



**Student
Pro Bono
Awards
2022**



LexisNexis®



**The LawWorks and Attorney
General Student Pro Bono Awards**

Wednesday 4th May 2022, 3:30-5:00
Cholmondeley Room and Terrace
House of Lords



Attorney General's Office Introduction

Welcome to the LawWorks and the Attorney General's Student Pro Bono Awards 2022. Throughout the history of the awards, Attorneys General have taken part in this vital event, to praise the many law students providing pro bono advice to thousands of people every year and note the huge benefits brought by students acting pro bono in a variety of areas of law such as family, welfare benefits, personal injury, employment, housing and small claims.



The LawWorks Clinic Report shows that over the last academic year thousands of students willingly gave their time to provide pro bono advice, which has helped make a real difference to people's lives as well as their communities.

In return, students gain legal skills and experience which will be of benefit to them throughout their professional career. Pro bono not only brings a sense of responsibility but also a tremendous sense of achievement and pride. These awards present a wonderful opportunity to appreciate a group of committed and hardworking law students who have gone to great lengths to help increase access to justice in their community.

The role of the Attorney General could not function without close support from the Solicitor General and the Attorney General's Office, similarly, this ceremony could not take place without its panel of Judges, who this year include: Peter Farr, Head of Civil Law Policy, Ministry of Justice; James Harper, Executive Sponsor, Rule of Law and CSR for LexisNexis UK & Ireland; Olivia Partridge, Content Producer, LawCareers.Net; Lubna Shuja, Vice President, The Law Society of England and Wales; Leanne Targett-Parker, co-Chair, Bar Council Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee and Rohini Teather, Head of Parliamentary Affairs, Legal Aid Practitioners Group, who have given their time and cast their expert eye over the shortlist and agreed the winners. Naturally, this could not happen without generous supporters like LexisNexis who generously sponsor this event.

Welcome from LawWorks Chair of Trustees

I am very pleased to welcome this year's shortlisted nominees to the House of Lords for the 16th annual LawWorks and Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards.

The Student Pro Bono Awards play a central role in LawWorks' involvement with students and offers a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the innovation, commitment and dedication of law students and law schools.



It is clear that the pro bono work being done by law students across the country is playing a significant role in the delivery of free advice to those in need. At a time when many face barriers to accessing legal advice, it is reassuring to see that student pro bono is now embedded at so many UK universities. Today, we come together to recognise this commitment and hard work.

On behalf of LawWorks, I am hugely grateful to all the students nominated, to the teachers and lawyers working within the law schools and to local solicitors, barristers, legal executives and others who support them. For me, it is one of the most inspiring aspects of our work and gives us great hope for the future.

We received a large number of high-calibre nominations and the diversity of projects nominated across the four categories is particularly impressive. The Award categories are: 'Best New Student Pro Bono Activity'; 'Best contribution by an Individual Student'; 'Best contribution by a Law School' and 'Best contribution by a Team of Students', with the winners chosen by an independent panel of judges. The Student Pro Bono Awards also include the Access to Justice Foundation Award for an educational body or student which has made a significant contribution to promoting access to justice.

Congratulations to all the shortlisted nominees; you should feel extremely proud of your achievements and the contribution you have made in enabling access to justice. I sincerely hope that you will continue with your commitment to pro bono as you move forward in your career, demonstrating that participating in pro bono is an essential part.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alasdair Douglas'.

Alasdair Douglas
Chair of Trustees

The Awards

Categories:

- Access to Justice Foundation Award
- Best New Pro Bono Activity
- Best Contribution by an Individual
- Best Contribution by a Law School
- Best Contribution by a Team of Students

THE
ACCESS
TO JUSTICE
FOUNDATION



Access to Justice Foundation Award

The Access to Justice Foundation works to bring additional financial resources to support free legal help for those in need. We are delighted to be part of the LawWorks and Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards.

The work of the Foundation is strategic and focuses on generating new sources of funding to support the free legal advice sector.

