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Have you given back? Join the ranks of those who have

Nothing epitomizes the Alabama State Bar's motto, "Lawyers Render Service," better than the pro bono efforts of Alabama lawyers. We are blessed to have over 4,000 lawyers participating in the Volunteer Lawyers programs around the state, and our lawyers continually receive state and national recognition for their pro bono work. In this issue, I will highlight some of the Alabama State Bar's programs and recognize the recent accomplishments of our outstanding volunteer lawyers.



Montgomery attorney Nikki Rothschild visits with several students from Jones Law School during a "Justice Bus" stop in Lowndes County.



A client is helped by a "Justice Bus" volunteer during Pro Bono Celebration Week, October 21–27.

During Pro Bono Celebration Week, October 21 through October 27, Alabama again led the nation. The bar's Pro Bono Celebration Task Force, led by **Jeanne Rasco**, planned a number of legal clinics, CLEs and other events specifically designed to deliver legal services to low-income Alabamians. This year, the task force dispatched its first "Justice Bus" to rural areas of our state. The Justice Bus transported



ASB President Phillip McCallum and past President Sam Crosby (third and fourth from left) joined other volunteers from the South Alabama Volunteer Lawyers Program on the "Justice Bus."



"Justice Bus" volunteers from the Birmingham Volunteer Lawyers Program

lawyers from Huntsville, Birmingham, Montgomery and Mobile to outlying areas to reach rural citizens.

The American Bar Association continually recognizes Alabama as a leader in the Pro Bono Celebration Week. Last year, Jeanne and **Professor Jeff Baker** of Jones School of Law specifically developed and videotaped a CLE program for the ABA that is being used nationally. This year, the task force videotaped a number of JUST stories for use by the ABA. These are short interviews with Alabama lawyers describing the impact of pro bono work on their lives and the lives of their clients. I encourage you to listen to some of these compelling stories at www.alabar.org.

Alabama lawyers and firms are also regularly recognized on the national level for their pro bono efforts. In August 2011, the American Bar Association awarded **Henry Callaway** its prestigious *Pro Bono Publico* award. For many years, Henry has been a leading figure in the pro bono movement in Alabama and nationally. This summer, **Bradley Arant Boulton Cummings** was awarded the *American Bar Association Death Penalty Representation Project's Exceptional Service Award*. Led by the firm's Pro Bono co-chair, **Chris Christie**, Bradley Arant lawyers have represented 22 death row inmates and spent more than 1,000 hours on cases for condemned killers who have no right to appointed counsel at the latter stages of their appeals.

The Alabama State Bar also has a rich tradition of honoring lawyers who fulfill our motto through pro bono work. At this year's annual meeting, the **Hon. J. Scott Vowell, presiding judge, 10th Judicial Circuit, Birmingham**, and **Birmingham Bar Association Past President Gregory H. Hawley** received the *Al Vreeland Award* for outstanding pro bono service by an attorney. Judge Vowell and Greg dedicated countless

hours to revitalizing the **Birmingham Volunteer Lawyers Program**. Under their leadership and direction, the BVLP went from handling 300 cases in 2009 to handling more than 1,000 in 2011.

The firm of **Beasley Allen Crow Methvin Portis & Miles PC** of Montgomery was this year's recipient in the *firm/group category*. Beasley Allen attorneys regularly accept pro bono from the Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program and maintains 100 percent participation in the program. **Beasley Allen** has also established a competitive grant of \$10,000 awarded annually to an organization that promotes pro bono activity in Alabama.

In the *law student category*, the **students of the University of Alabama** received the award for their efforts in response to the devastation to the community by the April 27th tornadoes. More than 300 hours of pro bono services were provided by student volunteers, and this response was particularly inspiring, given the fact that a significant number of them were directly affected by the tornadoes.

D. Robert Stankoski of Fairhope was given the pro bono award in the *mediation category*. Robert's commitment to the **Baldwin County District Court Small Claims Mediation Program** is immeasurable. From 2010-2012, he supervised the program and was responsible for scheduling all 15 of the program's mediators to ensure that they were available for each small claims docket. He spent approximately 10 hours per week coordinating volunteers via a master calendar, updating **Baldwin County District Judge Jody W. Bishop** on the status of volunteer availability and creating a master statistical summary.

And, finally, I am excited to announce the winner of this year's *Harold Albritton Pro Bono Leadership Award*. This

award was established by the Alabama State Bar Board of Bar Commissioners in 2012, and was presented to and named for **Judge Harold Albritton**.

Judge Albritton was president of Alabama State Bar when the Volunteer Lawyers Program began. This year the award will be presented to **Sam Crosby**—one of my all-time favorite Alabama lawyers! During his term as president of the Alabama State Bar, Sam worked to ensure funding for access to justice by using increased pro hac vice fees to support this effort and working for approval of the mandatory IOLTA rule. Sam also brought the **“Wills for Heroes”** project to Alabama.



Sam Crosby (left) receiving the Harold Albritton Pro Bono Leadership Award from President Phillip McCallum

There are countless attorneys throughout the state who perform pro bono services on a daily basis without any recognition. Many lawyers agree to represent clients who come to their offices and cannot afford to pay them for their services. Their stories are equally as inspiring as the few that I have shared with you in this article and their efforts should be acknowledged. I

thank and recognize all of the lawyers of our bar who perform pro bono work. Your efforts communicate to the public that “lawyers render service.” | [AL](#)

Thornhill Hired to Direct Lawyer Assistance Program

Robert B. Thornhill of Montgomery has been named director of the Alabama Lawyer Assistance Program (ALAP).

Created in 1985, the ALAP provides legal professionals with assistance for problems associated with drug, alcohol, gambling, suicide prevention, difficulties resulting from depression, and other mental health issues.

Thornhill graduated from Troy University at Montgomery with an undergraduate degree in psychology and a graduate degree in counseling and human development. He is a licensed professional counselor, a certified alcohol and drug abuse professional and a master's level addiction professional. He is also credentialed as an internationally-certified alcohol and drug counselor.

With the ALAP, his responsibilities will include educational outreach and confidential assistance to impaired lawyers, judges and law students, as well as to their families. He will maintain relationships within the legal community and



Thornhill

with treatment providers to develop educational programs, recruit and train volunteer lawyers to assist with program services and work with other local bars statewide that have similar programs.

As a member of the state bar staff, he will serve as liaison to the Lawyer Assistance Committee and will be the primary contact for the American Bar Association's Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs.

Before joining the state bar, Thornhill was a clinical coordinator of the Alabama Physician Health Program, which serves doctors and veterinarians facing substance abuse or other mental health issues. He was also employed in the Montgomery office of Bradford Health Services as a primary and adolescent counselor.

His professional activities include two terms on the board of the Alabama Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association and one term as secretary, plus memberships in both the Alabama Counseling Association and the Alabama Mental Health Counselors Association.

A well-known local musician, he has performed in Montgomery for many years, at times accompanied by his sons.