

The Dentons logo is a purple arrow pointing to the right, containing the word "DENTONS" in white, uppercase, sans-serif font.

DENTONS

Dentons US Pro Bono Impact Report 2024

Grow | Protect | Operate | Finance

October 2024



Contents

5	...	A message from our Pro Bono Partner
6	...	Pro Bono Day with PayPal
8	...	On a Mission
10	...	Pro Bono Profile: Jae Park
12	...	Pro Bono Profile: Linda Pfatteicher
14	...	Pro Bono Awards and Recognition



A message from our Pro Bono Partner

Each year at this time, we pause to take stock of what we have done in the past year. And every year, I am amazed at the depth and breadth of our pro bono work. As I approach my 17th year as Dentons' Pro Bono partner, I remain in awe of our Dentons colleagues who incorporate pro bono work into their extremely busy work and home lives.

I'm delighted that in this report you'll be able to learn more about my partners Jae Park and Linda Pfatteicher. Jae has been at the Firm longer than me, and has been a pro bono superstar for his entire tenure. His commitment to the community in San Diego is central to who he is as a lawyer. Linda is much newer to Dentons, and from day one she has shown the incredible value a tax lawyer can bring to the nonprofits that are on the front lines of serving low-income and underserved populations. Oh, and did I mention that both of them are kind, delightful people?

I'm also excited to share information about Dentons' partnership with the PayPal legal department in our global research sprint with ECPAT, a Bangkok-based NGO that works to protect children from sexual exploitation. This project brought together Dentons and PayPal colleagues from around the world. Then there is our historically impactful work on behalf of domestic violence survivors through the Domestic Violence Appeals Project, led by our Chicago office. There is also our New York office's work with Her Justice, helping meet a desperate need for access to justice in areas like family law and immigration counseling. And my eyes were truly opened this year by our work with Seeds of Fortune, leading and mentoring a group of super-sharp high school girls from all over the United States whose talent and commitment blew our whole team away.

So, thank you to all of the Dentons colleagues and friends who have worked so hard in the past year to make a positive impact on the communities in which we live and work. Thank you to our commercial clients like PayPal who share our values and our commitment to the community. Thank you to the myriad legal aid and advocacy organizations who make our pro bono work possible through their mentoring, supervision, intake and guidance. And finally, thank you to our pro bono clients, who entrust us with their legal representation as they traverse often challenging roads towards access to justice.

Sincerely,



Ben Weinberg
Pro Bono Partner

Pro Bono Day with PayPal

At Dentons, we are proud to represent clients who share our commitment to giving back to the communities in which we live and work. And we are privileged to partner with our clients on significant pro bono projects—pooling our resources to amplify our impact.

In one of the largest such collaborations, Dentons and PayPal conducted a series of research sessions to assist [ECPAT International](#), a Bangkok-resident nongovernmental organization (NGO) that works to protect children from sexual exploitation. Approximately 75 members of PayPal's in-house legal team in the Asia Pacific, Europe/UK, and South North America regions joined with Dentons lawyers and business services professionals from the US, Australia and Europe.

The project was the centerpiece of PayPal's Inaugural Pro Bono Day, and it came together on a tight schedule. Aiming to develop an internal event that would reach its global organization, PayPal sought assistance from Dentons' global Pro Bono team. The Dentons team then conducted preliminary research and created an informative video to introduce the project to PayPal's staff on Pro Bono Day.

The day's research sought to answer three questions for ECPAT: (1) What is the age of sexual consent under the jurisdiction being researched? (2) Do the provisions on the age of sexual consent (i.e., statutory rape) equally apply to girls and boys? And (3) Does the national legislation explicitly indicate the age of consent is 18 for both males and females, with a close-in-age exemption for sexual acts between peers (of up to three years), or does it fail to do so, or only partially do so?



Since PayPal has offices internationally, Dentons made a lawyer available in every applicable time zone to assist with the research questions. Participants were given different jurisdictions to research. By the end of the day, the questions had been answered for essentially all countries around the world.

“I didn’t really have prior experience with something exactly like that, though I have given presentations and CLEs in the past,” said Nat Moges, a senior managing associate in Dentons’ Chicago office who helped lead the project. “It was great to hear that all of our hard work resulted in something which produced a meaningful outcome, and which impacted so many people in the process of doing so.”

James Lindfelt, PayPal’s Director of Litigation, called it “a truly remarkable event.” He explained, “Dentons came through and developed a brand new pro bono opportunity, which will have a lasting effect on those that participated and that, most importantly, developed resources which will assist ECPAT in their important work.”

