

PRO BONO BULLETIN

Dorsey & Whitney LLP is a fully integrated, multi-practice law firm with offices in the United States, Canada, Europe and Asia.

Seattle:

Rachel McCall and **Hassan Abedi** recently concluded a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) case for two brothers who were subjected to abuse and neglect at the hands of their drug addicted parents. The parents were offered many self-help services and failed to take advantage of them. After a series of negotiations, the birth parents ultimately agreed to voluntarily give up their parental rights to the two boys provided they: 1) will be provided with a current photo of the children three times a year; 2) are allowed to communicate with the children in writing; 3) are allowed to have three telephone calls a year with the children; and 4) may have in-person visitation with the children three times per year.



Rachel McCall



Hassan Abedi

Anchorage:

When our pro bono client fell behind in her monthly payments on her lease-purchase agreement for her trailer, we not only had the eviction and forfeiture case against her dismissed, the court also ordered that our client could keep the

\$3,000 that she had tendered to the court in payment of her arrearages, and ordered the plaintiff (property seller) to pay attorney's fees and costs of \$3,500. We found the money to tender to the seller by reducing to judgment several domestic violence support orders totaling over \$6,000 against our client's soon-to-be ex-husband. The husband had moved to Hawaii, but had mistakenly kept a bank account open in Alaska on which we could execute. **Jahna Lindemuth** handled the eviction case; **John Treptow** handled the divorce/support case. Paralegal **Sue Winton** provided support on both cases.



Jahna Lindemuth



John Treptow

New York and Washington DC:

The New York and Washington offices are continuing to press the habeas corpus petitions and civil claims of six Bahraini nationals who are being detained at the United States Naval Base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Dorsey has a tentative agreement with Department of Defense officials to visit its clients at Guantanamo Bay during the



Stewart Aaron

week of October 25. Further, the government has agreed to provide written explanations as to why each detainee is being held prior to Dorsey's visit. **Stewart Aaron, David Singer, Mark Sullivan, Chris Karagheuzoff, Joshua Colangelo-Bryan, Lauren Rasmus, Samira Sarbakhsh** (New York), **Ralph Taylor** and **Kevin Bedell** (DC) have handled the representation with assistance from **Nate Williams, Elizabeth Mann** and **Diane Fernandez**.



Mark Sullivan



Joshua Colangelo-Bryan

New York:

Dorsey represented an inmate in a civil rights action commenced in 1999 pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 in federal court in Manhattan. Our client claimed that while he was incarcerated at Rikers Island Correctional Facility, he was approached and threatened by three correction officers who broke his wrist. Following motion practice, certain defendants were dismissed from the action, and we were able to obtain a default judgment against one of the defendant officers who failed to cooperate in discovery. The remaining defendant correction



Joseph Shumofsky

officer claimed that our client broke his wrist while playing basketball. Prison accident reports prepared immediately after the incident state that our client told officials he injured his arm while playing basketball, our client claimed that he was coerced into providing this false information. The case proceeded to trial before Judge McKenna in the Southern District of New York. **Joseph Shumofsky** and **Stewart Aaron** tried the case, assisted by **Hannah Hojeberg**. The trial lasted for three days. Despite the fact our client's only supporting evidence was his own testimony, the jury deliberated for approximately eight hours. Although the jury eventually returned a verdict for the defendant correction officer, the team considered it a victory that the jury deliberated for such an extended period of time. The firm still is representing our client in an effort to obtain damages against the one defendant against whom a default judgment has been entered.



Stewart Aaron



Hannah Hojeberg

Minneapolis:

LegalCORPS, is a business law pro bono program recently launched with **Joe Genereux** as its president. The program was started by the Minnesota State Bar Association. Business lawyers can donate their time and legal services to nonprofit corporations and small businesses to assist in economic



Joe Genereux

development. Traditionally pro bono opportunities involve litigation, family law, immigration, employment and housing issues. LegalCORPS assists small businesses and microenterprises in the following areas: organizational formation and governance; taxation; business contracts, structure and transactions; employment; real estate; and intellectual property.



Awards and Recognition:

On October 18th, The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law held its Annual Awards Presentation and Reception in New York. Dorsey was presented with the Robert F. Mullen Pro Bono Law Firm Award for its work on the NAACP v. Thomasville School District desegregation case. The Robert F. Mullen Award is named for a deceased Cravath, Swaine & Moore partner who served as a Co-Chair of the Lawyers' Committee and was a staunch advocate of pro bono legal services.

Paul Dieseth, team leader of the project, attended the event representing **Paul Robbenolt, Eric Ruzicka, Charles Moore, Theresa Bevilacqua** and others who worked on the case. In addition, seven lawyers from the New York office, including Pro Bono Coordinator **Mark Sullivan** were present, together with **Steve Carlson**.

In presenting the award, a number of gracious remarks were made about

Dorsey's longstanding pro bono commitment and its support for the Lawyers' Committee over the years. Among other things, the presenter remarked that for as long as he has been working for civil rights, "every time you turn around, Dorsey & Whitney has been there, doing the right thing." Richard Silberberg, Pete Hendrixson and Tom Tinkham are long-time directors of the Lawyers' Committee.



Steve Carlson, Paul Saunders (presenter), Rich Silberberg and Paul Dieseth.

Bill Wernz was recognized along with others for his contribution to the



Bill Wernz

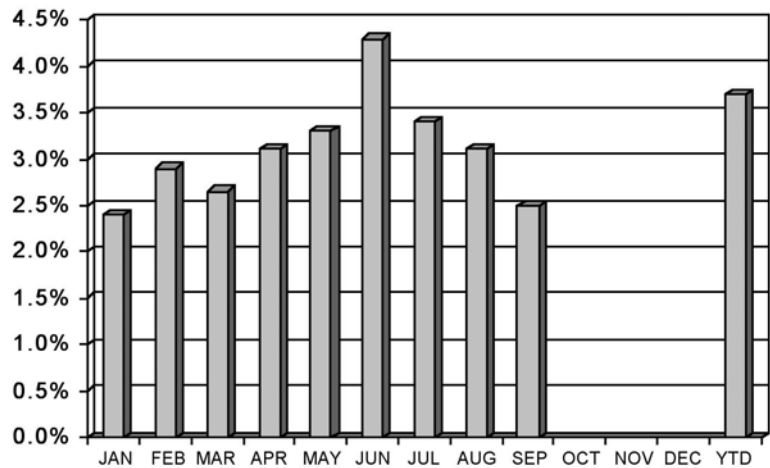
Minnesota's Loan Repayment Assistance Program ("LRAP"). The program provides loan repayment assistance to law

school graduates who take positions offering public service and legal services to the disadvantaged.

We need your help to meet the Challenge. Our Law Firm Pro Bono Challenge hours are at about 2.9%. We need to stay on a positive track to make sure we meet the Challenge again this year.

As a Firm, Dorsey has made a commitment to the Law Firm Pro Bono Challenge at the 3% level. We have met this goal since signing on as a charter signatory eleven years ago. Please help us to continue to meet our pledge by providing quality legal services to the disadvantaged in our communities.

PRO BONO HOURS



EDITOR'S NOTE

Please contact your Pro Bono Coordinator if you have questions, contributions or suggestions for the Pro Bono Bulletin.

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