The Foundation receives funds from pro bono costs, introduced in October 2008 by section 194 of the Legal Services Act 2007, donations of dormant client account funds and works with a matrix of Legal Support Trusts to support the pro bono and advice sector, with fundraising events such as 'Go the Extra Mile for Justice' and the regional Legal Walks.

The Foundation is proud to celebrate the outstanding contributions of students and academics who strive to promote access to justice. Our Award both recognises and commends the vital efforts made by future legal professionals and those who train them to support free legal advice agencies that bring real change to the lives of thousands of people up and down the country.

This year's award was judged by the Access to Justice Foundation Trustee, Simon Davis, and we are delighted to be announcing the winner at the Student Awards celebration at the House of Lords.

The shortlisted nominees for this year's Access to Justice Foundation Award are:

- Gabriella Barnes, University of Edinburgh
- University of Plymouth Law Clinic
- Amelia Quince, Cambridge University
- Windrush Justice Clinics at London South Bank University, King's College London and University of Westminster

Best New Pro Bono Activity

School Programme, The Aberdeen Law Project, Aberdeen University

"I was really impressed with the enthusiasm and organisation of [the team] and the way they were able to engage members of the class in the whole process. I was particularly proud to see a number of the not-so-confident people in my class read and act out their scripts beautifully."

The Aberdeen Law Project is a pro bono law clinic founded, led and operated by law students from the University of Aberdeen, with the aim of reducing the justice gap. The clinic's Schools' Project runs in-person and online events for primary and secondary school pupils throughout Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. These include workshops run in partnership with Police Scotland to educate young people on legal issues affecting their communities, including the impact of drug abuse; mock trials, also in partnership with Police Scotland, to help primary school pupils understand police procedure and the court structure; workshops for secondary school pupils on digital crime awareness and money and product mule prevention; and online events for aspiring law students. Since September 2021, the Schools' Project has reached hundreds of students and received positive feedback from both pupils and teachers.

Young Asylum Seekers Legal Advice Clinic, University of Hertfordshire

"Advice from the YASLAC clinic is so important because on so many occasions a young person has no other means to get any advice. In some circumstances, it can also give them the hope that they will eventually receive the right support."

Launched in November 2021, the Young Asylum Seekers Legal Advice Clinic (YASLAC) is a collaborative partnership between the University of Hertfordshire, the national charity Centrepoin and the national law firm, Duncan Lewis. Participating students undertake specialist training, then gain practical experience triaging clients and shadowing lawyers from Duncan Lewis. In addition to learning about immigration law, the students are able to develop new transferable skills, enhance their employability with experiential learning and develop informal connections with the partner organisations. Clients receive practical advice including steps they can take themselves and recommendations on where to go for further assistance. Though clients

are often vulnerable and distrustful of the legal system, working with young students, many of whom are themselves from a widening access background, can help put them at ease and build trust. To date seven students have been trained to participate and three clients assisted, with that number expected to grow quickly.

Human Rights and Environment Clinic, King's Legal Clinic, The Dickson Poon School of Law, King's College London

"From strategic support to operational engagement, the clinic was crucial in helping us. Without this strategic help, as well as the enthusiasm and dedication of law students, many socially excluded and vulnerable people would not be able to access legal advice which they desperately needed."

Launched in 2020, the Human Rights and Environment Clinic is the first in the UK to bridge the divide between human rights and environmental law. Using the tools learned from the pandemic, it works transnationally with clients ranging from indigenous communities in Columbia to a Cornish community affected by tin mining.

In the UK, the clinic partners with the Environmental Law Foundation which refers a range of domestic environmental law cases from community groups. The clinic also worked with The Roma Support Group to set up the Mayfair Roma Hub.

One of the clinic's most innovative initiatives is The Sundarbans Climate Justice Project aiming to develop a clinical model to address the lack of access to justice for communities affected by rising sea levels and climate change. The clinic team also worked on the Greenwatch amicus curiae brief on deforestation in Uganda – this could prove to be one of the most significant cases on environment and climate change in Africa.