“Knowing that Dentons lives a similar mission of service and giving as PayPal will pay dividends as we continue to work together on case and pro bono work into the future,” added Lindfelt.”

Dentons’ global team included Brussels associate Aurore Ancion, New York managing associate Sara Gates, St. Louis senior managing associate Timothy Guntli, Washington, DC, senior managing associate Esosa Igiehon, Europe pro bono coordinator Joanna Khatib, New York managing associate Maria Mannarino, New York associate Tina McAuliffe, Chicago senior managing associate Nat Moges, New York managing associate Fernanda Pires Merouco, New York associate Emma Tall, Melbourne managing associate Kurt Tiam, Sydney partner Jodie Wauchope, Chicago partner Ben Weinberg, St. Louis managing associate Jayne Winner and New York associate Rebecca Zawrotny. Meatpacking, NY, partner Victor Boyajian and Pittsburgh shareholder Morgan Hanson, PayPal’s relationship partners, connected the teams to the client.

Seeds of Fortune

Seeds of Fortune empowers young women from underrepresented backgrounds through corporate programs, mentorship and guidance. The organization helps these scholars apply for college scholarships while teaching them career skills and financial management. Scholars are also supported in transitioning to the workforce through professional workshops, internships and fellowships with various partners. To date, Seeds of Fortune has supported 2,500 scholars across the US.

Dentons is proud to be a supporter of Seeds of Fortune and its mission. For the past two years, we have participated in its Innovation Research Program, which pairs scholars with corporations to give them exposure to the workforce and insight into what it’s like to work at and lead a company. Scholars are presented with a challenge, and with support and guidance from Dentons volunteers, develop and present their solution. One 2024 scholar said, “Leaning towards the future, I see myself working as an intern with Dentons. I believe in pro bono work and helping my community.”

In 2024, 12 scholars were impacted directly by Dentons’ participation. The partnership has involved dozens of Dentons lawyers and professionals across the US to date.

“Corporate partnerships like this are important for community-based organizations like Seeds of Fortune, because they really give the scholars the visual of what is possible,” says Nicola Fennel, Seeds of Fortune’s program manager and director of college success. “One thing the scholars always mention that they appreciate about the Dentons volunteers is the sharing of their backgrounds, motivations and paths.”

On a Mission

Two huge victories to protect domestic violence survivors



Earlier this year, the US Supreme Court made a critical decision in the fight for to disarm perpetrators of domestic violence. In *US v. Rahimi*, the Court reversed a Fifth Circuit ruling to allow domestic abusers to be armed, confirming that abusers do not have a constitutional right to own guns.

Dentons' Litigation team filed an amicus brief in the case on behalf of Legal Aid Chicago, Ascend Justice and 20 other organizations working to support survivors of domestic violence. The case challenged the constitutionality of a federal statute prohibiting persons subject to a domestic violence order of protection from owning firearms. The team's brief addressed the necessity of the statute to protect domestic violence victims from further harm and death. Jacqui Giannini, a Dentons partner and member of Ascend Justice's board of directors, proposed the brief to Legal Aid Chicago and led the team, which included Kansas City counsel Stephen McAllister, Chicago partner Tim Storino, St. Louis associate Mike Vangel and Kansas City associate Parker Bednasek.

Then, this fall, Dentons secured another important and impactful pro bono win in coordination with Legal Aid Chicago. Though the client had received a two-year domestic violence order of protection, the Illinois Domestic Violence Division expressly refused to consider child support for her. Our team submitted a brief demonstrating that the availability of child support often is a crucial aspect of a domestic violence survivor's ability to escape violence and protect their children. They also laid out the clear statutory support for the availability

of child support. On this basis, the Illinois Appellate Court reversed the trial court and made it clear that the Domestic Violence Division judges must adjudicate child support where adequately and appropriately requested. This is not only a huge win for our client, it also sets a key precedent for future petitioners seeking child support in domestic violence cases. The Illinois Appellate Court has made clear that financial security is imperative to safety, and judges may not decline to decide the issue of child support in orders of protection. This matter was led by Chicago managing associate Emily Eggmann and partner Kristine Schanbacher, recipients of Legal Aid Chicago's 2024 Volunteers of the Year award. Los Angeles partner Kelly Graf also assisted in the matter.

