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Allegheny County Bar Foundation to Recognize Individuals, Law Firm, and Organization with Pro Bono Achievement Awards

Awards to be presented at Sept. 15 Fall Foundation Reception at Hotel Monaco

PITTSBURGH – The Allegheny County Bar Foundation (ACBF) is proud to promote justice for all by developing and supporting pro bono legal services and public information initiatives. Each year, through its Pro Bono Achievement Awards, the ACBF recognizes individuals, firms, and organizations that have made exceptional contributions to eliminating the justice gap by providing crucial free legal services and information to those with low incomes.

The 2026 Pro Bono Achievement Awards will be presented at the ACBF's Fall Foundation Reception on Tuesday, Sept. 15, 5:30 p.m., at Hotel Monaco in Downtown Pittsburgh.

The following five individuals, one law firm, and one organization will be recognized:

Jane F. Hepting Individual Attorney Award: Joshua D. Brown

Joshua D. Brown, an attorney at Lund Metcalfe, LLC, has demonstrated a remarkable commitment to pro bono legal services through his volunteer work with Casa San José and the Collaborative Immigrant Impact (CII) Pro Bono Project. As an attorney volunteer with Casa San José and the CII, Mr. Brown has skillfully represented many local immigrant neighbors in asylum proceedings. This work allows those fleeing violence or persecution in their home countries to find safety in the community. Although his law practice is litigation, Mr. Brown expanded his legal knowledge by completing extensive immigration law training through the CII so that he can best serve his pro bono clients. Mr. Brown's compassionate and thorough assistance has supported community neighbors in finding life-saving refuge. Mr. Brown's dedication to using his legal expertise to help others makes him a worthy recipient of this award.

Kathryn M. Kenyon Leadership Award – Stefan A. Dann

Attorney Stefan A. Dann, Shareholder of Dentons Cohen & Grigsby, is the recipient of the Kathryn M. Kenyon Leadership Award in acknowledgement of his outstanding leadership in the founding of the Neighborhood Legal Services Name Change Pro Bono Program, which assists transgender and non-binary individuals in navigating the legal name change process. Name changes help provide dignity and safety in matching an individual's legal identity to their personal identity. Mr. Dann has

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been dedicated to expanding resources to the LGBTQ+ community in the area through his years-long commitment to the Name Change Project, a national initiative of the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund (TLDEF). When TLDEF lost the needed support to continue pro bono referrals in the Pittsburgh area, Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS) launched a Name Change Pro Bono Program in partnership with the Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation to ensure that crucial legal services would not disappear. Mr. Dann aided the program's founding through his training of volunteer attorneys, his creation of crucial legal forms, and his direct legal representation of NLS clients at Name Change Clinics. Mr. Dann's leadership in the creation of pro bono programs in the community is deserving of celebration.

Lorraine M. Bittner Public Interest Attorney Award: Catherine Martin

Catherine Martin has dedicated her career to providing imperative legal services to individuals with low incomes as an attorney at Neighborhood Legal Services. Ms. Martin began her work at NLS as a summer law student volunteer and has served NLS in an attorney role since her admission to the Pennsylvania Bar in 1978. Since 1995, Ms. Martin has been a managing attorney in NLS's Pittsburgh office, where she leads the Consumer Unit and acts as Director of Advocacy. As head of the Consumer Unit, Ms. Martin works to secure the financial stability of our neighbors with low incomes, which is crucial in preventing displacement from their homes. In her role as Director of Advocacy, Ms. Martin handles the strategic direction of NLS's client services and supports staff attorneys across multiple offices while continuing to handle a consumer caseload. Further, Ms. Martin instructs law students as an adjunct professor at the Thomas R. Kline School of Law at Duquesne University, teaches clinical classes at both the Duquesne Kline and the University of Pittsburgh Schools of Law, manages NLS's summer intern program, and supervises bankruptcy law students throughout the year. Ms. Martin's dedication to public interest legal causes — through her direct legal representation of those with low incomes, her creation of pro bono legal programs, and her leadership in engaging the next generation of attorneys — has improved the lives of countless members of our community and makes Ms. Martin most deserving of this honor.

Special Service Award: Jordan Lee Strassburger

Attorney Jordan Lee Strassburger, a Shareholder of Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky, is awarded the Special Service Award in recognition of his representation of KidsVoice clients facing summary charges in Magisterial District Courts. Mr. Strassburger's work shines a light on an oft-forgotten area of pro bono need: criminal cases in which one does not qualify for free representation from a public defender. KidsVoice is a nonprofit legal agency that represents abused, neglected and at-risk children, including young adults who have recently aged out of the foster care system. These young adults face unprecedented struggles for their age without the support of family. When facing a minor summary charge, it can be difficult to know where to turn. Mr. Strassburger's pivotal representation has prevented these young adults from encountering the barriers one faces with a criminal record, allowing their futures to not be limited in options for housing, employment, and education. The Allegheny County Bar Foundation is pleased to applaud Mr. Strassburger's compassionate and extraordinary pro bono service to the most vulnerable in the community.

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PRO BONO AWARDS – PAGE THREE

Law Firm Pro Bono Award – Robert Peirce & Associates, P.C.

Robert Peirce & Associates is awarded the Law Firm Pro Bono Award in appreciation of its institutional commitment to domestic violence advocacy through the Neighborhood Legal Services Protection From Abuse Pro Bono Program. Protection From Abuse (PFA) orders provide civil protection to individuals experiencing violence from those close to them, and unfortunately are an area of perennial need in civil legal aid. Due to the consistency and volume of these cases, the dependable nature of Robert Peirce & Associates' pro bono support is vital. Robert Peirce & Associates committed to a monthly PFA date through NLS, in which several attorneys from the firm step forward collectively to provide pro bono legal services for PFA clients with hearings scheduled on that date. Robert Peirce & Associates' structured and reliable pro bono participation serves as an example to local firms of how to integrate public service into the foundation of their organizations.

