



How to Support Pro Bono Work and Partnerships



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IMMIGRATION LAW

Overview

- What types of cases do firms like to take/avoid?
- Challenges during the process
- Pro Bono work during COVID-19
- What non-profits can do to attract firms and vice versa.



Panelists

- Gina DelChiaro, Partner, Director of Pro Bono Initiatives, Akerman LLP
- Tonia Klausner, Partner, Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati PC
- Megan Kludt, Managing Partner, Curran, Berger, & Kludt



Gina DelChiaro

Gina DelChiaro is a partner at Akerman LLP and the firm's national Director of Pro Bono Initiatives, overseeing the pro bono program for more than 700 lawyers across 25 offices. Gina has 15 years of experience working on pro bono efforts, including as a litigator at Sidley Austin, and later at Human Rights First and Lawyers Alliance for New York. Gina's many years at Human Rights First focused on running a pro bono program with law firms and corporations to provide representation for asylum seekers and other immigrants.



About: Akerman LLP

- Akerman LLP is a top 100 U.S. law firm recognized among the most forward thinking firms in the industry by *Financial Times*.
- More than 700 lawyers
- 25 Offices
- Deep commitment to helping close the justice gap, providing pro bono legal services to those in need across our many communities.
- Attorneys and other staff encouraged to do pro bono; no cap on billable credit for approved pro bono work.



About: Akerman LLP (cont.)

- Long history of diverse pro bono work
- Focus is on serving low-income and other communities in need of high quality legal representation while allowing our attorneys to work in areas that align with their personal passions
- Immigration work includes: Asylum, CAT, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, Adjustment, Naturalization, Family Reunification, U Visas, Advocacy Work (e.g public comments to proposed DHS rules), Research Projects, transactional assistance to nonprofits that serve immigrants.



Tonia Klausner

Tonia Ouellette Klausner is a partner in the litigation department of Wilson Sonsini's New York office. She is an experienced litigator and trial attorney in both federal and state courts who regularly defends companies in matters involving privacy, marketing, and internet-related issues.

Tonia has significant experience defending consumer class actions, including dozens of Telephone Consumer Protection Act cases. Tonia also regularly counsels companies regarding marketing, internet, and privacy matters, including issues pertaining to the collection, use, and sharing of online and mobile data, communications privacy and marketing laws, online lead generation, data breach incidents, and government subpoenas and investigations.



Wilson Sonsini

Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati is the premier legal advisor to technology, life sciences, and growth enterprises worldwide, as well as the venture firms, private equity firms, and investment banks that finance them. We represent companies from entrepreneurial start-ups to multibillion-dollar global corporations at every stage of development.

- The firm has approximately 1,000 attorneys in 16 offices:
 - 11 in the U.S., three in China, and two in Europe.
- Clients include Google, Netflix, GoDaddy, Twitter, Square and Tesla



Wilson Sonsini

Wilson Sonsini believes in enhancing the communities in which we live and work by providing legal services to worthy agencies and individuals in need. We also believe in supporting the pursuit of justice and equality by taking on pro bono assignments that help those with limited resources gain access to the legal system.

- Wilson Sonsini participates in the Pro Bono Institute's law firm challenge, which encourages firms to devote 3 percent of their total billable hours to pro bono activities.
- In fiscal year 2021, Wilson Sonsini attorneys and staff provided nearly 71,000 pro bono hours.
- The firm's attorneys have provided pro bono assistance to approximately 400 nonprofit agencies in fields such as healthcare, education, the arts, and the environment, as well as to numerous individuals.



Megan Kludt

Megan specializes in complex immigration cases in the areas of business, academia, scientific research, and the arts. She is also an expert in client representation at USCIS interviews and in the Immigration Courts in Boston and Hartford. She has given presentations at academic institutions and spoken at local panels, and has co-authored an article on federal litigation in the context of DOL labor certification as well as a practice advisory on adjustment of status for TPS holders.

In 2016, Megan was honored as one of AILA New England's Pro Bono Champions for work with immigrant detainees, both on the border and through remote bond request preparation. She later co-founded a project that evolved into the Remote Immigrant Assistance Project, coordinating remote volunteers to prepare over 200 bond and parole requests for organizations working with detainees on the border in 2018-2020.