Windrush Justice Clinics at London South Bank University, King's College London and University of Westminster

"This project has proved to be the light at the end of the tunnel for many and has begun to restore faith in the justice system in the UK. This has helped further develop my interest in immigration law as well as human rights law and has affirmed my decision to go into a career in this sector."

The Windrush Justice Clinic was launched in October 2020. It is a collaborative partnership made up of community organisations, law centres

and university legal advice clinics striving to help victims of the windrush scandal receive the compensation they deserve.

The clinic provides several layers of support utilising the strengths of the various partners. Staff and volunteers engage in advocacy and feed into ongoing discussions in respect of the windrush schemes and help identify gaps in legal provision. Working from start to completion on claims with clients who are often vulnerable, the scheme can offer additional employment, immigration and housing advice.

The innovative and collaborative nature of the scheme has had a direct beneficial impact on the community affected with over 100 clients being assisted to claim Home Office compensation with 20 being awarded a total of £1,151,000.

Best Contribution by an Individual

Meera Amari Chauhan, University of Leicester

“She has the ability and maturity to engage with local legal professionals, academic staff and professional services staff, and students, in order to make the pro bono society’s activities run well.”

As Pro Bono Society President, Meera’s role includes supporting twelve different projects. She also organises various professional occasions, workshops and guest speaker and fundraising events. Meera researched the forfeiture and seizure of property in oppressive regimes, led a debate on gender inequality, and collaborated with five law students to create a variety of materials, tackling the issue of human trafficking in Tanzania.

She introduced a response to the Ukraine crisis, in which the pro bono society are organising donations, researching and raising awareness of the crisis and helping provide information on how to safely evacuate from a warzone.

Other innovative initiatives have included Meera supporting a project called LIGHT to collaborate with the sikh society and organising a community outreach at the local Gurudwara. Meera also launched a Winter Shoe Box Appeal for “Help the Homeless.” She collaborated with SolidariTee to deliver a presentation giving insight into the student-led society fighting for refugee rights.

Theresa Cokell, University of Bolton

“I could think of no other person who could be more deserving – a student who has encapsulated the spirit of pro bono activity to drive the success of the [Legal Advice] Centre whilst also supporting peers and undergraduate students to achieve at the highest level.”

Terri has used her considerable life experience (in addition to being a law student, she is also the mother of nine children) to provide advice and guidance to clients, particularly on family law matters. The willingness to go the extra mile has continued throughout Terri’s studies and she has always gone over and above for the clients she seeks to help and in her support for Legal Advice Centre clients.

Even though she is now engaged with the LLM/SQE programme, Terri has still found time to attend the Legal Advice Centre every Friday to support the work of second year students, in addition to advocating the work of the

Centre to groups within the local community who would otherwise not have known where to turn for help.

Graham Herschel, University of Chester

“Graham holds an absolute commitment to using the law, and student’s legal skills, to stand up for those who are most vulnerable. He is committed to working alongside front-line agencies to effect a change for the better from the inside out.”

Graham is a student project manager for The Housing Advocacy and Access to Legal Advice project (a collaboration between the University of Chester Law School and several third sector organisations). The project aims to provide a voice and practical support to those facing, experiencing or transitioning from homelessness. Graham is currently leading a team of students who are producing pictorial fact sheets and short videos to empower individuals faced with navigating the complex system around tenants’ rights and eviction challenges. He is also working on The Plain English Project, reviewing letters sent out by local authorities relating to tenancy, eviction and review processes.

Through a collaboration with Pennysmart, Graham is developing a series of bit-sized videos covering disrepair and threats of eviction. He is also involved in Money Matters, a project which supports individuals who are experiencing financial hardship who are not receiving the benefits to which they are entitled.

Samantha Howlett, University of Essex

“[Sam] has shown outstanding maturity and wisdom in representing the student viewpoint on decisions without every compromising her fierce determination to see that the client and the community are always prioritised in decision-making.”

