



The Greater Richmond Bar Foundation

Promoting Service to the Public and the Legal Profession

www.grbf.org

2010
2010 Annual Report

Pro Bono Clearinghouse Program: Giving Good Advice to Those Doing Good

For the past ten years, the Pro Bono Clearinghouse has strengthened the Richmond community by assisting the nonprofit sector with its legal needs. By allowing nonprofit organizations the opportunity to access pro bono legal services, the Clearinghouse allows nonprofits the opportunity to invest their dollars in the direct fulfillment of their charitable mission. Each nonprofit's request is screened for eligibility, and if approved, is matched to an attorney volunteer who practices in that substantive area of the law. Typically, within 48 hours, the nonprofit organization is matched with legal counsel and soon able to return focus on serving the needs of our community.

The Foundation is proud to work **together** with the attorneys who wish to make a difference in this community! In 2010, our virtual law firm of volunteer attorneys handled over 80 matters in the diverse areas of real estate transactions, trademark applications, contracts, employment questions, tax issues and other business transactions. Here are just a few examples of how our work helped the nonprofit sector do what they do best...

Together: We Help Our Children



The **Down Syndrome Association of Greater Richmond** is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that strives to improve the

quality of life for individuals with Down syndrome and their families by providing access to current and accurate information on Down syndrome and by fostering programs

that focus on education, community services, public awareness, medical issues, research, advocacy, legal issues and parenting. *"The Pro Bono Clearinghouse availed us of top legal expertise in revising our Articles of Incorporation, By Laws, and Policies and Procedures that we couldn't have otherwise afforded. Our PBC attorney was helpful, available, friendly, and knowledgeable, ensuring that all our concerns were addressed. Our organization is now stronger and prepared to move to the next level."*

Together: We Help Teach Humane Behavior

FETCH a Cure is a 501(c)3 nonprofit whose mission is to help pet owners make better, fully informed decisions about the care of pets through treatment, education and training. This organization not only provides financial aid for life-saving treatments, but has other excellent programs including, Pixies for Pets. Inmates at Virginia correctional centers train and socialize rescue dogs with the guidance and instruction from two professional dog trainers. The program not only lowers the rate of euthanasia in Virginia's city dog shelters, but also provides life skills to inmates. *"Through the Pro Bono Clearinghouse, FETCH was able to utilize the expertise of a volunteer attorney who was able to oversee the acquisition of a smaller nonprofit for FETCH. His knowledge and professional recommendations made this for a much easier transition and made sure FETCH was protected. It is so wonderful that Richmond has this organization to support its non-profit community."*

Together: We Promote Good Health

The **Faces of HOPE** is a 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to fight and

prevent obesity in children and their families through education and activity. *"When the Faces of HOPE literally "outgrew" its location on W. Marshall St., we needed a location that suited our clients and staff. After weeks of searching we found a space with*



the help of a local real estate agent. When we realized that the negotiation process was much too complicated for the board's input we called upon the Pro Bono Clearinghouse. We are so grateful for the opportunity to receive the legal advice and assistance from eager and highly-skilled professionals."

Together: We Respect Our Elders

A **Grace Place Adult Care Center** serves individuals with lifelong, age-related, or chronic conditions who need supervision, support with daily living activities and socialization. They are committed to improving lives every day by igniting hope, instilling pride and offering compassionate support for adults with disabilities and their caregivers. *"As a nonprofit health and human service agency, we have limited resources and are unable to retain an attorney. The Pro Bono Clearinghouse has come to our rescue on several occasions, and assisted us with labor issues that require expertise beyond our skill set. We are deeply grateful for this priceless service."*

A Letter from Brian R. Marron, President

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

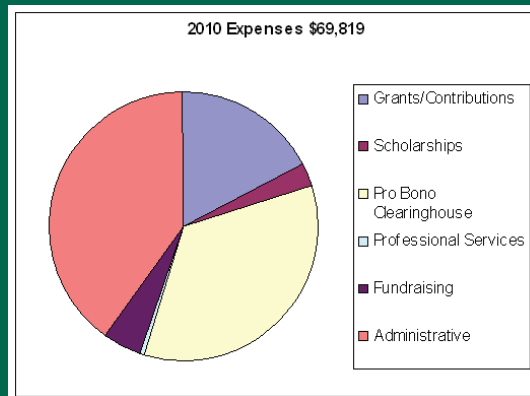
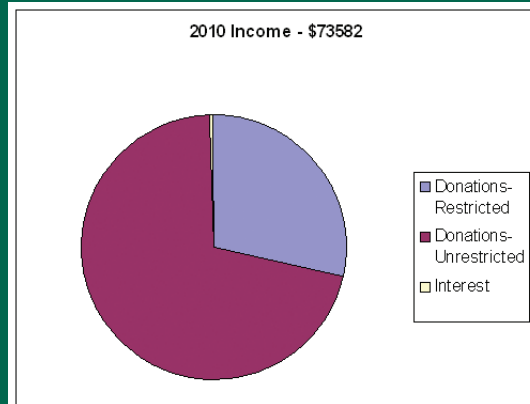
During the past year, the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation has made significant changes to position ourselves to better serve the community. In order to achieve the full measure of our mission, we are more actively seeking opportunities to encourage and promote pro bono legal services and outreach by the legal community. Our system of justice can only function properly if lawyers take up the cause of the less fortunate in our community.