About: Curran, Berger & Kludt



Serving the Pioneer Valley of Massachusetts and the greater New England area since 1985, we are a small Northampton-based law firm devoted exclusively to the practice of immigration law and helping individuals from around the world pursue temporary and permanent visas for living and/or working in the United States.

CBK Immigration has 5 lawyers and a team of 45 paralegals, case managers, legal assistants and administrative staff. We specialize in all areas of immigration law, including business, family, achievement-based, humanitarian and federal litigation.

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Afghanistan:

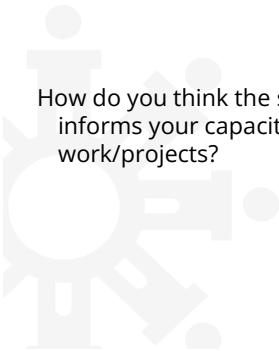
- Working on 10 pro bono humanitarian parole cases
- Preparing materials and providing mentorship for other pro bono attorneys, as well as strategic guidance for schools and non-profits looking to help
- Collaborating with AILA to put pressure on USCIS, speaking out in the media, participating in national webinars

Southern border:

- Created a remote immigrant assistance project organizing and mentoring more than 30 local/regional volunteers to prepare bond and parole requests for asylum-seekers at the border, in partnership with RAICES and EPIC
- One of initial partners and planners in the El Paso Immigration Collaborative
- Collaborated with the ACLU of Massachusetts on the Immigrant Protection Project of Western MA
- CBK attorneys volunteered at the border on three occasions

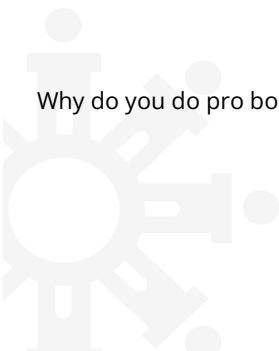
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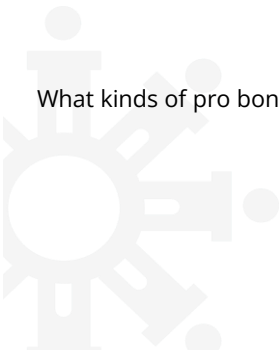
How do you think the size of your firm informs your capacity to take on pro bono work/projects?





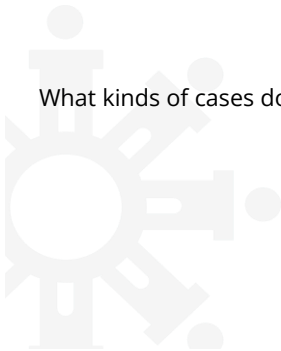
Why do you do pro bono work?





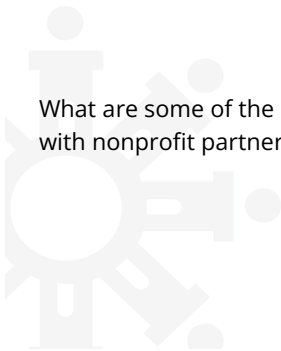
What kinds of pro bono cases do you take?





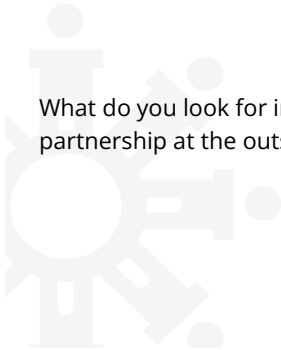
What kinds of cases do you avoid?





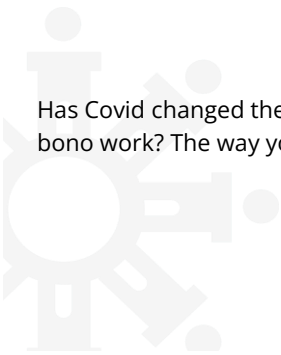
What are some of the challenges to working with nonprofit partners?





What do you look for in a legal nonprofit partnership at the outset?





Has Covid changed the way you find pro bono work? The way you conduct it?



How can legal nonprofits or community-based (non legal) organizations support pro bono work?



What can nonprofits do to attract your attention? Do you have any tips on how to get started?



Questions

Questions?

(Use the chat box on the right of your screen to ask questions.)



Join Us!

Join a community of over 9,000 advocates dedicated to protecting and promoting the rights of immigrants in the United States.

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www.immigrationadvocates.org



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