From the very start of her clinic life, Sam’s positivity, enthusiasm and professionalism made her stand out as an exceptional volunteer. Her passion for family law is fuelled by her direct experience of what it is like to be a vulnerable person, having left home and school at 16. Her commitment to pro bono is huge. She has been a highly effective and active Student Director, despite also managing her studies, a family and a home, taking on extensive client casework and formal and ad-hoc roles in assisting staff and students. She has chaired regular student forums, enabling and encouraging peer-to-peer feedback from volunteers about their clinical experiences and she plays an active role in student recruitment and training.

Sam's clinic work has consistently shown her passion for helping people in need, particularly in relation to domestic abuse matters and cases concerning children. She is highly empathetic and provides clear, straightforward advice. Through her dedication, positivity and hard work, she is a real role model for students.

Amelia Quince, Cambridge University Law Society, Cambridge University

"Amelia has shown unparalleled commitment to pro bono while at Cambridge. Her skill and motivation have effected great change in the wider Cambridge community, in addition to providing students with valuable experience and inspiration."

Amelia has worked with a Citizens Advice clinic for a number of years and has gone above and beyond in this role. She not only provides volunteer advice support, but has written numerous articles for the newsletter Spotlight on a number of legal issues. Her advice on domestic violence and online scams is particularly impressive and useful, and was important during the pandemic when many vulnerable individuals could not physically visit advice centres.

She leads a group of 24 students in her role as Head Pro Bono Coordinator, all of whom work on a number of core projects. In the Amicus Project, Amelia has also overseen the work of more than 100 students on hundreds of death row cases. She has led a project in producing a video for the Amnesty Social Justice Showcase, which featured local organisations that make a difference to social justice and founded "The Pro Bono Publico", a blog for students to post about their pro bono experiences and comment on access to justice.

Helena Siebenrock, The Aberdeen Law Project, University of Aberdeen

"Through Helena's tenacity and passion, TLC [foodbank] has been supported greatly and has only good things to say about Helena and the ALP".

Helena stands out in regards to the vast range of work she has been involved in. As Student Director she is responsible for overseeing all of Aberdeen Law Project's (ALP's) 15 outreach initiatives along with the representation and PR teams. She is also involved in communication with external partners promoting ALP, including the approval of all materials that teams develop prior to publishing, event management, team management, project management, administration and more.

Helena also founded the Language Justice Initiative and is part of the founding team of the Probonoskills.com platform which provides wide-reaching training to Scottish law clinics. No doubt is it because of Helena's guidance and the whole team's collective efforts that ALP was shortlisted for the Pro Bono category in the LexisNexis Legal Awards 2022. Helena has also secured the support of Lord Reed, President of the Supreme Court, in becoming Patron of ALP as well as the Lord Advocate, Dorothy Bain QC, who accepted ALP's invitation to be guest speaker at ALP's Annual Lecture 2022.

Alecia Spence, Hillary Rodham Clinton School of Law, Swansea University

"Alecia has shown tremendous commitment to the clinic and has given 230 hours of her time to clinical activities. She embodies the values of the Pro Bono Protocol, as she carries out her duties timeously and to the highest standard."

Alecia has volunteered for many years for Swansea Law Clinic and has done so throughout her undergraduate law degree from her first to her third year. Alecia has been involved in the clinic's governance as she is a member of the clinic's student board. In this role, she has represented students in meetings with clinic staff and helped the clinic innovate, through the use of legal technology and holistic support to clients, in order to meet the clinic's strategic priorities and extend its service. This contributed to ensuring the clinic retains its Advice Quality Standard quality kite mark.

Alecia has been one of the first student advisers to be involved in the Ukraine Advice Project and been advising clients on the Ukraine Family Scheme which has enabled the clinic to make a rapid response to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. She has also been involved in the Valla Project, which is an online free platform, which provides advice on employment law.

Best Contribution by a Law School

BPP Pro Bono Centre, BPP University

"[The]... volunteers and staff... have not just met, but exceeded, all expectations of what could be achieved,... [offering]... legal support that meets the needs of the clients... [and] also future proofs the service."

