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## CONTRIBUTORS

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## Law Firm Chair Praises Firm for Pro Bono Leadership

Bruce McLean, Chairman of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, sent a year-end email to all attorneys at the firm congratulating them on their pro bono activities and announcing that the firm had exceeded its 2007 commitment to the Pro Bono Institute's Law Firm Pro Bono Challenge<sup>SM</sup> by 15%.

Visible and vocal support from law firm leadership is one of the best means to ensure that firm pro bono programs are well-grounded in the culture of the firm. Other law firm leaders should feel encouraged to share pro bono news with their colleagues, in the same manner that billable client news is shared. Please read the full story to view a copy of this inspiring message.

[\[FULL STORY\]](#)

## The Immigrant Legal Resource Center and Law Firms Join Forces to Create Pro Bono Mentoring Program

Change is in the air. The [Early October 2007](#) issue of the Wire featured Pro Bono Institute President and CEO Esther Lardent's article, *The Role of Major Law Firms in Addressing the Unmet Legal Needs of the Immigrant Poor*, which argued for the reconceptualizing and restructuring of the role of full-time public interest attorneys and a rethinking of the role of law firms and their lawyers in order to maximize the beneficial impact of pro bono work. Ms. Lardent's article responds to an address by Judge Robert A. Katzmann, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, regarding 'The Legal Profession and the Unmet Needs of the Immigrant Poor' (featured in the [Early May 2007](#) issue of the Wire). Both of these articles, along with several others, including a piece by Pro Bono Institute Board Member, Robert E. Juceam, have recently been published in The Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics (Winter 2008). It is exciting to note that a model Ms. Lardent described in her article – using full-time public interest attorneys to mentor, train, and support the work of a large number of pro bono attorneys to reach more clients – is taking shape in California.

[\[FULL STORY\]](#)

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## Corporate Spotlight: Professional Volunteerism in Corporate CSR Efforts

In a February 20, 2008 commentary, [posted on Forbes.com](#), Lisa Hamilton, President of the UPS Foundation, highlights the growth of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as an integral part of a company's identity, affecting brand recognition and shareholder value, and states that professional volunteerism, such as legal pro bono work, is the best way to maximize the knowledge and experience of professionals to meet the needs of the community. Hamilton notes that 'One of the great business differentiators today has become a company's moral compass,' and challenges the corporate world to add 'skilled service' to any CSR efforts. Hamilton also argues that 'The moral compass also influences a company's ability to attract and retain top talent--especially among today's Generation Y professionals.'

[\[FULL STORY\]](#)

## Illinois Amends State Bar Rules to Allow Inactive and Retired Attorneys to Do Pro Bono

The Illinois State Bar Rules have been amended to allow inactive and retired attorneys, as well as in-house counsel, to provide limited pro bono services. [State Bar Rule 756\(j\)](#), *Pro Bono Authorization for Inactive and Retired Status Attorneys and House Counsel*, effective July 1, 2008, will allow inactive or retired lawyers or lawyers admitted as house counsel under Rule 716, to perform legal services for persons of limited means, without charge or expectation of a fee, under the auspices of a nonprofit legal services organization, governmental entity, law school clinical program, or bar association.

The proposed change was suggested and supported by a group that included in-house counsel from Caterpillar Inc. - a Corporate Pro Bono Challenge<sup>SM</sup> Signatory - the Chicago Bar Foundation, and Illinois public interest organizations. Read the full story for details of the rule change, as proposed.

[\[FULL STORY\]](#)

## Creating Future Pro Bono Leaders: Law Students, Public Interest, and Law Firm Pro Bono

The Fifth Annual Washington, DC Area Law Schools Public Interest Retreat was held on March 30, 2008, at [The George Washington University Law School](#). The student-organized event brought together law students, law school faculty, and attorneys from law firms and public interest organizations, including the Pro Bono Institute's Law Firm Pro Bono Project, to contemplate various entry-level pathways to pro bono and public interest work. Specific discussion topics included

'Making Pro Bono Work a Reality during Your First Year of Private Practice,' 'Stages of a Public Interest Career,' and 'Building Pro Bono in Law Schools.' Studies demonstrate that students who are introduced to pro bono in law school report a far greater likelihood of career-long pro bono participation. The conversations were strategic, yet practical; idealistic, but grounded.

[\[FULL STORY\]](#)

### **New Publication Available: Transactional Pro Bono Opportunities for Law Firm and In-House Attorneys**

The Pro Bono Institute is pleased to announce that a new publication on transactional pro bono opportunities has been added to its extensive library of materials on law firm and corporate pro bono. Until recently, most pro bono work has involved litigation, causing many transactional and business lawyers to avoid legal work that could be perceived as outside their traditional areas of expertise. This new release highlights institutional efforts that can be made to engage more transactional lawyers in pro bono opportunities; provides ideas and examples of pro bono opportunities for non-litigators, including work on behalf of qualifying nonprofit groups, small businesses, and micro-entrepreneurs; and suggests possible sources of appropriate transactional opportunities. By understanding the unique nature of transactional work and by making it a pro bono priority, law firms and legal departments will be able to engage business and transactional lawyers in rewarding pro bono work that takes full advantage of their skills and expertise.

[\[FULL STORY\]](#)

### **PB Victory: Holland & Knight, ACLU, and Mississippi Department of Corrections Agree to Overhaul Violent Supermax Unit**

Recently, Holland & Knight LLP worked with the American Civil Liberties Union to reach a settlement with the Mississippi Department of Corrections reforming a super maximum security unit in Mississippi's Parchman Prison. In 2005, the ACLU filed suit, claiming that conditions in the 'supermax' unit of the prison violated the Eighth Amendment. In January 2006, the state agreed to a consent decree and admitted that conditions in the unit constituted cruel and unusual punishment. As a result, a settlement was negotiated that will remove 'hundreds of misclassified prisoners and all seriously mental ill prisoners' from this type of confinement. Read the full story for more details regarding this landmark agreement.

[\[FULL STORY\]](#)

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