



***Super Lawyers* Announces Pro Bono Award Recipients**

The eight recipients embody the spirit and purpose of pro bono legal service

Eagan, Minn., January 23, 2012 –*Super Lawyers*, part of Thomson Reuters, is announcing eight recipients of its newly created Pro Bono Award. The award honors legal professionals, students and institutions that exemplify excellence in the practice of law through offering volunteer legal services to the poor, disadvantaged or exploited.

The eight recipients of *Super Lawyers* first annual Pro Bono Award include practicing attorneys, law firms, law students and law programs. The winners, and their respective rankings, were chosen by a review committee which evaluated each application based on legal effort, personal contribution, inspiration, future effort, time frame, obstacles and innovation. Law students and law programs were evaluated on the additional factors of community outreach and leadership.

From providing free legal counsel to Hawaii's most vulnerable citizens, to combating human trafficking with legal prowess, to aiding Native Americans in drafting wills that adhere to the unique needs and laws governing Indian reservations, the tireless work of each award recipient embodies the very spirit and purpose of pro bono legal service, and the award itself.

"All of us at *Super Lawyers* are incredibly proud to be recognizing and rewarding the impactful work of these eight people and programs in their support of the poor, the disadvantaged, the underrepresented and the exploited. At *Super Lawyers*, we're always searching out the legal professionals who lead the way in excellence in practice, and this Pro Bono Award allows us to showcase not only the immense legal talent that went into each of these recipients' stories, but also their collective and unwavering commitment to using the law to bring justice to those who need it – not just those who can afford it," says Barb McGivern, vice president and general manager, *Super Lawyers*.

The *Super Lawyers* Pro Bono Award was divided into three tiers: There is one first-place award, one second-place award, and six honorable mentions. The eight award recipients are highlighted below:

- **Attorney Paul Alston of Alston, Hunt, Floyd & Ing in Honolulu** is the recipient of the first-place award. He was nominated for his work providing pro bono legal counsel in 2011 in several cases in which he represented poor and vulnerable citizens in complaints against the State of Hawaii, for infractions such as failing to maintain public housing complexes and failing to process food stamp applications in a timely manner.
- **Law student John Rafferty, of Villanova University** in Villanova, Pa., is the recipient of the second-place prize. He witnessed the effects of human trafficking while serving overseas as an officer in the U.S. Navy and since then has dedicated his time and legal talents to various anti-trafficking causes, including Philadelphia's Anti-Trafficking Coalition.
- **Attorney Amelia McCarthy of Gass Weber Mullins in Milwaukee** is a recipient of an honorable mention prize for her work on a Peace Corps mission in Namibia, where she provided legal counsel and assistance to families impacted by the HIV/AIDS crisis.
- **Law student Andrea Johnson at Columbia University** in New York City is a recipient of an honorable mention prize for organizing a "spring break pro bono caravan" of law students to assist attorneys in rural northern Wisconsin in helping Native American clients draft wills that comply with unique Indian estate planning laws.



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- **Loyola University School of Law in Chicago** is a recipient of an honorable mention award for the pro bono work done through its Life After Innocence program, which seeks to help innocent people after they have been exonerated by the justice system.
- **Michigan State University College of Law in East Lansing** is a recipient of an honorable mention award for work performed by law students involved in its Law Clinic. In 2011, among other accomplishments, the law clinic added a mobile unit to help provide services to disadvantaged people who are unable to come to East Lansing.
- **Davis, Polk & Wardwell, LLP, in New York** is a recipient of an honorable mention award for the firm's pro bono efforts throughout 2011, which primarily involved matters of criminal defense. In one instance, the firm's lawyers were able to secure a new trial for a man on death row in Tennessee.
- **Klee, Tuchin, Bogdanoff & Stern, LLP, in Los Angeles** is a recipient of an honorable mention award for the firm's work assisting a same-sex couple, whose marriage was legally recognized in California prior to the passage of Proposition 8, file a joint bankruptcy petition. Under federal law, only spouses are able to file for bankruptcy jointly, and the couple's marriage was not legally recognized by the federal government due to the Defense of Marriage Act.

In addition to the honor, each winner will receive a cash award and editorial coverage in a 2012 edition of a *Super Lawyers* magazine, also published on superlawyers.com. To learn more about the *Super Lawyers* Pro Bono Award, visit http://www.superlawyers.com/about/probono_award.html.

Super Lawyers

Super Lawyers, part of Thomson Reuters, is a rating service of outstanding lawyers from more than 70 practice areas who have attained a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement. The selection process is multiphasic and includes independent research, peer nominations and peer evaluations.

The *Super Lawyers* lists are published in *Super Lawyers* magazines and in leading city and regional magazines across the country. *Super Lawyers* magazines also feature editorial profiles of attorneys who embody excellence in the practice of law. For more information, go to superlawyers.com.

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CONTACT

Megan Gustafson
651 848 9043
megan.gustafson@thomsonreuters.com