

The year 2009 was difficult for many businesses and professions, as well as for individuals, across the nation. With the loss of jobs, the home foreclosure crisis, cutbacks in public benefits and decreased philanthropic support for nonprofits serving low-income people, community demand for legal representation dramatically increased.

09

Pro Bono and Community Service Annual Report

New Beginnings

Leonard, Street and Deinard, along with three other Minnesota law firms and in-house counsel from a large financial institution, helped the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota launch its New Beginnings program to provide assistance to victims of domestic abuse or serious crimes who qualify through the Violence Against Women Act for U-Visas. Through this project, vulnerable women and their dependent children are able to move forward and escape violent relationships while advancing toward their ultimate goal of naturalization. Two Leonard, Street and Deinard attorneys assisted a woman with receiving her U-Visa, which allowed her to lawfully accept employment and support herself along with her two U.S. citizen children. One of the children struggles with autism and the mother is now able to receive other assistance so that she can work. This particular client will also be eligible to become a lawful permanent resident in three years.



Meeting the Law Firm Pro Bono Challenge®

In response to the unprecedented call for pro bono legal services, Leonard, Street and Deinard raised its overall pro bono hours by 13% in 2009. The firm saw a 26% increase in cases handled, as well as a 35% increase in matters handled on behalf of low-income people using the services of the Community-University Health Care Center (CUHCC). The Leonard, Street and Deinard Legal Clinic, housed in the CUHCC in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis, offered its 16th year of service during this difficult time. The firm is proud of the time and legal talent contributed to Legal Clinic cases and other matters on behalf of indigent individuals.

Last year was also the 16th consecutive year that the firm has met the Law Firm Pro Bono Challenge by donating in excess of 3% of total billable hours to pro bono work. However, given the great need for service to the poor last year, the attorneys, paralegals and staff at the firm responded with an increased percentage of pro bono hours donated to an all-time high of 5%. Congratulations and a sincere thank you to all who contributed in such a difficult time.

Firm Attorneys Win the Children's Law Center of Minnesota Distinguished Service Award

In October 2009, a group of Leonard, Street and Deinard attorneys received the Children's Law Center of Minnesota's Distinguished Service Award. This prestigious award recognizes the team's effort to promote the rights and interests of Minnesota's children who are in foster care or who are wards of the state.

The following firm attorneys were honored for their work: Jim Dorsey, Dominic Cecere, Rob Devolve, Jeff Ehrich, Claire Gagnon, Amy Walsh Kern, Rob Kugler, Dan Palmquist, Beth Papacek and Matthew Seltzer. Congratulations to you all.

Honored with the Wisdom Award

In May 2009, Leonard, Street and Deinard was selected by the Litigation Section of the American Bar Association as the recipient of the John Minor Wisdom Award. This award is given to individuals or law firms who meet the needs of the indigent and other persons in need of access to justice.

The firm received this award in recognition of its pro bono legal work and other contributions to the community. The Leonard, Street and Deinard Legal Clinic, the firm's representation of community nonprofits and the firm's scholarship program continue an 88-year history of giving back to those in need.

Leonard, Street and Deinard shareholder Jim Dorsey, center, accepts Distinguished Service Award on behalf of the firm from Children's Law Center Executive Director Linda Foreman and board member Tom Fraser.

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What We Did in 2009

58% of pro bono matters worked on by firm attorneys and paralegals were through projects independent of the Legal Clinic.

Approximately **\$1.7 million** was donated through pro bono hours in 2009, including the Legal Clinic and other public interest agencies.

13,575 pro bono hours were donated by firm attorneys and paralegals in 2009.

85% of total pro bono work in 2009 was on behalf of indigent individuals or organizations serving the poor.

89% of firm attorneys donated time and legal skills on pro bono matters.

85% of shareholders participated in pro bono work.

97% of associates participated in pro bono work.

41% of all attorneys donated 50 or more hours to pro bono matters.

09 Pro Bono by the Numbers

Who We Served in 2009

89% have household incomes below \$15,000; **48%** are below \$6,000.