Utilising online technology, BPP worked to secure and improve accessibility of pro bono services for clients and volunteers. In 2020/21, the virtual BPP Legal Advice Clinic advised 30% more clients than they had the previous year. There was also a significant increase in volunteer engagement. In addition to running the Housing, Family, General Litigation and Enterprise Clinics, BPP also launched a Welfare Rights Clinic that provided invaluable support to individuals navigating the benefits system. BPP recently joined the Environmental Law Foundation network and has recruited their first cohort of volunteers to support the new BPP/ ELF Legal and Policy Clinics.

Though their extensive Streetlaw project consisting of live and recorded online sessions, podcasts and broadcasts, students have worked with schools, prisons and community groups to improve access to justice by demystifying complex areas of law. 3,950 people have benefitted from the remote Streetlaw project. In the last 16 months, students and volunteer lawyers have provided initial advice to 600 clients through their Employment Law Telephone Advice Line.

University of Bristol Law Clinic, University of Bristol

"I wasn't eligible for legal help via your clinic because I live in Plymouth, but your team decided to take on my case regardless and your student advisers...showed high levels of compassion, dedication and commitment to my case from day 1."

Students at the University of Bristol have participated in a range of pro bono activities through the University of Bristol Law Clinic. This year the Law Clinic has supported hundreds of clients with issues relating to housing, employment, benefit appeals and contract disputes. Through their involvement in outreach programmes, students have provided advice and information to charities and organisations including Young Lives Against Cancer, the Bristol Drugs Project and BANES dementia service, as well running advice and education sessions for local schools and engaging in experience sharing conferences with students from Israel, Spain, Croatia and India.

Students within the Inquest Team provided invaluable advice, support and occasional representation for clients for whom legal aid is not available, including travelling to London to support a client in a three-day inquest. Working in collaboration with two other universities, the Law Clinic was also instrumental in setting up LIP Service, a service ran in conjunction with the local county court to provide members of the public with advice on the court process.

Student Legal Advice Centre, Derby Law School, University of Derby

"I strongly believe that without the services the University of Derby offers, there would be...more people in the Derby area struggling with the legal minefield of court applications."

The University of Derby's Student Legal Advice Centre opened its doors to the public in February 2019. Initially it offered advice in relation to family law matters only, but in February 2021 it opened an Immigration Family Reunion Clinic, in partnership with the British Red Cross and Paragon Law. Student volunteers draft Exceptional Case Funding applications for clients and 93% of applications made have been successful.

In August 2021, the Centre established its Litigant in Person service in order to provide support to those needing help in private children's matters at court – and have seen a threefold increase in client numbers this year. Finally, in December 2021, the Centre opened its Policy Clinic (which is currently exploring the nexus between poverty and the criminal justice system in India).

There is a keen commitment from students - 140 (out of a total of 300) have volunteered so far. Furthermore, the Centre has been able to move to an online delivery of its services which are now offered to those living beyond its local geographical area.

Hertfordshire Law School, University of Hertfordshire

"I had plenty of time to talk and explain various issues, all of which were answered. It was explained what a S21 notice was and how the landlord had already not provided certain things to me, which would count against them, therefore giving me peace of mind."

Hertfordshire Law School has increased the impact and scope of its pro bono activities since it first launched a pro bono project in 2019. Hertfordshire

Law Clinic provides free legal advice on a range of issues by working in collaboration with firms of solicitors and charities. It also runs a satellite family law service at Future Living Hertford, supporting people experiencing domestic abuse.

In March 2021, the law school launched an LGBT+ Law Clinic providing free advice to the LGBT+ community and began the Hertfordshire Community Mobile Advice Clinic, giving advice to hard-to-reach communities in the county. Finally the Young Asylum Seekers Legal Advice Clinic was established in 2021, providing free legal advice to vulnerable young asylum seekers.

Students also volunteer with Stevenage Citizens Advice, providing support to local people refused Personal Independence Payments and its Shelter Court Runner Scheme has helped clients in possession hearings at local county courts.

