

Sources Say

SOURCES SAY features responses from industry professionals to questions posed by the Washington Business Journal. For information or to be included in future features, contact Associate Editor Timothy Burn at tburn@bizjournals.com.

Share with us any notable experiences you have had doing pro bono work.



SHERI DILLON
Partner,
Mokke Nelson LLP

"The opportunity to help prepare and collaborate with law students to advise low-income residents as they face complex tax issues was a main reason McKee Nelson recently partnered with the University of the District of Columbia's David A. Clarke School of Law Low Income Taxpayer Clinic. We are seeing problems such as stolen identity becoming a tax issue. Immigrants with valid Social Security Numbers are finding they owe taxes on income they never earned when others use the SSNs to secure jobs. The law students and the D.C. community are benefiting from this partnership, which helps to make the most of our tax expertise."



STEVE BASKIN
Managing partner,
Kilpatrick Stockton LLP

"In 2005, Kilpatrick Stockton partnered with Crowell & Moring to work with D.C. Applesseed to improve the District's child support programs. That culminated in a 190-page report, completed in July 2007. The experience opened our eyes to the real benefits of improving the child support process — increased parental involvement. While increasing the success in receiving child support payments is obviously important, we learned that providing job assistance programs and a less formal court mediation process created a greater likelihood that a noncustodial parent would be more actively involved in the lives of their children."



MICHAEL GOLLIN
Partner, patent prosecution
group, Venable LLP

"In 2002, I helped launch Public Interest Intellectual Property Advisors. PIPA is a global, pro bono resource that leverages the know-how of intellectual property lawyers to assist developing countries and public interest organizations that promote health, agriculture, science, education, culture, biodiversity and the environment. PIPA volunteers helped the Ache Guayaki tribe license its name to a consumer product, worked with Ethiopian coffee workers to develop a licensing program and helped other developing nations fight aggressive trademarking practices designed to block the export of their goods to developed markets."



WILLIAM GARDNER
Former partner,
Morgan, Lewis & Bookius LLP

"I had the good fortune to spend February in Monrovia, Liberia, as a volunteer with the International Senior Lawyer's Project in New York. I spent the month with the minister of justice and the solicitor general advising them on pursuing corruption on the part of former government officials. The Liberians were a delight to work with. Their enthusiasm for reform and honest government is palpable, as is their work ethic. They need all the help the international community can provide because their resources are so few. I spent most of my time providing training to their anti-fraud investigators and auditors and counseling their prosecutors."



ALLEN KEESSEE
Volunteer,
International
Senior Lawyers Project

"Earlier this year I had the good fortune to represent New York-based International Senior Lawyers Project on a five-week trip to Afghanistan to work with one of the country's leading legal aid NGOs, the Afghanistan Human Rights Organization. The trip was encouraging in that it offered a view of a society in which legal aid efforts could make a significant difference. It was discouraging, however, as well. For NGOs to implement human rights principles broadly, they need both adequate external support and a degree of internal official cooperation. In many, if not most, countries it is the cooperation that is missing."