

Honoring Our Own

Each year, Ballard Spahr honors every lawyer and paralegal who has performed more than 50 hours of pro bono service. The firm also recognizes four individuals or groups that have made significant pro bono contributions during the past year and donates \$1,000 to a charitable organization of their choice.

The 2012 honorees are:

Los Angeles Adoption Day Project – Lydia W. Wu, a Real Estate partner, led Ballard Spahr’s Los Angeles office to partner with the Alliance for Children in its National Adoption Day Project. In November, a dozen Ballard Spahr lawyers and paralegals helped adoptive parents finalize their adoptions of 10 children who had been abused, abandoned, or neglected, and whose cases had languished in the foster care system for months or even years. The Los Angeles awardees are directing their donation to the Alliance for Children.

Distinguished Service Award – Carl G. Roberts, a Philadelphia Litigation partner and Practice Leader of the Real Estate and Construction Litigation Group, has logged more than 600 hours in handling dozens of pro bono cases in the past decade, including adoptions, child advocacy and immigration cases, guardianships, and appeals for public benefits. Mr. Roberts is directing his donation to the Support Center for Child Advocates.

Education Advocacy – In the last year, Ballard Spahr volunteer attorneys have worked on three significant public education projects.

- Michael W. Skojec, a partner in Baltimore’s Litigation and Real Estate groups, and Cristina Coronado, a Salt Lake City Real Estate associate, led a team working with Appleseed public interest justice network to draft an issue brief concerning legal rights and challenges to education and benefits for homeless youth.

- A second team of attorneys and summer associates in seven offices worked with the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law to research and draft seven special education manuals for parents of children with disabilities in their respective states. Blake K. Wade, Managing Partner of the Salt Lake City office, led the team.

- A third team undertook another project with the Lawyers Committee to research recent legislation requiring public school students and their parents to disclose their immigration status. Linda B. Schakel, a Washington, D.C., partner in the Public Finance Department, led the team.

The Education Advocacy Team is splitting its donation between Appleseed and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

U Visa Practice Group – Jenny N. Perkins, a Philadelphia Litigation associate, and Scott W. Cockerham, a Washington, D.C., Public Finance associate, combined forces to recruit and train more than two dozen lawyers and paralegals to help clients apply for U Visas—specialized visas available only to immigrants who are crime victims and cooperate with U.S. law enforcement officials. This winter, Mr. Cockerham moved his practice from our Salt Lake City office to Washington, D.C., where he is recruiting and training another cohort of U Visa volunteers. The U

Visa Practice Group is splitting its award between HIAS Pennsylvania and Holy Cross Ministries Legal Immigration Program.

In 2011, Ballard Spahr provided more than 29,000 hours of pro bono legal services to low-income families, civil rights projects, and community organizations in need.