University of South Wales Law School, University of South Wales

"I felt very lost regarding my situation and really did not know how to pursue the matter. The LAC could not have been more helpful and lifted a weight off my shoulders."

The Legal Advice Clinic at the University of South Wales offers every law student an opportunity to participate. Established in 2013 and based in the South Wales Valleys, the Clinic helps plug a gap in access to justice by providing free legal advice on employment, family, consumer, litigation, housing and business law in an area where limited pro bono advice is available.

Collaborative partnerships are a key element – one of which operates with Cardiff Lawyers Care who run a pro bono Homelessness Advice Clinic. Initially appointments were drop-in at a night shelter in Cardiff, but the clinic now operates online as a result of Covid-19 and its scope has widened as a result with a fivefold increase in clients.

The positive feedback that students receive demonstrate to them that they have the capacity to make a real difference and is hugely influential in shaping them to remain committed to access to justice.

Best Contribution by a Team of Students

The Aberdeen Law Project Representation Team, University of Aberdeen

“The Aberdeen Law Project (ALP) team were professional, supportive and knowledgeable. When working with the ALP team there was constant and clear communication, as they were incredibly responsive to emails. We never felt like we were alone in the dark, instead we felt reassured in the knowledge that they were there to help us.”

The Aberdeen Law Project is a student founded and led pro bono clinic running since 2019. The team represents clients in a range of cases including landlord and tenant and consumer protection. The Project also works with the Scottish Social Services Council to provide representation to its members in fitness to practice proceedings. They enjoy a 100% success rate, thereby ensuring members can have their voices heard and retain their jobs.

The team has seen an increase in enquiries last year with 13 active cases currently. With two advisors on each case, the client can be sure of both a fantastic relationship and a positive outcome.

The project is always seeking to extend its reach. It has successfully enforced a judgment in a foreign jurisdiction which was hugely rewarding for the advisor, and more recently filed a claim in a discrimination case for breaches of the Equality Act 2010.

ELTAL Student Directors, BPP University Pro Bono Centre

“Various people are involved in making ELTAL a success, but it is the hard work and dedication of the Student Directors which ultimately makes it possible to provide this pro bono service. The significant time and effort the Student Directors devote to the administration of ELTAL ensures it operates efficiently and allows us to help as many clients as possible.”

The Employment Law Telephone Advice Line (ELTAL) has been running for 16 years with support from BPP staff, student volunteers and volunteer lawyers. Last year they responded to 559 queries. The 119 student volunteers and 24 lawyers are coordinated by a dedicated team of three Student Directors whose efforts ensure the smooth running of the service.

Working upwards of eight hours a week, the Student Directors manage the volunteer rota, deal with potential conflicts, maintain client records and

statistics and deal with student queries. More recently they have taken on a national role co-ordinating the service across all BPP campuses rather than locally. Their communication skills and professionalism are exemplary, and they are applauded for their responsiveness by both clients and volunteers. The Student Directors not only consistently perform above expectations but also seek continually to improve the service for both clients and lawyers, ensuring the volunteering experience is as enjoyable and valuable as possible.

Shelter Court Runner Team, Hertfordshire Law School

“The court runner scheme is an inherently collaborative project, where our students take centre stage. They make a real difference to clients, see law in practice and develop skills which can be done in no other student setting.”

The court runner scheme is a collaboration between Hertfordshire Law School and national housing charity Shelter. Ten law school students help Shelter’s own in-house solicitor Ruth Camp to support defendants facing possession orders at Watford and Hertford County Courts. Many of the defendants have never had any legal advice before; many of them are anxious; and all of them are at risk of homelessness. Under Shelter’s supervision, the students interview the defendants, gathering information to support their case and sometimes drafting initial advice letters. This has increased by 20% the number of people that Ruth Camp is able to support. Furthermore, feedback from District Judges has included: *“...any assistance provided by the scheme is invaluable, not only to those receiving their assistance, but to the other parties involved in the hearings and to myself as judge”*; while Polly Toynbee of The Guardian stated: *“I was impressed with the way the student talked with the Defendants... helping to put them at their ease”*.