Recently, we lost one of the true champions of pro bono in the Commonwealth of Virginia, Chief Justice Leroy Hassell. Before his passing, Justice Hassell awakened lawyers to the legal needs of the poor and underprivileged in our communities through the pro bono summits held in every region of the Commonwealth. While the need for pro bono legal services is certainly great in the Greater Richmond community, we are encouraged to find a willingness, particularly among young and senior lawyers, to find creative ways to deliver needed services to the underprivileged.

The challenge we face in the coming years is to identify specific legal needs in the community and work with existing service providers, such as Central Virginia Legal Aid Society and the Legal Aid Justice Center, to design programs that will attract and sustain volunteer

lawyers. In order to meet this challenge, the Foundation has taken a number of steps forward:

- We will host at least two “mini-summits” a year, each of which will be focused on a particular chal-



lenge to the delivery of pro bono legal services to the underserved in our community. The first such summit focused on unemployment benefits. Through this dialogue, a panel of volunteers was developed and trained to assist those in our

community who encounter problems in their employment. Future “mini-summits” may deal with such topics as domestic violence, bankruptcy, child custody and the challenges of doing pro bono in a small firm.

- We have expanded our staff by adding a Director of Programs and Development. With the addition of Ali Fannon and the continued service of our Director of Administration, Carol Deitrick, we are pursuing new opportunities and new resources, while continuing to serve the community with our existing programs, such as the Pro Bono Clearinghouse.
- We are participating with Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, the Legal Aid Justice Center and Capital One in the development of a web-based case referral system that will be designed to streamline client intake and the referral of cases to volunteer lawyers. Once this system is in place and with the recruitment of additional volunteer lawyers, we will meet more of the legal need of the poor and underprivileged in the community.
- We are improving our communication and interaction with our constituent bar associations to provide pro bono opportunities for their members and to help provide resources for pro bono and community outreach programs that they develop.

These are exciting times for the Foundation. We are grateful for your continued interest and financial support.

Brian R. Marron, President

On April 7, 2011, a charter Advisory Board member of the Foundation, **Russell V. Palmore, Jr.** passed away unexpectedly. For almost 40 years, Russ Palmore strengthened our legal community with his distinguished career as a litigator, his service as a leader of the Richmond Bar Association and his role as advisor

to this Foundation. The Greater Richmond Bar Foundation’s Board members and staff extend our deepest sympathies to his family and friends for the loss of such an esteemed man and colleague.

The Foundation Fills a Gap in Our Community

According to the most recent census data, one in five citizens of the City of Richmond (approximately 43,000 people) live at or below the poverty level. With the populations of the surrounding counties taken into account, that number jumps to over 90,000 people in our community barely able to meet life's most basic necessities, and certainly unable to afford legal representation. Unfortunately, most studies indicate that 80% of the civil legal needs of this segment of our community are not met by the current system.

With the momentum and focus raised by the April 2010 Pro Bono Summit, the Foundation took steps to improve pro bono legal service delivery in the region through **collaborations with stakeholders, raising awareness of the needs and opportunities to serve** and **selective investments** in local initiatives for the underserved populations.

Collaborations with Stakeholders

Each year, the Foundation has worked with the bar associations, service providers and law schools to assist with program development at all stages. This year, with the addition of a Director of Programs & Development, the Foundation took a more proactive role in the legal community to help **assess** the priority needs, to **connect** the necessary parties, to **educate** the community and to **activate** the local attorneys.

- With increased demands for unemployment insurance appeal representation, the legal aid attorneys needed private bar assistance. Through a joint effort by the Foundation, CVLAS, LAJC, the Richmond Bar Association and the Harry L. Carrico Center for Pro Bono Service at the University of Richmond School of Law (Carrico Center), we created a pilot **Unemployment Insurance Panel** that will take cases each week. The Foundation helped connect LAJC/CVLAS with the attorneys able and willing to sit on such a panel, supported the training of the panel and assisted with the reference materials.
- This year, the **Commonwealth Attorney's Youth Court**, a juvenile diversionary system that holds students accountable for conduct while educating them about the justice system, at Huguenot High School was in jeopardy due to necessary budget cuts. The Foundation stepped forward to assist with strategic planning for a sustainable model. Collaborating with the **Carrico**

Center, the Foundation supervised research into other youth court programs across the nation that partner with law school clinics or pro bono programs, assisted with the student training, and publicized volunteer opportunities to students and attorneys.

