

# Metro Pro Bono Advocate

*A publication of the Pro Bono Committee of The Bar Association of the City of Richmond*

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Fall 2007

## Pro Bono Clearinghouse Reception to Become Annual Event

Troutman Sanders hosted a reception in June at their Richmond headquarters for the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation's Pro Bono Clearinghouse. The purpose of the reception was to provide an opportunity for nonprofit executives to learn more about the Clearinghouse and to meet with some of the volunteer attorneys.

The Pro Bono Clearinghouse program provides a link between nonprofits and the legal community in the Richmond metropolitan area. The Clearinghouse responds to requests by nonprofits for legal advice in such areas as preparing and amending organizational documents, contracts, tax, charitable giving, employment and labor law, finance, buying and selling property, leasing matters, intellectual property and mergers.

The reception was so well received by both the nonprofit executives and volunteer attorneys that plans are underway to make this forum an annual event.

Jennifer Boyden, Executive Director of Community-Based Services, and Jason Young, Executive Director of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Richmond, shared details about their experiences with the Pro Bono Clearinghouse. Other nonprofits represented at the function included Virginia Holocaust Museum, Comfort Zone Camp, Lifelong Learning Institute, Central Virginia Health Services, RX Partnership, Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation, Henrico CASA and HOME.

See page 3 for a testimonial by the director of a non-profit organization who has benefited from assistance provided by the Pro Bono Clearinghouse.

## U of R Law School Launches New Pro Bono Program and Inner City Initiative

The University of Richmond Law School is cultivating a culture of pro bono service among its student body through the creation of its new Pro Bono Services program and its collaboration with the Center for Civic Engagement on the Richmond Families Initiative.

Pro-bono publico work, literally "for the public good," is an integral part of what it means to be an attorney. In recognition of the importance of giving back to the community, the Law School created the Pro Bono Services program to connect the skills and talents of its student body with the needs of the Richmond community. Tara Louise Casey, the program's inaugural director, views the program as a vehicle for promoting and coordinating pro bono activities of law students with area lawyers, legal service agencies, and nonprofits. A former chair of the Richmond Bar Association's Pro Bono Services Committee, Ms. Casey joins the law faculty after serving as an Assistant United States Attorney with the Eastern District of Virginia; she is also a past recipient of the Richmond Bar Association's John C. Kenny Pro Bono Award and the YWCA's Outstanding Women of Achievement Award in Law. Through the Pro Bono Services program, Ms. Casey hopes that students will develop a habit of service that will continue into their professional careers.

Ms. Casey will also work in conjunction with Angela Swanson of the Center for Civic Engagement in a coordinated program called the Richmond Families Initiative (RFI). The RFI is a joint program supported by the University of Richmond's Center for Civic Engagement and the Law School, which will  
*continued on page 3*



*Will Homiller, Troutman Sanders volunteer attorney, Ann Maust, President, New Visions New Ventures and Steve Northup, Troutman Sanders Pro Bono Partner and Director of the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation discussed 501(c)(3) issues. Approximately 50 non-profit groups participated in the the reception.*

## Local Law Firm Spearheads Effort to Assist Hispanics

Every month for the past three years, a team of Williams Mullen attorneys and staff, led by partner Bob Redmond, helps dozens of members of the Hispanic community with a variety of legal needs through a unique partnership with the Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (VAHCC). The relationship began in March of 2004, when Redmond suggested that his firm collaborate with the VAHCC to offer monthly pro bono legal clinics to members of Virginia's Hispanic community.

The Hispanic community has the same legal issues as everyone else, but also faces a myriad of challenges, from no knowledge of the U.S. legal system to limited language proficiency. During these clinics, firm attorneys assist with everything from immigration to housing issues, with unpaid wages claims making up a significant number of the cases. Since its inception, Redmond and his team of pro bono attorneys and staff have assisted over 1,000 clients and obtained judgments in excess of \$100,000.

These attorneys' pro bono work has gone beyond the monthly legal aid clinics. Through their partnership with the VAHCC, Williams Mullen was invited to co-sponsor a public citizenship fair last year. Along side the Virginia Poverty Law Center and Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce, Williams Mullen offered free legal advice to immigrants that were eligible to apply for citizenship. The event was so successful that it tripled the number of attendees from the previous year.

The clinic is held the third Monday of the month from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the VAHCC headquarters. The address and contact information for the VAHCC can be found at [www.vahcc.com](http://www.vahcc.com). Worker's compensation, domestic relation disputes and criminal matters are not handled at the clinic although referrals are provided, if possible.

To learn more about the VAHCC Legal Clinic, contact Bob Redmond at [redmond@williamsmullen.com](mailto:redmond@williamsmullen.com).

## Housing Law Program Begins New Volunteer Cycle

The Pro Bono Committee of the Richmond Bar Association and the Legal Aid Justice Center will hold a Pro Bono Housing Law training session on Tuesday, December 4, 2007 from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The training will be held at Troutman Sanders, 1001 Haxall Point, 15<sup>th</sup> floor. Dinner will be provided. Participants will receive 3 hours of CLE credit.

The Pro Bono Housing Law Program, which is administered by the Legal Aid Justice Center and the Richmond Bar Association Pro Bono Committee, provides crucial pro bono services to indigent clients throughout

the greater Richmond area who are facing the loss of housing or other basic leasehold services. Pro bono housing law volunteers represent these indigent tenants in landlord tenant disputes.

