

PRO BONO

A Letter from the Pro Bono Committee Co-Chairs

Kramer Levin has a long and proud tradition of encouraging its attorneys in fulfilling what we believe is a core responsibility — to use our skills and commit a meaningful portion of our time assisting low-income individuals and non-profit organizations. Our diverse and robust pro bono program allows all our attorneys and non-legal staff the ability to satisfy this core responsibility. The firm is also a long-time signatory of the Law Firm Pro Bono Challenge, pledging to devote at least three percent of its billable time to pro bono legal services. We continue to meet that pledge, averaging well over three percent each year since signing on to the Challenge.

We have always felt that pro bono assignments should be driven by each attorney's passion for a particular cause or group, and therefore, we are open to evaluating new programs, while at the same time providing a full range of existing programs in which an attorney may participate. We endeavor to provide services efficiently so that we can assist a larger number of similarly situated clients. In the past year alone, Kramer Levin has served hundreds of low income individuals in housing matters, social security benefits

hearings, unemployment benefits hearings, asylum matters and other matters where individuals or entities would otherwise never have had the benefit of competent counsel for their "day in court." We have also leveraged our resources to provide assistance in larger impact matters: e.g., we currently represent the Immigrant Defense Project and numerous clients in New York and various federal appeals courts on issues arising from the Supreme Court's landmark decision concerning the constitutional rights of non-citizen criminal defendants; we were co-counsel in the first New York state marriage equality litigation and also are active in multiple litigations in New York and other states involving LGBT rights; we assist a large LGBT organization in reviewing and revising all of their governance materials; and we represent several Uighurs who have been wrongfully detained at Guantanamo Bay.

In addition to individual cases or groups of matters, we have further enhanced our delivery of services to low income individuals by staffing, on a three to five month rotating basis, a full time attorney externship position with South Brooklyn Legal Services in their housing unit, as well

as regularly staffing a one-day-a-week externship with the Legal Aid Society's criminal defense division.

In recent years, the firm and its lawyers have been widely and consistently recognized for their public service efforts, receiving awards from the American, New York State and New York City Bar Associations, the Legal Aid Society and *The National Law Journal*, as well as numerous other organizations.

While statistics are impressive and awards make attractive lobby displays, the work we accomplish and the people we assist are the true essence of the program.

For more background and detailed information, we hope you will look at the pro bono section of our website located at <http://www.kramerlevin.com/probono/overview/> or scan this code.




James A. Grayer
Partner, Committee Chair


Eric A. Tirschwell
Partner, Committee Chair