Raising Awareness of Legal Needs & Opportunities to Serve

The Foundation has representatives from six local bar associations on its Board of Directors which allows for a centralized perspective of the region's pro bono and public service efforts of the bar, and a centralized point of communication to all the bars. In addition to the periodic Local Bar Leader meetings to engage the current leadership in interactive discussions about promoting pro bono volunteerism, the Foundation facilitated the following:

- The Foundation helped encourage pro bono volunteerism through its support of the **Law Over Lunch Series** this past Fall. Two areas of on-going critical pro bono service need are No Fault Divorces and Domestic Violence Protective Orders. In partnership with the Harry L. Carrico Center for Pro Bono Service at the University of Richmond School of Law, CVLAS, LAJC and the Richmond Bar Association, this series provided prospective volunteers with a free CLE accredited training and lunch.
- For the **National Celebration of Pro Bono week**, October 25-29th, 2010, the Foundation promoted the week of pro bono education, volunteer opportunities and problem solving through its local bar channels. The Foundation closed the week by partnering with LINC to host a Legal Round Table (*Conquering the Challenges of Pro Bono Service in Your Workplace*) that involved over 20 participants including attorneys from medium to small firms, the legal aid agencies and the nonprofit community. The Foundation is using this information to develop a centralized pro bono volunteer system.

Selective Investments in Local Initiatives to Address the Needs of the Underserved

- Each year, hundreds of our community's children must live in temporary

foster care placements throughout the region. Many must wait for years to find a "forever family" through the adoption process. In 2010, the City of Richmond had 24 finalized adoptions of children from the foster care system. To celebrate and raise awareness of the need for adoptive and foster care homes, the Foundation proudly supported the City of Richmond's Adoption Day Celebration through a grant to the **Greater Richmond Juvenile Bar Association**. This Adoption Day is part of a national movement recognized as a community priority by Governor Bob McDonnell, as well as by Richmond City Council and Mayor Dwight Jones.

- For over 15 years, the **Metropolitan Richmond Women's Bar Association** has distributed a free, self-help booklet entitled "Understanding Your Domestic Relations Rights in Virginia" to educate the public about the legal topics related to family violence, domestic rights and navigating the court system. With the help of a two-part grant from the Foundation, the MRWBA translated this 40 page booklet into Spanish, printed 20,000 copies of a bi-lingual version, and distributed to courthouses, social service agencies, nonprofit organizations and individuals throughout the Commonwealth.
- Based on the past success of **Drive To Work**, a nonprofit that assists qualifying low-income and previously incarcerated persons with restoration of driving privileges so they can drive to work and hold a job, the Foundation provided funding for their Driver Literacy Program, a new adult-focused prep course for the DMV driver's examination.
- In partnership with the Attorney General's Office and the law firm Troutman Sanders, the Foundation purchased four \$1000 savings bonds for the annual Y.O.U.T.H. (Young and Old United to Help) Awards given to four local high school students who strive to be positive role models to peers and give back to their community through public service.
- To assist with the scholarship awards for deserving first year law students interested in civil rights, the Foundation sponsored the 10th Annual **Oliver Hill/Samuel Tucker Scholarship Dinner** organized by the Hill-Tucker Bar Association.

Kevin White named Pro Bono Clearinghouse Volunteer of the Year

The Foundation appreciates the volunteer service of all its attorneys who make the Pro Bono Clearinghouse possible. Each year, the Foundation recognizes one attorney for providing outstanding service to our community's nonprofit sector. On September 30, 2010, Kevin A. White received the 2010 Pro Bono Clearinghouse Volunteer Service Award at a reception held at St. Joseph's Villa. Mr. White, a member of the Corporate and Public Finance Group of the Richmond office of Kaufman & Canoles, has volunteered through the program since July 2008. When presented with the award

with compliments from all the nonprofits he served, Mr. White humbly stated that he provides pro bono legal service not for recognition, but because that is what all attorneys are supposed to do for the community. As a result of his 58 hours of pro bono service this past year, four local nonprofits (the YWCA, Gateway Homes, Virginia Holocaust Museum and the Asian American Society of Central Virginia) were able to redirect approximately \$14,500 dollars they would have spent on legal fees to fulfill their missions.



2010 VOLUNTEERS

The Pro Bono Clearinghouse is a "virtual law firm" of 180 attorneys who are legal experts in such areas as corporate, family, immigration, employment, real estate, tax, and intellectual property law. They stand ready to meet the needs of local nonprofit organizations. A special thanks goes out to those attorneys who provided free legal services through our program in 2010.

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Our Mission

The Greater Richmond Bar Foundation serves the public and legal profession by supporting, facilitating and promoting the delivery of pro bono legal services for non-profit organizations through the Pro Bono Clearinghouse, by providing financial support to others in greater Richmond who provide pro bono legal services, and by involvement in and sponsorship of law-related educational and service projects that encourage public understanding of, participation in and access to our justice system. The work of the Foundation is made possible through the generous support of the community and members of the legal profession.

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