



**Student  
Pro Bono  
Awards  
2023**



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

**Thursday 27th April 2022, 3:00-5:00  
Pavilion Terrace, House of Commons**





## Welcome from the Attorney General

Welcome to the LawWorks and the Attorney General's Student Pro Bono Awards 2023. I commend the many law students providing pro bono advice to thousands of people every year. Advice is given in a variety of areas of law such as family, welfare benefits, personal injury, employment, housing and small claims, and volunteering takes various forms.



The LawWorks Clinic Report shows that over the last academic year thousands of students willingly give 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. I sincerely hope the enthusiasm shown for pro bono by nominated students will stay with them for the rest of their careers. 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.

All students nominated across all categories should be very proud. I hope that they will consider a career in the Government Legal Department where they can find a home for their skill, enthusiasm and commitment to public service.

I would like to extend my gratitude to this year's panel of Judges who have given their time and cast their expert eye over the shortlist and agreed the winners. I would also like to thank LexisNexis for kindly sponsoring this event, and to Alasdair Douglas for once again introducing the awards and to the LawWorks staff team for making them happen.

Most of all, I commend and thank all this year's entrants for their outstanding contributions to pro bono.

Rt Hon Victoria Prentis KC MP, Attorney General

## Welcome from LawWorks Chair of Trustees

I am very pleased to welcome this year's shortlisted nominees to the House of Commons for the 17th 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 and growing 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 inspiring 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.

This year we welcome the winners of the Law School Challenge to the Award ceremony. Their imaginative efforts in raising money for LawWorks and our sister charity, Advocate, is greatly appreciated.

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, which appears to read 'Alasdair Douglas'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background.

Alasdair Douglas, Chair of Trustees

# The Awards

- Law School Challenge
- Best New Pro Bono Activity
- Best Contribution by an Individual
- Best Contribution by a Law School
- Best Contribution by a Team of Students





## **LawWorks and Advocate Law School Challenge 2022/23**

LawWorks and Advocate would like to congratulate and thank the eight teams who participated and raised funds in the Law School Challenge 2022/23. Their amazing hard work and dedication to our charities is greatly appreciated.

This was the first time that the challenge has been held since 2020 and the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, a high bar has been set for future years. All kinds of fundraising activities took place; from a masquerade ball to a murder mystery night, world cup sweep stakes, movie nights, branded hoodies, holiday biscuit boxes, and countless quiz nights and bake sales.

LawWorks and Advocate would like to congratulate The University of Law Bloomsbury Campus for winning the 2022/23 Law School Challenge. The University of Sunderland, and University of Huddersfield are recognised as this year's immediate runners up. We also commend The University of Law Midlands team.

The other participants in the Law School Challenge were Birmingham City University, Nottingham Law School, Staffordshire University and Warwick University.

LawWorks and Advocate would like to thank and extend our gratitude to Swati Krishnakumar, our Law School Challenge volunteer, who organisation, tireless patience and dedication contributed hugely to the success of the Challenge this year.

Once again we would like to say a big thank you to all the law schools that participated in the Challenge, for the valuable contribution you have made to LawWorks and Advocate.

## Best New Pro Bono Activity

### Ukraine Project Cymru, Cardiff University

*“...it has been fantastic to see how our students have risen to the challenge in responding to this emergency crisis. Their commitment and quality of work has been outstanding.”*

Setup to provide immigration advice to Ukrainians in Wales, the Ukraine Project Cymru is a new partnership between Cardiff University, the Welsh Government and local charity Asylum Justice. Using IT services provided by Asylum Justice, a dedicated group of 13 students have worked tirelessly since October 2022 to provide advice on all matters relating to immigration and asylum. Working in small groups, online appointments are followed up by legal research and advice in writing, which is supervised and checked by the project lead. As a pan-Wales project it has helped clients right across Wales including in harder to access areas. To date 18 clients have received specialist advice, with 16 more receiving general advice or signposting.

The students have gone out of their way to further the project including meeting out of hours and supporting each other. The work is fast paced, and students consistently demonstrate a high level of commitment and initiative. The impact on beneficiaries is very real, enabling families to remain together and live a more settled life.

### City Community Legal Advice Centre, City University London

*“The CityCLAC has been an invaluable addition to the Westminster Refernet partnership...the CityCLAC gives residents the access to justice they deserve and do not have the means to access themselves, which is crucial given the rising cost of living in the UK.”*

CityCLAC is a new service based at City Law School and is a part of the Refernet service. Working with other local providers and law firms, they advise on 8 main areas of civil law including family, employment and assisting with PIP applications. The innovative service offers a hybrid model of face-to-face and online appointments thereby reaching a wide range of clients. Appointments are offered by Zoom and followed up by advice in writing. Over the last 16 months, some 200 students have worked to advise 337 clients across the city with a further 215 helped through signposting.

The new PIP form filling service, supervised by a welfare solicitor, will



see around 140 clients helped this year. This has been very well received as early intervention can make a real difference to ensuring successful outcomes for clients. All clients using the service have rated it 5/5.

