IN-HOUSE PRO BONO IN PRACTICE PROFILE: ACC NORTHEAST CHAPTER
September 2018

The Northeast Chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC-Northeast) has a long tradition of providing pro bono assistance to those in need in the New England area. Under the leadership of the Pro Bono Committee, the chapter has been active in multiple pro bono projects and is looking to expand and create new volunteer opportunities for its members.

Currently, ACC-Northeast's pro bono program is focused on two signature projects: the ACC-Northeast Mediation Program and co-hosting **Clinic in a Box®** programs. The Pro Bono Committee Co-Chairs Christine Hughes and David Lintz say the efforts benefit the chapter in a variety of ways: "The pro bono projects complement the Chapter's other, more traditional continuing legal education and networking programs. They also draw the interest of members who might not be drawn to other programing. They provide junior lawyers the opportunity to develop their professional skills, and they give all participants a refreshing change from their 'day jobs' and the chance to give back."

General Program Information	
Pro Bono Contact	Christine Hughes, Co-Chair, Pro Bono Committee David Lintz, Co-Chair, Pro Bono Committee
Region Served	ACC-Northeast serves five New England states: Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
Number of Members	1,355 members
Pro Bono Program History	The ACC-Northeast Pro Bono Committee was formed more than a decade ago to coordinate opportunities for members to provide pro bono services in the communities where they live and work.
Pro Bono Leadership Structure	The ACC-Northeast chapter Pro Bono Committee is led by two co-chairs, who each take responsibility for one of the program's chief pro bono initiatives.
Pro Bono Policy	ACC-Northeast does not have a pro bono policy.
Communications	ACC-Northeast uses a variety of techniques to communicate with members, including emails, various social media channels, a quarterly newsletter, website, announcements in meetings, and personal recruitment. The newsletter features a Pro Bono Spotlight each quarter so that the members are aware of various organization that need assistance.
Recognitions/Awards	ACC-Northeast honors pro bono attorneys in its mediation program during a "Mediator Appreciation Evening" in June of each year. The event allows ACC-Northeast to thank its volunteers for their continued support and hard work.

Tracking Pro Bono	ACC-Northeast does not formally track pro bono.
Partnerships	The chapter partners with a variety of legal services organizations and law firms that are vital to the success of its pro bono program. It has worked with Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo* to co-host **Clinic in a Box®** programs (described below). It also has a great relationship with The Arts & Business Council of Greater Boston and Lawyers Clearinghouse. The Arts & Business Council of Greater Boston provides training for individuals interested in serving nonprofit arts organizations and matches individuals with organizations that align with their interests and expertise. Lawyers Clearinghouse provides a myriad of opportunities for lawyers of all disciplines, as well as subject matter expertise.
Professional Liability	ACC-Northeast relies on partner organizations to provide professional liability insurance.
Pro Bono Projects	
Clinic in a Box® Program	This year marks the eighth year that ACC-Northeast has partnered with Corporate Pro Bono, Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, and others to co-host an annual Clinic in a Box® program, during which volunteer lawyers receive training on various aspects of nonprofit law and then meet in teams with a Massachusetts-based nonprofit organization to review a legal issues checklist and provide advice. The program has been very successful, and 44 pro bono lawyers advised 16 nonprofit organizations at the most recent Clinic in a Box® program.
ACC-Northeast Mediation Program	Since 1990, ACC-Northeast has trained volunteer lawyers as mediators and arranged for them to provide mediation services for small claims (up to $7,000) and trial docket mediations in the Woburn, Massachusetts and Dedham, Massachusetts small claims courts. Mediation training is ongoing, and services are provided to both courts on a weekly basis. The beneficiaries are the courts, their magistrates and litigants, as well as the ACC member volunteers who participate and have an opportunity to sharpen an important skill set. Currently, 83 pro bono attorneys volunteer for this program. ACC-Northeast is planning to increase volunteer participation and add additional courts.
Lessons Learned	
Dedication is essential.	It takes dedicated, focused individuals to get pro bono programs off the ground. Because of the assiduous work of previous Pro Bono Committee Chairs and ACC-Northeast's dedicated executive director, the Chapter's pro bono program has thrived and expanded over the years.

Focus on a few programs.	It is better to do a few programs well and add new ones slowly, once the program expands and has more capacity.
Don't be afraid of trial and error.	Trial and error goes with the territory of creating and expanding a pro bono program. For example, ACC-Northeast has worked with multiple legal services organizations in order to find a steady and reliable partner for its Clinic in a Box® program.
Be detail-orientated.	ACC pro bono programs require a great deal of administrative support and attention to detail.
Be willing to experiment.	It is important to experiment with different communication methods and pro bono projects. While some of them may fail, others will succeed.

*denotes a **Law Firm Pro Bono Challenge**® signatory

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