Support Through Court Manchester Team, Manchester Metropolitan University

“We’re enormously grateful for the persistence, courage and innovation of the student team who pioneered our work during this time. Once face-to-face services closed, the team supported [us] to implement new systems that overhauled the way we worked. Rather than having to close our services completely, we were able to continue to reach clients by a new National Helpline and through video calls.”

Support Through Court offers support and guidance to people going through court without representation as litigants in person – before, during and

after court. Through the scheme, ten student volunteers from Manchester Metropolitan University provided practical, procedural and emotional support in many areas of civil and family court processes. They explained how the court works, helped clients fill in forms, organised papers and discussed settling issues without going to court. In spite of the pandemic, the students' innovative ideas helped the scheme to support 1,445 clients. The Service Manager commented: "We continuously adapted to the ever-changing effects of the pandemic. The students were an integral part of service delivery during an extremely challenging time... [they] adapted quickly and with enthusiasm. I am grateful to them for their dedication and commitment and they were an asset to the charity".

Immigration and Refugee Law Clinic Team, University of Plymouth and British Red Cross

"The law clinic gives me hope when I was hopeless and at the moment when I'm writing this email almost all my cases are processed and resolved for my family to be together."

The work of the Immigration and Refugee Law Clinic Team encompasses both casework for individual clients and the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) teaching project, in which students take the IHL and Refugee Law into schools to broaden knowledge and raise awareness.

The Law Clinic works in partnership with the British Red Cross Refugee Family Reunion Service, where students assist very vulnerable people reunite with families from whom they have been separated due to persecution, conflict and war. The team has had to engage with numerous complex and difficult issues, such as the impact of torture on victims and the effect of familial separation on children. This year the clinic is running a specialist emergency project to support Afghan nationals (such as interpreters who worked with the British military) to reunite them with their family members.

Members of the team have also co-created and are running a peer support/mentoring group for students who have faced barriers accessing University due to being in the asylum system.

Thank you to our Judges

LawWorks & Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards:

- **Peter Farr**, Head of Civil Law Policy, Ministry of Justice
- **James Harper**, Executive Sponsor, Rule of Law and CSR for LexisNexis UK & Ireland
- **Olivia Partridge**, Content Producer, LawCareers.Net
- **Lubna Shuja**, Vice President, The Law Society of England and Wales
- **Leanne Targett-Parker**, co-Chair, Bar Council Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee
- **Rohini Teather**, Head of Parliamentary Affairs, Legal Aid Practitioners Group

Access to Justice Foundation Award

- **Simon Davis**, Trustee, Access to Justice Foundation and former President of the Law Society of England and Wales

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About LawWorks

Supporting and celebrating pro bono

LawWorks (the Solicitors Pro Bono Group) aims to promote, support and facilitate pro bono legal services that extend access to the law for individuals and communities in need and the organisations that support them.

We champion pro bono because of the positive contribution and difference it makes for individuals, communities and society.

We work (in England and Wales) with the solicitors' profession and our members, the Law Society, law schools and law students, law centres, advice agencies and others to develop and support pro bono legal services, and to promote access to justice for all.

While pro bono is not, and should not be, an alternative to legal aid - it makes an important contribution to accessing legal information, advice and representation.

We enable the provision of pro bono through:

Supporting a growing network of over 300 independent pro bono clinics. We work with lawyers, advice agencies, charities and others to establish or develop new clinics, and provide on-going support, information, training and webinars and legal resources (including the online legal research tools Lexis®Library and Lexis®PSL);

- Our Not-for-Profits Programme facilitates the provision of free legal advice for smaller charities and not-for-profit organisations, supported by volunteer solicitors from among LawWorks members. We also provide free online training videos for charities, covering many of the common legal issues they face;
- We support more in-depth pro bono ('secondary specialisation'), in areas of social welfare law. This includes supporting solicitors to provide representation at First-tier social security tribunals, an unpaid wages project and, working with the charity Together for Short Lives, to provide legal advice and case-work for the parents and carers of children with life-limiting conditions;
- Connecting barristers and solicitors to jointly litigate civil cases on a pro bono basis through the Pro Bono Connect Scheme;
- Digital platforms and tools, including the Pro Bono Portal UK, linking firms and in-house teams to pro bono opportunities easily and quickly, and

Free Legal Answers, enabling individuals to request initial or one-off legal advice.

