One of the things I love most about my job is hearing nonprofits describe the impact our volunteers have made to their organizations. When our nonprofit clients and volunteer attorneys have the opportunity to meet in person, the stories shared and appreciation exchanged are always inspiring. It’s also a great example of what we can accomplish, and the difference we can make, by working together. The impact that results from the work of our volunteers and clients is an antidote to our sometimes polarizing news cycle... YOU are the source of a lot of good news!

Pro Bono Partnership volunteers are an amazing group, with a seemingly endless supply of generosity, talent, and determination to make the world a better place, starting in our neighborhoods. That’s why selecting our Volunteers of the Year is not an easy task. There are so many exceptional volunteers making a difference in communities throughout the tristate. Today, not only will you get to meet our honorees, you’ll also get to hear about some of the matters these super-volunteers have assisted with, and learn from our nonprofit partners what that legal assistance has meant for their programs.

Our volunteers and supporters made it possible for the Partnership to provide free legal help to 875 nonprofits last year, a new record! Our client charities have stepped in to fill gaps they’ve identified in their communities, and our skills-based volunteers help them to do that more efficiently and with less risk. As a result, our clients can expand programming and enhance services that make our communities stronger. By empowering these organizations, our pro bono attorneys positively impact thousands of individuals throughout our region. In 2018, nearly 1,400 Pro Bono Partnership volunteer lawyers provided more than 24,000 hours of expert legal counsel, translating to a nearly $10 million value to the nonprofit community in Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York! And that is truly great news!

Thank you for being a force for good, for elevating the conversation, for being an inspiration to others, and for uplifting our communities in real and tangible ways. We really cannot thank you enough.

With great appreciation,

Nancy Eberhardt
Executive Director
CONNECTICUT VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

Stephen W. Aronson, Esq.

Stephen, an employment law partner at Robinson+Cole, has been a dedicated Pro Bono Partnership volunteer for a decade. Stephen’s skills are always in high demand because employment law inquiries comprise more than 25% of the Partnership’s total nonprofit client requests for legal assistance. Stephen often takes several pro bono projects at a time, and clients are grateful that he always makes time to answer urgent questions. Last year, Stephen provided invaluable legal assistance to Copper Beech Institute, a nonprofit in West Hartford that teaches mindfulness practice to inspire purposeful living. Stephen also worked on a range of matters for several other Partnership clients in 2018, including providing legal assistance with independent contractor agreements, reviewing employee handbooks, and advising on various HR issues. We’re thankful for Stephen’s commitment to Pro Bono Partnership and his outstanding contributions to the nonprofit community!

The Hartford
Law Department

For 18 years, The Hartford’s Legal Department has provided exemplary support to Pro Bono Partnership and our nonprofit clients. The team’s volunteer attorneys take on an array of projects, from zoning and tax issues to corporate governance and IP protection, to name just a few. While the matters vary, praise from our nonprofit clients is consistent—they rave about the level of professionalism, responsiveness, and expert advice received. The Hartford’s commitment to Pro Bono Partnership goes a step further with their longstanding involvement in the Partnership’s Hartford Advisory Board. David Robinson, General Counsel at The Hartford, explains, “Our department and its people are committed to making legal services more accessible for those who serve the disadvantaged, which is why we so strongly support the Pro Bono Partnership.” We appreciate The Hartford’s unwavering support and its dedication to strengthening our neighborhoods!

Robinson+Cole

Robinson+Cole has played an instrumental role in Pro Bono Partnership’s success. Not only did the firm help establish the Partnership’s Hartford program in 2003, it has consistently provided some of our most active volunteers. Since R+C began volunteering with the Partnership, 84 of the firm’s attorneys have assisted 161 clients on 281 projects! The Partnership’s Connecticut Program Director, Priya Morganstern, said, “We can always rely on R+C to help our nonprofit clients with everything from complex transactions to less complicated matters. They understand the importance of pro bono, and they keep raising the bar, which has a truly meaningful impact on our community!” Clearly, R+C’s commitment to pro bono work starts at the top and is a fundamental part of its culture. We greatly appreciate the firm’s many contributions to the Partnership and to the greater Hartford region!

NEW JERSEY VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

Barbara A. Casey, Esquire

Barbara has been a devoted Pro Bono Partnership volunteer since 2010. A real estate partner practicing in the New Jersey office of Ballard Spahr, Barbara has consistently demonstrated a dedication to Pro Bono Partnership clients and a willingness to tackle complex projects that require expertise in New Jersey condominium and co-op law. She worked on a particularly complex project with PBP client Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newark, who described Barbara’s work as “phenomenal.” Barbara believes that working with Habitat for Humanity on their legal matters “is a way to pay it forward and use the experience I have gathered in my 34 years of practice to bring promise to neighbors in our community and state.” Barbara was recognized by the New Jersey Law Journal as one of the “Top Women in Law 2018.”

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newark, Inc.