Organization Award – Allegheny County Law Library

Created at the direction of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1867, the Allegheny County Law Library (ACLL) has been a fixture in providing free legal information to members of the public for over 150 years. For those who cannot afford an attorney in civil legal actions, law libraries are imperative in providing accessible information for those who must represent themselves in legal proceedings. In 2023, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP) assumed management responsibilities of the ACLL, and in the three years of CLP's involvement, library usage has skyrocketed by 530 percent. The ACLL's innovative management has created free legal information workshops, resource fairs that include legal aid providers and government agencies, and self-service legal access models both available in-person and virtually. A free CLP library card now allows individuals to access legal information and forms without charge and free of fines through the CLP's shared catalogue, to pick up or return any print legal resources at any CLP location, and the opportunity to conduct free legal research through Westlaw at all CLP libraries. These strategies in bringing information to our neighbors demystify legal processes and put justice within reach of those with low incomes. The ACLL's efforts in improving access to justice to our community is unprecedented.

***Pro Bono Legacy Award – David Korman**

Rightly receiving the inaugural Pro Bono Legacy Award is David Korman, an Emeritus attorney with a storied career in supporting public interest causes and assisting those with low incomes through pro bono legal services and other volunteer endeavors. Mr. Korman's career began at a small general practice firm, before he was recruited to lead the Indigent Divorce Program (now the Divorce Law Project) for six months; he stayed for ten years. In addition to his work with the Indigent Divorce Program, Mr. Korman assisted with the following pro bono projects in Allegheny County: Project Challenge, United Mental Health Legal Services, and the Legal Project for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired. Mr. Korman also served as a hearing officer in the Allegheny County Family Division for ten years, hearing more than 20,000 cases. Beyond his work as an attorney, Mr. Korman previously served in various roles at the University of Pittsburgh and is currently volunteering for several organizations in non-attorney roles. Legal aid organizations recognize Mr. Korman as a dedicated pro bono volunteer, providing aid to our neighbors in need of legal help across a plethora of legal specialties: family law, criminal records clearing, immigration, landlord/tenant, as well as providing brief advice through in-person clinics and virtual resources. Mr. Korman's current pro bono legal efforts include participation with the Allegheny County Bar Foundation, the American and Pennsylvania Bar Associations, Neighborhood Legal Services, Jewish Family & Community Services and Casa San José. Throughout his career, Mr. Korman has demonstrated a steadfast

devotion to aiding members of our community, both through legal assistance and other volunteer work.

The award winners also will be recognized during National Pro Bono Week, Oct. 25-31. Pro Bono Week is a national celebration of the life-changing work that volunteer attorneys perform on behalf of clients with low incomes across the country. The ACBF Pro Bono Center will celebrate the week with a variety of events to thank volunteers, recruit and train additional volunteers, and bring attention to the needs of individuals facing critical legal issues.

Additional Award Information:

The Kathryn M. Kenyon Leadership Award is given to an individual who has demonstrated commitment and exceptional leadership in pro bono efforts benefitting the most vulnerable in our communities. The award was established in 2015 and is named in honor of Katie Kenyon, who has provided pro bono legal services throughout her legal career and has shown outstanding initiative and leadership as volunteer chair of organizations assisting individuals with low incomes including the ACBA Public Service Committee, the Pittsburgh Pro Bono Partnership, and Neighborhood Legal Services Association.

The Lorraine M. Bittner Public Interest Attorney Award is given to an outstanding and dedicated attorney who is employed by an entity or program whose primary function is the delivery of civil legal services to low-income individuals or organizations that serve the poor or disadvantaged. The award is named in honor of the first attorney to receive it when it was established in 2005, in honor of her exceptional and career-long commitment to the needs of the poor and disadvantaged through her work at Neighborhood Legal Services Association and the Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh.

The Jane F. Hepting Individual Attorney Award is given to an attorney who has shown exemplary commitment to or made substantial achievements in pro bono legal services. The ACBF Board of Trustees adopted a resolution in 2002 to name this award in recognition of Jane Hepting's dedication to the delivery of pro bono legal services through her 26 years as an NLS attorney, the many and varied pro bono programs that she helped create and implement, her recruitment initiatives and exceptional training programs to attract and prepare volunteer attorneys, her exceptional expenditures of time and energy on behalf of pro bono legal services, and her outstanding commitment and dedication to public service, the legal profession, and the community.

The Law Firm Pro Bono Award and Organization Award recognize groups of individuals who collectively or as an institution have shown exemplary commitment to or made substantial achievements in the delivery of pro bono legal services.

The Special Service Award recognizes individuals or organizations who do not fall into another category and who have made substantial contributions to the delivery of free legal services.

**The Pro Bono Legacy Award is given to attorneys whose careers are characterized by a steadfast dedication to pro bono legal services and public interest causes. Winners of this award have consistently provided extraordinary pro bono assistance in their time as an attorney. The ACBA/ACBF Access To Justice Committee voted to create this award in 2026.*

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About the ACBF

The ACBF provides educational programming, promotes public awareness of the legal and judicial systems, renders legal services to clients with low incomes and provides financial assistance and grants to legal-related organizations. The Foundation's Pro Bono Center helps attorneys fulfill their professional responsibility to provide public interest legal services by creating, managing, and supporting programs that match volunteer attorneys with individuals with low incomes facing legal issues that threaten their basic human needs. For more information, visit www.PittsburghProBono.org.

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