For more information about volunteering for the program, please contact RBA Pro Bono Committee Housing Project Chairs Steve Northup and Carole Timberlake, both of Troutman Sanders, at (804) 697-1200. To register for the CLE, please contact Carole Timberlake at 697-1489 or [carole.timberlake@troutmansanders.com](mailto:carole.timberlake@troutmansanders.com).

## Drive-To-Work Needs Volunteers

Drive-To-Work is a newly-formed Virginia non-profit corporation which assists low income and previously incarcerated persons to restore their driving privileges so they can drive to work and keep a job. Clients pay no legal fees, but are responsible for all fees and costs paid to DMV or the courts, plus a \$100.00 administrative fee.

Drive-To-Work receives applications and driving records, meets with clients and develops plans to restore their driving privileges. Legal and administra-

tive experience is critical to implementing these plans. The most frequent cause of license suspension is not driving related; rather, it's the failure to pay fines and costs. We work with clients to pay or establish payment plans which will restore the licenses, as well as assist with court petitions on driving-related issues.

If you would like to offer your services to Drive-To-Work, please contact O. Randolph Rollins, President, at 804-358-6727, or [rrollins@drivetowork.org](mailto:rrollins@drivetowork.org). For more information, see [www.drivetowork.org](http://www.drivetowork.org).



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## Nonprofit Executive Praises Pro Bono Clearinghouse Program

The Pro Bono Clearinghouse has been an invaluable resource to A Grace Place Adult Care Center. As a non-profit health and human service agency, we have severely limited resources which restrict our ability to retain an attorney. Yes, typical of many businesses, we have many legal issues which threaten our stability and ability to fulfill our mission of providing affordable and accessible community based care. Recently, the Pro Bono Clearinghouse has assisted us with labor issues that are very time consuming and require expertise way beyond our skill set. The staff can concentrate on their primary role: providing the highest quality of day time care for the elderly and disabled, and the Board of Directors can focus on oversight and ensuring financial stability.

Thank you for providing this priceless service to agencies like ours. You are literally providing the safety net that supports our ability to serve the community's most frail and vulnerable.

Lynn Seward, CEO  
A Grace Place Adult Day Care Center

## RBA's Pro Bono Committee Solicits Contributions for CVLAS

The Association wishes to acknowledge the following firms who have responded to the RBA's annual request for financial support to Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, Inc. as of October 1, 2007:

Allen, Allen, Allen & Allen  
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## New Law School Program Aids Families

*continued from page 1*

combine the efforts of law and undergraduate students to address legal and social problems facing families in metropolitan Richmond. The goal of the RFI program is to address pressing community needs through a combination of pro bono legal services provided by law students and attorneys, service learning, service and research undertaken by undergraduates and faculty members, and rigorous academic assessment of the effectiveness of both the legal and service components. The RFI program will be run out of an office in the City of Richmond, giving the University a visible presence in the metropolitan Richmond community. This local presence, alongside the range of curricular and co-curricular educational opportunities to be offered, will develop linkages across the curriculum, encourage interactive learning, and cultivate strong partnerships with a range of organizations serving families in metropolitan Richmond.

To learn more about the Law School's new pro bono program and/or the exciting work being done on the Richmond Families Initiative, please contact Ms. Casey directly at 804-287-1207 or [tcasey@richmond.edu](mailto:tcasey@richmond.edu).

## Local Bar Leaders to Discuss Pro Bono

The leaders of six local bar associations will be attending a luncheon hosted by the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation on Wednesday, November 7 at Hunton & Williams. The Foundation, which acts as the charitable arm of the Richmond, Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico, Old Dominion and Metro Richmond Women's Bar Associations, brings the bar leaders together three times per year to discuss topics of interest to all bar associations. At the November luncheon they will be talking about what is being done in the pro bono area of each association and how to recruit more volunteers.

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## RICHMOND METRO PRO BONO SAMPLER

Attorneys, please refer to the list below to learn more about the activity that interests you.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Appeal Bond Fund	Marcel Slag Henry McLaughlin	643-1086 648-1012
Community Tax Law Project	Elaine Javonovich	358-5855
LAJC Housing Law	Marcel Slag	643-1086
CVLAS Wills Program	Kathy Brigman	862-1100
Henrico Bar Association Pro Bono Volunteers	Christopher H. Macturk	762-9500
Hunton & Williams - Church Hill office	George Hettrick	775-2248
VBA-YLD Central VA Pro Bono Hotline	Coburn Beck, Agustin Rodriguez	697-1262, 274-5731
Pro Bono Clearinghouse (www.grbf.org)	Carol Murray	780-2600
Legal Information Network for Cancer (LINC)	Allison Held	371-9543
Virginia Poverty Law Center	Jay Speer	782-9430
Richmond Domestic Violence Project	Robbi Gray/Alexis Fishel	775-1227/285-6253
VBA-YLD Legal Services for the Mentally Ill	John Phelps	662-7242
VSJ Young Lawyers Board Match	Brent Timberlake	377-1262
Refugee and Immigration Services - Catholic Diocese of Richmond	Marilyn Breslow	355-4559

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