Copper Beech Institute

Hispanic Health Council

Neighborhood Music School
**NEW JERSEY VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR CONTINUED**

**Denise M. Keyser, Esq.**

Denise, an experienced employment attorney at Ballard Spahr, has been a wonderful and reliable Pro Bono Partnership volunteer since 2015. Giving back is central to Denise’s values and, as an outspoken champion of the Partnership, she has encouraged colleagues to volunteer as well. In Denise’s words, she is thrilled to be able to use her “unique position as a lawyer” to allow nonprofits “to better fulfill their missions and assist those who are most in need.” Last year, Denise assisted with a merger for Literacy New Jersey, Inc., a nonprofit that provides training, administrative support, program development, referral services, and instructional materials to literacy organizations throughout New Jersey. Denise's work with the organization, and connection to their mission, led her to become a board member. In 2018, Denise also assisted several PBP clients with a variety of complicated employment issues.

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**Bristol-Myers Squibb Law Department**

Bristol-Myers Squibb Law is committed to corporate responsibility, and has been an ardent supporter of Pro Bono Partnership since 2001. In harmony with the department’s mission to provide free legal support to patient advocacy organizations, Bristol-Myers Squibb lawyers assisted PBP client ASD Solutions, Inc. with incorporating and applying for tax-exempt status. ASD is a nonprofit that provides support to individuals with autism and their families. The pro bono legal help they received allowed the organization to apply for grants, accept donations, and expand their services to help people with autism develop the skills necessary to succeed in the workplace. ASD Executive Director Bice Del Galdo is grateful for the attorneys’ “monumental impact” in getting the organization started, and the Partnership is grateful for the continued support of the Bristol-Myers Squibb legal team!

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**NEW YORK & FAIRFIELD COUNTY VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR**

**Shannon Hennessy Pulaski, Esq.**

Shannon has been a stellar Pro Bono Partnership volunteer since 2014, assisting clients on a variety of issues including contract, employment, trademark, and copyright matters. A devoted health advocate, Shannon volunteers for a number of nonprofits that focus on hereditary cancer. To align with her passion and areas of expertise, Shannon has worked on numerous IP matters for PBP clients, including American Cancer Fund®. Shannon originally helped the organization get their trademark in 2016, and assisted again last year with intellectual property issues for their cancer education video. “We definitely could not have done [the video] without Shannon’s experience and guidance,” said Shari Lerer, Chief Financial Officer at American Cancer Fund®. We are thankful for Shannon's enthusiasm and commitment to providing legal help to nonprofits so that they can continue to meet needs in our communities.

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**Dawn Rudenko Albert, Esq.**

Dawn began volunteering with Pro Bono Partnership in 2016, and has quickly become one of our most prolific volunteers. A partner at Holland & Knight specializing in litigation and intellectual property, Dawn worked on eight matters with the Partnership last year. Dawn assisted the Special Education Legal Fund with the protection of its name and logo. The organization provides grants to low-income Connecticut families with children in special education who cannot afford legal assistance to protect their child's rights to a free and appropriate public education. Dawn has greatly enjoyed the “privilege of working with [clients that] are laser-focused on making a difference,” and firmly believes that “there is no greater honor than to assist these amazing organizations in achieving their goals.” We are honored to have Dawn as part of our volunteer roster and appreciate her contributions!
NEW YORK & FAIRFIELD COUNTY VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR CONT.

**Kurt Odell, Esq.**

Kurt has been an enthusiastic Pro Bono Partnership volunteer since 2011. He has provided critical legal assistance to a variety of PBP clients, including shelters, youth organizations, senior groups, and cultural institutions. At the conclusion of a project, one grateful client remarked, “Today, with a simple, generous act, Kurt, you became a member of our team.” Whether providing employment law advice or assistance with contracts, Kurt’s skills and knowledge have enabled organizations to enhance programming, reduce risk, and, in some cases, open their doors. That was the situation for the Barnum Museum Foundation that worked with Kurt last year to secure necessary contracts to renovate and preserve the Museum’s historic building. Kurt said he prioritizes pro bono work because “It is very rewarding to be of use to a greater good,” and we are thankful for his dedication!

**Lisa Ulrich, Esq.**

Lisa, an intellectual property lawyer at IBM, has been volunteering with Pro Bono Partnership since 2011. Last year Lisa completed six pro bono matters for four PBP clients, including one for the Partnership — providing each with excellent, thorough, and timely counsel. Lisa is motivated to volunteer because, “I have seen, personally and professionally, the positive impact nonprofits have in our community, and enjoy contributing in some small way in support of that impact.” Through the Partnership, Fran Karliner, Director of Development at Long Island Crisis Center, worked with Lisa to successfully trademark contributing in some small way in support of that impact.” Through the Partnership, Fran Karliner, Director of Development at Long Island Crisis Center, worked with Lisa to successfully trademark.

**Hogan Lovells**

A steadfast supporter of Pro Bono Partnership, Hogan Lovells increased its commitment in 2017 to include sponsoring the Partnership’s Equal Justice Works Fellow, Gregory Kimble Jr., Esq. Gregory’s two-year fellowship project focuses on transforming the Westchester communities most in need by providing comprehensive transactional legal assistance to existing and newly formed nonprofits in economically challenged municipalities. Hogan Lovells has long been a generous contributor to the Partnership’s mission, and last year 46 of the firm’s attorneys handled 36 matters for 30 PBP nonprofit clients. The projects the Hogan Lovells team assisted with range from a straightforward review and renegotiation of a lease to handling all aspects of merger with two nonprofits. We are deeply appreciative of the longstanding support Hogan Lovells provides the Partnership, and celebrate their continued dedication to pro bono service!
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