Dentons partnered with Legal Aid in 2013 to create the Domestic Violence Appeals Project, which appeals wrongful rulings in the Domestic Violence Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County, to ensure that the most vital provisions of the Illinois Domestic Violence Act make it into the courtroom on behalf of survivors.

Eleven years later, the Domestic Violence Appeals Project has won 19 out of 21 appeals, including four published opinions that have established the leading precedent for applying the law. Our work has not only benefitted our clients, it has also improved access to justice for all Illinoisans in domestic violence courtrooms throughout the state.

Her Justice

Dentons proudly supports Her Justice's mission to provide critical free legal services to women who couldn't otherwise afford it, women who must go through the civil justice system to access basic rights, like financial autonomy and freedom from abuse. More than three dozen colleagues in our New York office have contributed to our work for Her Justice clients, and supervise our summer associates every year. All work tirelessly on behalf of the underserved women whom Her Justice serves.

Her Justice provides access to legal services to underserved women living in poverty in New York City. The organization pairs thousands of pro bono lawyers with women who have legal needs in the areas of family, matrimonial and immigration law.

Over the years, Dentons colleagues have assisted Her Justice and its clients with navigating Family Court matters (primarily child support), pursuing uncontested divorces, self-petitioning for protection under the Violence Against Women Act

and securing U-Visas. Many of our recent clients have been women and children survivors of domestic violence. Our summer associates all participate in this client work, and have every year since the program inception more than 20 years ago in 2003.

One Dentons colleague in particular, legal administrative assistant Brenda Trinidad, has for many years served as a linchpin of Dentons' relationship with Her Justice. Brenda interprets for Spanish-speaking clients, and she serves as the point person to ensure continuity of care when matters are restaffed. She also makes herself available to answer client questions and to liaise between clients and lawyers.

We are deeply proud not only of our Firm's steadfast support of Her Justice and its mission, but also of the widespread participation in that work among our lawyers and business service professionals alike.

Pro Bono Profile

Jae Park



Litigation Partner
San Diego

“Pro bono work greatly enhances the Firm’s brand reputation. Clients want to know their lawyers share in their commitment to social responsibility and making positive change. Plus, pro bono successes showcase your legal abilities.”

What motivated you to start doing pro bono work, and how has it impacted your career?

I started doing pro bono as a second year or third year lawyer. The skills required for the pro bono project I accepted—an asylum application for a client in removal proceedings in immigration court—aligned with my business litigation practice: research, writing briefs, interviewing the client and other witnesses, court appearances and, ultimately, putting together a case for trial.

After that experience, I saw pro bono as an opportunity to learn and sharpen litigation skills and do good at the same time, so I continued to take on these cases. Eventually, I used this as a way to increase my profile in the Firm and in the local legal and business communities, to develop a personal brand and to continue honing and developing litigation skills.

Is there a particular case that has had a significant impact and that you are particularly proud of?

My first case was representing an Ethiopian refugee who was wrongfully accused by the local law enforcement/military officer, who wanted him out of the picture because he was interested in my client's wife. My client was imprisoned without charge and tortured for many years. He escaped prison and walked and hitchhiked to South Africa, did odd jobs living out of an abandoned car until he saved enough money to fly to Brazil, then walked and hitchhiked his way to the US border to seek asylum. The judge granted his application. At the end of the hearing, he broke down crying, thanking me for saving his life.

How can you engage with clients and further relationships through pro bono work?

There are so many ways you can partner with clients to do good work together. Many clients have legal departments with active pro bono programs that you could work with them on. Others may not have active programs but want to get engaged, and you could spearhead a joint program together.

Have you made any connections in your pro bono network that have added value to your business/practice as well?

I have received several awards and recognitions for my pro bono service, including being named "Pro Bono Attorney of the Year" by the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association. This has led to many introductions to other practitioners, local judges and prospective clients, among other valuable contacts.

What are the biggest challenges or barriers that lawyers can encounter in doing pro bono, and how can they overcome them?

Fear of the unknown and fear of commitment. But you can mitigate that by choosing the right project and the right team to partner with.

Pro Bono Profile

Linda Pfatteicher



Venture Technology and Tax Partner
San Francisco/Oakland

“I believe we as lawyers have a duty to engage in pro bono work, since the very foundation of the law is to be an advocate for justice and fair treatment. If we can use our knowledge to provide pro bono help to those most in need, then we are honoring the roots and importance of our profession.”

Can you describe a particularly rewarding or impactful pro bono case that you worked on and how it influenced your perspective on the legal profession?