Supporting litigants in person

LawWorks is a partner organisation for the Litigant in Person Support Strategy, working with Law for Life, Support Through Court, RCJ Advice, Advocate and the Access to Justice Foundation. Funded by the Ministry of Justice, the Strategy works to improve the experience of people involved in legal proceedings who do not have a lawyer.

Addressing barriers to justice: a 'policy voice' for pro bono

We work to remove barriers to pro bono and use evidence from the work of local clinics, our members and others to advocate for positive policy change to better enable access to free legal advice and to justice.

In building a 'policy voice' for LawWorks and pro bono, we have engaged with the Government's review of LASPO (the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012) and subsequent Legal Support Action Plan, as well as other strategic policy reviews and consultations such as the Taylor review of modern working practices, and on court and tribunal modernisation.

We have supported various fora for policy engagement including the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Pro Bono and Public Legal Education, which has developed a public legal education vision and strategy with the support of the Law Officers. During COVID, we have facilitated a new advice sector roundtable with a range of legal and access to justice organisations to address issues, challenges and legal needs raised by the crisis.

Student pro bono

The pro bono contribution of law schools and students is significant and growing. LawWorks encourages and supports student pro bono (many law school clinics are part of the LawWorks clinics network), and the important contribution students make is recognised and celebrated through the annual LawWorks & Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards. The growth in the range and scale of pro bono activities undertaken by students is analysed in more depth our [Law School Pro Bono and Clinic report](#).

Membership of LawWorks

The support of our members is vital to our work. Membership of LawWorks

makes an important contribution towards the achievement of our charitable objectives and supporting our work in enabling and celebrating pro bono and the importance of access to justice. We have around 130 members, including some of the largest City and International firms, national, regional and local firms, and in-house teams, law schools and charities.

We support our members in a number of ways, including by providing information, guidance and advice (for example, in setting up or developing a pro bono project), and facilitating pro bono activity and connections through our Not-For-Profits Programme.

Members have the opportunity to nominate for our annual awards and have access to our training, online resources, newsletters and networking opportunities (including a quarterly pro bono forum and regional events), and have the opportunity to contribute to our growing policy work.

By joining LawWorks you will be supporting our charitable work to encourage, support and celebrate pro bono, and also our work to highlight - and address - barriers to accessing justice.

The fee depends upon the size of the firm or in-house legal team - with other categories also for charities and other organisations.

For more information about membership of LawWorks and the difference your membership can make, please get in touch with Sarah Yates, Membership Officer, at sarah.yates@lawworks.org.uk or visit our website www.lawworks.org.uk.

Other ways to support LawWorks

The need for pro bono support has increased due to cuts in legal aid, the closure of some law centres, and the ongoing effects of the pandemic, which has exacerbated the problems faced by disadvantaged individuals across the UK. As a charity, LawWorks is almost entirely dependent on grants and other philanthropic funding, and the amount we are able to raise determines the scope and reach of our work.

We welcome both one-off donations and long-term support for our programmes. There are also opportunities to take part in fundraising challenges or to sponsor our events. If you would like to discuss supporting LawWorks financially, please contact Carrie Cuno, Head of Fundraising, at carrie.cuno@lawworks.org.uk, or visit our website www.lawworks.org.uk.

The LawWorks & Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards
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LawWorks is a charity working in England and Wales to connect volunteer lawyers with people in need of legal advice, who are not eligible for legal aid and cannot afford to pay and with the not-for-profit organisations that support them.

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