

# Making an Impact at Skadden

## Philosophy

Skadden views *pro bono* work as a professional responsibility. While recognizing that such work is a personal endeavor, the firm's actively encourages its attorneys to participate.

## Practice Areas

Skadden has a rich tradition of *pro bono* work across a broad spectrum of issues and practice areas, including, but not limited to:

- Arts and Entertainment
- *Amicus Curiae* Briefs
- Anti-Trafficking
- Civil and Criminal Appeals
- Community Development
- Death Penalty
- Disability
- Domestic Violence
- Education
- Elder Law
- Employment
- Family Law
- First Amendment
- Homelessness
- Housing
- Intellectual Property
- Microentrepreneurs
- Naturalization
- Nonprofits
- Political Asylum
- Prisoners' Rights
- Real Estate
- Tax
- U-Visa and T-Visa Petitions
- Veterans' Rights and Benefits
- Violence Against Women Act
- Voting Rights
- Wills

## Commitment

Skadden's commitment to *pro bono* service runs deep. The firm has pledged to dedicate 3-5% of its billable hours on *pro bono* work. With the firm meeting or exceeding that goal every year.

Our policies encourage attorneys to contribute to the firm's commitment to the public interest. Accordingly, attorneys are asked to perform at least 60 hours of *pro bono* work a year. With those hours counted as chargeable for all purposes.

Over 1.9 million hours of *pro bono* work have been completed by Skadden attorneys in the past 10 years. These efforts make Skadden one of the nation's leading *pro bono* service providers. Each attorney devoted 145 hours to *pro bono* service during the first 11 months of 2020.

## Summer Associate Program

In response to law firms announcing the transition to remote summer associate programs, we launched our first-ever remote, firmwide summer associate *pro bono* program. Twenty-five teams of summer associates, organized by issue area, worked on *pro bono* matters and research. Summer associates had the opportunity to collaborate across offices, working virtually, yet side by side with associates, counsel and partners on individual cases in eight key areas. These areas included immigration/asylum, housing, family law/domestic violence, nonprofits/small business, criminal/prisoners' rights, veterans, public rights and benefits, and low-income taxpayer issues. At the end of the summer, the

summer associates pitched their ideas for new *pro bono* projects and initiatives for the firm to consider.

The *pro bono* leadership team also planned remote *pro bono* fairs in five U.S. offices (N.Y., L.A., Palo Alto, D.C. and Chicago), featuring more than 50 local legal services providers from across the U.S. and more than 500 participants from Skadden. The organizations discussed how our attorneys and professional staff could get involved with COVID-19-related matters and in helping to fight systemic racism. Summer associates were invited to attend the virtual *pro bono* fairs in advance of their start dates.

Skadden



[skadden.com/recruiting](https://www.skadden.com/recruiting)

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## Initiatives and Achievements

Skadden is regularly recognized by legal services providers and bar associations for a wide array of *pro bono* achievements. Recent accomplishments include:

- In January 2020, our Hong Kong office and 14 attorneys were recognized for outstanding commitment to *pro bono* service at the Law Society of Hong Kong's annual *pro bono* and community service awards ceremony. Skadden was one of only three firms honored with the society's highest honor, the Distinguished Pro Bono Law Firm Award.
- On January 30, 2020, Skadden received an Empire State Counsel award at the New York State Bar Association's Justice for All Luncheon. Each year, the association presents six awards to law firms — three downstate and three upstate. Skadden has been honored more than any other firm. The awards recognize firms that "have gone above and beyond in performing much-needed *pro bono* work and in encouraging their associates and partners to do so."
- In April 2020, three Wilmington attorneys were honored with the Delaware Victims' Rights Task Force's annual Outstanding Volunteer Award, which recognizes members of the community who have exhibited exemplary local service resulting in positive, long-term change. The team was nominated by *pro bono* client Delaware Alliance Against Sexual Violence Inc. (DAASV). The three attorneys assisted DAASV in launching its organization by preparing and amending certain of its governing documents and preparing and filing a now-approved application for federal tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- In May 2020, Skadden was recognized by *The National Law Journal* on its 2020 Pro Bono Hot List as one of the firms that "have taken on some of the biggest [*pro bono*] issues of our time." An article accompanying the list discussed the successful challenge by Skadden attorneys and the Legal Aid Justice Center to Virginia's Interdiction Statute on behalf of a class of homeless individuals with alcoholism, as well as Skadden's work to clear a backlog of more than 5,000 applications for help that were submitted to the Innocence Project.
- In June 2020, Global Pro Bono Practice Director Brenna DeVaney received the Leadership, Excellence and Dedication to Pro Bono (LEAD) Award from Volunteers of Legal Service, a provider of free civil legal services in New York City.
- In August 2020, for the 13th consecutive year, Skadden raised more funds than any other law firm for The Legal Aid Society of New York's annual Associates' Campaign. The citywide fundraising competition is sponsored by The Legal Aid Society to benefit its Civil Practice. The campaign is organized by associates at the city's leading law firms who solicit donations from attorneys within their firms.
- In August 2020, The Washington Lawyers' Committee (WLC) presented Skadden with an Outstanding Achievement Award for our work fighting an egregious example of racial profiling.
- On August 19, 2020, Skadden was awarded the Leadership Award for the Learning Rights Law Center Law Firm Challenge for our work on the Long Beach Unified School District Records Request Project. The award is issued to a team that takes on a project in a challenging district — one that is ripe with resources but lacking in educational support and services for every single student.
- On October 29, 2020, Skadden received a Steve Kolleeny Pro Bono Service Award from the Bellevue Program for Survivors of Torture (PSOT) at its 2020 Annual Benefit. Named for the late leader of the firm's asylum program, the annual award acknowledges honorees who share Mr. Kolleeny's diligence and persistence in bettering the lives of their *pro bono* clients. We were recognized for the launch of our Immigration Impact Project (IIP), a global practice group of Skadden attorneys and professional staff who provide counsel across the full spectrum of immigration-related *pro bono* work. The IIP has strengthened our partnership with PSOT and our shared clients. Skadden also received the inaugural Steve Kolleeny Pro Bono Service Award in 2016.
- In November 2020, 13 Palo Alto attorneys were recognized as Outstanding Volunteers by the Justice and Diversity Center of the Bar Association of San Francisco (JDC). The award was given to the top 15% of JDC volunteers over the course of 2019 and 2020 based on the amount of time spent on JDC *pro bono* matters and the matters' complexity.
- On December 3, 2020, a Skadden attorney was honored with a Cornerstone Award from Lawyers Alliance for New York (LANY) for skillfully assisting nine nonprofits in navigating formation, structuring and corporate governance issues. LANY's annual Cornerstone Awards recognize attorneys and institutions that have made extraordinary contributions through *pro bono* legal services to nonprofits.

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For more information, contact **Brenna DeVaney**, director of *pro bono* programs / *pro bono* counsel, at [brenna.devaney@skadden.com](mailto:brenna.devaney@skadden.com) or 212.735.2325.