

## Pro Bono Celebration Task Force

The Pro Bono Celebration Task Force, chaired by John Stamps, is charged with planning, implementation and oversight of the Alabama State Bar 2021 Pro Bono Celebration.

In 2008, the American Bar Association approved the first every National Pro Bono Celebration. The National Pro Bono Celebration is an opportunity to celebrate the difference lawyers make in communities, to recruit and train more pro bono volunteers, and to acknowledge the partnerships that form the basis for so many of the private bar's successful pro bono efforts. The goal of the Pro Bono Celebration Task Force for 2021 was to develop projects around the state that would:

- 1) increase awareness within the bar of the need for and ways to participate in pro bono work;
- 2) present an opportunity for lawyers to contribute to their local communities;
- 3) provide an opportunity to showcase the pro bono work provided by attorneys throughout the year around the state; and
- 4) identify and celebrate the positive work of bar members.

The Pro Bono Celebration Task Force kicked off Pro Bono month with:

- a video by President Sheppard of the Alabama State Bar,
  - a Proclamation by Governor Ivy of the State of Alabama, and
  - an Order from the Alabama Supreme Court.
1. Each week during October we featured a video from a pro bono attorney sharing their experience and why doing pro bono work enriches their practice.
  2. Each week, we also be offered an hour of CLE to all our members. We had over 1000 bar members attend these CLE programs. The videos were made available for the Pro Learn web site.
  3. The Task Force also sponsored a Video Contest for Law Students. Law Students were challenged to prepare a short video on the importance of pro bono. The winner was Samantha Renshaw, a law student at the University of Alabama School of Law.
  4. Law Students were encouraged to sign the Pro Bono Pledge. The law school with the highest percentage of first year students signing the pledge was Jones School of Law.
  5. All of the Volunteer Lawyer Programs also expanded their clinics and services they provide during October.
  6. We also had a Book Club this year. We read *A Knock at Midnight a Story of Hope Justice and Freedom*. The book club was very popular with bar members and the book club subcommittee has already suggested that we continue this project next year.
  7. Additionally, at the admission ceremony the VLP had a booth and spoke to many of our new lawyers encouraging them to join the VLP.

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8. The Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court hosted a luncheon for several of our newly enrolled volunteers.

Overall it was a very successful Pro Bono Month.