67% reside in Minneapolis.

32% are 41-50 years old; **30%** are 31-40; **19%** are 20-30; **19%** are 51 and over.

62% have 1-12 years of schooling; **21%** have 13 or more years of schooling.

52% are women.

35% are single; **27%** are married; **20%** are divorced; **11%** are separated; **7%** are widowed.

69% are unemployed, most often due to a persistent mental illness.

Exemplary Legal Service: 2009 Honorees

Legal Clinic Volunteer of the Year

Eric D. Paulsrud – Eric has handled very difficult contested family law matters on behalf of Legal Clinic clients for the past 17 years. Eric is always willing to take on cases with difficult family dynamics and challenging time requirements. In 2009, Eric worked on eight disputed family law matters. Additionally, he donates his time mentoring other attorneys and assisting them with their own family law cases. Eric was also involved in a trademark matter for a community nonprofit serving homeless youth.

Outstanding Legal Service to the Indigent

Kristin R. Sarff – Kristin handled a very difficult family law matter involving two parents disputing custody, parenting time and child support. Kristin's work resulted in the client retaining partial custody of the child, as well as child support. Through her cross examination, Kristin was able to point out to the court the other party's false accusations and information. Based on the evidence presented, the judge severely reprimanded the other party and warned against bringing frivolous lawsuits in the future. Kristin also successfully handled other child support cases, two divorces and a housing trial on very short notice.

Outstanding Legal Service in the Public Interest

Robert J. Fenlon – Bob represented numerous financially distressed borrowers whose homes were under the threat of foreclosure. His efforts resulted in several of their loans being restructured, allowing at least three families to remain in their homes while making reduced payments. He has also helped several financially distressed individuals by negotiating short sale agreements with their lenders and thereby minimizing the impact their situation would have on their credit ratings. Additionally, Bob's efforts on behalf of a struggling charter school allowed the school to restructure its lease and keep the school open and continue to serve its students. Bob worked tirelessly with a nonprofit community arts program to help it relocate and significantly expand the services it offers to the community. Finally, due to Bob's efforts, a divorced mother of four was able to stay in her home by working out a deal to reduce her mortgage payments after her ex-husband had refinanced the house two times. Bob also assisted another attorney in the real estate department on a child custody matter.

Outstanding Service to the Community

Allison Woodbury Leppert – Allison assisted a mentally ill Somali woman in winning her Social Security appeal. In another matter, she successfully relieved a mentally ill Hmong woman of credit card debt and proved to the credit card company that the application had been fraudulently filed using the client's name. In addition to getting the credit card debt dismissed, Allison assisted the client with cleaning up her credit report. Leppert also worked with a shareholder at the firm to successfully resolve a Tax Court case where the client had been the victim of a mortgage fraud scheme and was mistakenly ordered by the IRS to pay \$15,660 in taxes, penalty and interest. With the assistance of others at the firm, Allison was able to persuade the appeals officer that the tax dispute involving the residential property should be resolved in her client's favor. Leppert assisted the client in not only getting the \$15,660 dismissed, but also demonstrated that he was deserving of a \$4,015 tax refund.

Community Service: From attorneys to paralegals to an array of support professionals, Leonard, Street and Deinard employees once again volunteered their valuable personal time to community-based and partnership projects. **The projects in 2009 included:** Habitat for Humanity, Women Build, Hearts and Hammers, People Serving People, Catholic Charities Branch III Spaghetti Lunches and Memorial Blood Centers Blood Drive.

Pro Bono Committee Members in 2009: Julie M. Carson, Amos Deinard, Jr. (Community Member), Eric H. Galatz, Jane F. Godfrey (Co-Chair), David N. Haynes (Co-Chair), Theresa M. Hughes, Thomas A. Jensen, Timothy M. Kelley, Adam D. Maier, Keith S. Moheban, Todd A. Noteboom, Todd M. Phelps, Richard W. Pins, Ellen G. Sampson, Eric J. Skytte, Lowell V. Stortz

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