clients achieve access to justice. He consistently takes VIP's most difficult guardianship cases, supporting VIP's priority of maintaining family stability. Through his involvement in civil forfeiture and landlord/tenant matters, Askin contributes to VIP's goal of preventing homelessness. By his vigorous defense of clients in auto accident and consumer cases, he labors to maintain income and economic stability for VIP clients. In one recent collection defense case, Askin relentlessly advocated for his disabled client who was sued by a bank for more than \$40,000. The suit resulted from a car note the client co-signed for her brother-in-law on which he then defaulted. Askin helped the client by obtaining a favorable ruling on a non-suit motion. Without his counsel and intervention, the client could have faced a lien or forced sale of her home for the judgment. For his commitment and dedication to VIP clients in many crucial areas, Philadelphia VIP offers its heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Stanley Askin.

agencies and learn about pro bono opportunities. Other events throughout the week include several pro bono trainings offered for CLE credit presented by Philadelphia VIP, Support Center for Child Advocates and SeniorLAW Center, and four legal clinics sponsored by Homeless Advocacy Project. The full schedule is located on the Public Interest Section's

page at Philadelphiabar.org.

In these columns I often urge you to give financially to legal services (most especially to the Bar Foundation), so this column might seem like a change of theme. But it really isn't. Lawyers have a special responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to our justice system, and fulfilling that responsibility requires

contributions of time as well as money. So I hope to see you at one of the Pro Bono Week events and urge you to join the thousands of lawyers each year who provide pro bono services in Philadelphia.

Amy B. Ginensky, a partner at Pepper Hamilton LLP, is president of the Philadelphia Bar Foundation.

A large, framed advertisement with a sepia-toned background. At the top, the text reads "Philadelphia Bar Foundation invites you to the 2009 Andrew Hamilton Benefit" in a serif font. Below this, the date "Saturday, Nov. 21, 2009" is centered. The central focus is a large, ornate logo for the "World Fair For Philadelphians". The logo features the words "MAKING THE" in a small banner above "WORLD FAIR" in large, bold, serif letters, all enclosed in a decorative border. Below "WORLD FAIR" is a ribbon containing the text "For Philadelphians". The background of the advertisement shows a historical scene of the World Fair with a large building and people. At the bottom, the text reads "Please join us at Please Touch Museum® at Memorial Hall Site of the first official World's Fair in the United States" and "Visit PhilaBarFoundation.org to purchase tickets".