About 14 years ago, I helped a woman establish a nonprofit so she could provide after-school dance programs to underserved communities. She recently reached out to me to start a new venture, one with a for-profit and a nonprofit component. Three notable things about this: First, it was great to help someone make her dream a reality; then, it was rewarding how she appreciated my help enough that she thought of me all these years later; and finally, she may one day become a paying client. So you never know when or how the work you do today may benefit you later.

How do you decide which causes to support?

It is a combination of my area of legal expertise and my passions. As a tax lawyer, much of the pro bono work I do is to establish nonprofit corporations, which benefit the community by providing services to those most in need. Since my day job generally focuses on saving multinational companies millions of dollars in taxes, this is a great counter-balance to provide tax relief to organizations who want to use their funds to benefit the social good. I've also done a lot with organizations who support causes that I feel strongly about, like La Casa de Las Madres, which provides shelter for women and children who are survivors of domestic violence.

What is one thing organizations in need can do get the attention of lawyers for its pro bono projects?

It helps if the organization needing pro bono assistance offers to partner with the lawyers on the project. This makes it more of a shared investment in the work.

With so many competing demands for your time and attention, how do you prioritize pro bono work?

It is a balance, and obviously there are times over the years when we can devote more or less time to pro bono work. If it is a cause I feel passionate about, then I find it seems less like work and more just something that makes me feel good.



Pro Bono Awards and Recognition

Celebrating a Career of Pro Bono Commitment



Kansas City partner Mark Johnson received Dentons' 2024 Rothschild Pro Bono Award, honoring his remarkable 20-year record of pro bono work to advance civil liberties, civil rights and the rule of law. Averaging more than 200 pro bono hours per year for the past decade, Mark has successfully challenged unconstitutional voting restrictions and advocated for fair redistricting. He has served on the board of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Kansas since 2013 and has helped win major victories such as overturning the state's ban on same-sex marriage. Mark is also an adjunct faculty member at the University of Kansas Law School; the senior student award for commitment to the First Amendment and free speech given by the university's journalism school is named the Johnson Award in his honor.

The Rothschild Pro Bono Award is named for Dentons alum Ed Rothschild, a champion of civil liberties and the rule of law who earned many honors during his career, including the ACLU's Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Service.

- The National Legal Aid & Defender Association honored Dentons US with the 2024 Beacon of Justice Award, recognizing law firms that address issues related to civil and human rights.
- New York partner David Kornblau and managing associate Charles Farrell were recognized by [Brooklyn Defenders Pro Bono](#) for their work achieving a litigation victory for a Salvadoran migrant wrongly imprisoned while attempting to lawfully enter the US at the Mexican border. The client was incarcerated for nearly three months in federal detention. The case was settled for \$300,000 at the start of discovery—a lifechanging result for our client and their family.
- Legal Aid Chicago named Chicago partner Kristine Schanbacher and managing associate Emily Eggmann among its 2024 Volunteers of the Year. They were honored for their work on a protection appellate filing, which helped their pro bono client receive vital protection under the Illinois Domestic Violence Act.
- Short Hills, NJ, counsel Roman Tsibulevskiy received a Practitioner Recognition from the United States Patent and Trademark Office. The accolade honors Roman's pro bono work on behalf of Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, a leading legal aid and education organization dedicated to New York artists and its arts and cultural organizations.

- Lawyers Alliance for New York awarded Andrew Dalin with the Cornerstone Award for his aid to nonprofits in navigating complex employment law and employee benefit issues. Of note is his work with the New York Immigration Coalition, where he assisted in developing its Employee Manual and Retirement Plan, as well as his more than 100 hours assisting Queens Community House on its 403(b) plan.
- Legal Aid of Western Missouri awarded its Robert C. Welch Volunteer Attorney Project Award to Kansas City partner Jacqueline Whipple, senior counsel Jerry Wolf and managing associate Cody Wood.

ABOUT DENTONS

Across over 80 countries, Dentons helps you grow, protect, operate and finance your organization by providing uniquely global and deeply local legal solutions. Polycentric, purpose-driven and committed to inclusion, diversity, equity and sustainability, we focus on what matters most to you.

www.dentons.com

© 2024 Dentons. Dentons is a global legal practice providing client services worldwide through its member firms and affiliates. This publication is not designed to provide legal or other advice and you should not take, or refrain from taking, action based on its content. Please see dentons.com for Legal Notices.