

IBM, Wyeth, Dechert, Citi's Charkes and Pratt & Whitney's Gutermann Honored

February 2009 – The Pro Bono Partnership has named IBM Corporation; Wyeth; Dechert LLP; Evan Charkes, Managing Director and Deputy General Counsel of Citigroup Global Wealth Management; and Peter Gutermann, Vice President & General Counsel of Pratt & Whitney, as its Outstanding Volunteers of 2008.

"These attorneys are exemplars of what is best in our profession," said Richard Hobish, Executive Director of the Partnership. "They have dedicated hundreds of hours to the business legal needs of nonprofit organizations that would otherwise not have access to professional advice. These agencies serve the disadvantaged in communities throughout the region."

IBM Corporation has been an active supporter of the Partnership since 1997. Under the leadership of Robert C. Weber, Senior V.P., Legal and Regulatory Affairs and General Counsel, and Michelle Browdy, V.P. and Assistant General Counsel, both of whom joined the Partnership's Board in 2007, IBM has substantially expanded its pro bono participation with the Partnership, actively encouraging its lawyers to volunteer.

"IBM has recognizes the importance of community service," said Weber, "and is looking for even more opportunities to work with the Partnership in 2009. This project has been substantially Michelle Browdy's doing, and I am delighted that her leadership has produced such positive results."

Joanna Straub, Executive Director of The Volunteer Center of United Way, is grateful to IBM for providing a great attorney, Stephen Strunck. "We work with volunteers all the time and Stephen is one of the best I have had the pleasure of working with," she said. "Over a two-year period, he helped us consider all the options in a sensitive situation involving a copyright issue and finally brought the matter to a successful resolution."

Wyeth's level of volunteer involvement has been especially notable given that 2008 was the law department's first year of participation with the Partnership. "Clearly, Wyeth has shared our dedication to increasing pro bono representation to nonprofit organizations," said Nancy Eberhardt, Director of the Partnership's New Jersey Program.

Virgil Simons, Founder & President of The Prostate Net, agreed. "I cannot begin to place a value on the work done by Wyeth attorney Michele Farber in connection with our trademark filings. Her diligent research and persistent efforts in fighting through impediments have effectively positioned us as a stronger, more credible organization."

Lawrence V. Stein, Wyeth's Senior Vice President and General Counsel, said "Our volunteer attorneys and staff are demonstrating Wyeth's values by helping to serve a vast unmet need for civil legal services." Bret I. Parker, Vice President, Chief Trademark & Copyright Counsel and Assistant General Counsel concurred, "The work we do with the Partnership has allowed us to expand Wyeth's pro bono program to the handling of non-litigation legal matters and allowed us to help nonprofit organizations. With our help, they can focus on doing what they do best while leaving the lawyering to us."

Dechert has been one of the law firms most programmatically involved with the Partnership for years, according to Hobish. "Partnership projects enable our many transactional attorneys to actually use their skills when delivering pro bono services, and we really appreciate the fact that Pro Bono Partnership is able to make it so easy for us to make those community connections," said Suzanne Turner, Partner for Pro Bono.

One connection the Partnership made for Dechert is with the JCC (Jewish Community Center) MetroWest. "I have consistently been impressed with the services provided by Dechert," commented Idan Levin, Chief Administrative Officer. "Melissa Ostrower recently provided an invaluable professional review of contracts for our outsourced providers, and took the time to assist us in understanding the contract with our new security provider. We look forward to working with Dechert in the future."

"Evan Charkes has been an exemplary volunteer and of immeasurable help to the Partnership's clients," said Hobish. "Pro Bono Partnership provided me with the opportunity to give something back to the community and help organizations that otherwise would have difficulty in obtaining legal services," said Charkes. "I was able to provide intellectual property and contract advice to an organization partnering with a food bank to purchase groceries for needy families, corporate governance services to a well-established technical assistance provider, and advice to a program to bring authors into schools and to a local arts organization. The terrific support provided by Pro Bono Partnership made all of this possible, and I cannot thank the staff enough."

"Evan helped us to update our bylaws and ethics policy, and amend our not-for-profit certification, as well as our name, to bring them into accord with the changes that have taken place in our organization since 1963," said Carol Hayward, Director of Development of RiverArts, who reported that Charkes has now joined the Board of Directors, where he has helped launch a prestigious advisory board and increased diversity in programming.

Peter Gutermann, Chair of the Nonprofit Pro Bono Initiative's Advisory Board since 2003, helped promote opportunities for meaningful pro bono work long before he helped spearhead NBPI's merger with the Partnership in 2008. "Without Peter's leadership and dedication, our merger with NPBI could not have happened," said Hobish. "Under his guidance, the transition was nearly seamless." Gutermann continues to chair the Advisory Board, has joined the Partnership's Board, and helped recruit another United Technologies' leadership team member, Clinton Gardiner, Vice President & General Counsel of Hamilton Sundstrand, to the Board, too.

In 2003, Hartford area non-profits had very few options for assistance with legal problems. Gutermann seized the opportunity to help establish a pro bono program with Hartford companies. "The Hartford corporate legal community really stepped up and committed both legal talent and money to create the NPBI," said Gutermann who feels the successful merger with the Partnership has brought important new resources to the Greater Hartford area. "We are allowing non-profits to use their scarce funds for the people they assist and helping these non-profits thrive."

The Pro Bono Partnership is a nonprofit organization supported by annual gifts and grants. It provides pro bono legal assistance to nonprofit organizations in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. For more information, visit www.probonopartnership.org.

Contact:

Lisa Rosenbloom, Director of Development

lrosenbloom@probonopartner.org

914 328-0674

www.probonopartnership.org

###