### **The Prisons Project, The Aberdeen Law Project**

*'This has been a positive partnership which has been well received by all and we would like to thank the Aberdeen Law Project for providing this valuable support during their busy schedules.'*

The Aberdeen Law Project's Prisons Project aims to bridge the gap between liberation and reintegration into the community, a stage in the offending cycle where offenders are particularly susceptible to relapse into criminal behaviour. The project supports prisoners on release by delivering workshops on employability and budgeting as well as advising people in custody on opportunities and career prospects. The project has partnered with Fife College and the Scottish Prisons Service to assess the specific areas in which inmates need support and also runs a Youth and Justice Workshop in collaboration with APEX Grampian to provide young people with information on Scotland's justice system and the consequences of committing a crime. Since October 2021, the Project has reached about 85 people and received positive feedback from workshop participants, including that the workshops were 'really useful' and 'good information'.

### **Open Justice Criminal Justice Clinic, The Open University**

*'The Criminal Justice Clinic has enabled our team of new age explorers to experience law from a position of safety, not quite fully saddled with the responsibility of managing a case, but in the relative comfort of our own reality. Our journey into this unknown realm was enhanced by our courageous leader and cohorts, to whom we owe a great deal of thanks for their support and guidance.'*

The Criminal Justice Clinic (CJC) enables students to research and advise on live criminal cases under the direct supervision of legal academics who are also qualified solicitors. The project is run in partnership with the law firm CDMK Solicitors who refer cases that the students can then investigate to determine whether there are grounds for an appeal. The project is run entirely online, requiring students and supervisors to collaborate virtually. The CJC has also developed vicarious trauma training to support the students and partner law firm to manage the risk of vicarious trauma. This

training has been shared more widely and delivered to other universities to support the wellbeing of law students. The project has also allowed students access to high-quality work experience that they might otherwise struggle to participate in, enabling them to develop vital employability skills.

### **Family Advice Midlands, The University of Law**

*“The ...team and students have committed so much time and care ...as a result, clients of the project from across the country have benefitted from a professionally organised and effective service.”*

Family Advice Midlands (FAM) is a free bi-weekly advice service that provides advice on a range of family matters. The University of Law was a pioneer of pro bono in Law schools and offers a diverse portfolio of pro bono opportunities. Having seen how the move to virtual clinics extended availability post-pandemic, and as a direct response to the increase in family law related enquiries and a rise in the number of students expressing an interest in family law, FAM was launched in October 2022.

Since its launch, FAM has received over 50 enquiries from prospective clients. Every enquiry has either been given an appointment or signposted to further assistance. To date, over 30 students have taken an active role in the project, with 24 clients receiving initial advice from specialist family law lawyers in the Knights’ Midlands based Family Team.

The impact of the clinic has been clearly felt by all those involved. All clients who responded to the feedback survey have said that they would use the service again and recommend it to others.

### **University of Chester and Pregnant Then Screwed partnership**

*“Working with Chester University law students has been brilliant! They have engaged fully with the work of Pregnant Then Screwed (‘PTS’) to really understand how they can best support the thousands of women who reach out to us for advice every year.”*

The University of Chester Law School operates student-run community outreach projects under the umbrella of Chester Community Law Project (CCLP). CCLP and PTS started a partnership in 2022 following CCLP being inspired by the work PTS carry out to tackle the root causes of maternity discrimination and promote the rights of women.

Responding directly to what PTS identified as being most needed, CCLP

researched and devised a series of 'your rights' information sheets for the PTS website covering issues such as redundancy, discrimination claims and parental leave and pay, providing accurate legal advice and practical steps on how women can advocate for themselves. Breaking complex legal principles down into easily digestible information sheets assists women who may not have anywhere else to turn.

The first batch of information sheets went live on the PTS website in February 2023 and have been downloaded 3,479 times, demonstrating the huge impact this project has by empowering thousands of women across the UK.

### **University of Suffolk Legal Advice Centre, University of Suffolk**

*"A constant, reliable resource which has been invaluable to the people we support. It is a fast effective cost-free solution that we can offer to service users with low incomes and in situations where legal advice is paramount to improving safety for victims and their families."*

The newly established University of Suffolk Legal Advice Centre launched in May 2022 and provides family law advice to individuals as well as early legal advice to start-ups. In addition to 16 volunteer students, the clinic is supported by a number of law firms and not-for-profit organisations. In the short time the clinic has been operating, they have written 31 detailed letters of advice on family law issues, including divorce, child arrangements, co-habitation, trusts, non-molestation orders, occupation orders, financial remedies and consent orders. The clinic has also provided seven business clients with detailed letters of advice on a variety of issues including company structure, franchise agreements, intellectual property and terms and conditions of sale. Students have shown great commitment from the outset in establishing our Legal Advice Centre and have been instrumental in planning the further development of the services.

## Best Contribution by an Individual

### Betsy Board, Cardiff University

*“Your support is invaluable, priceless but more than anything it was the ‘hug of reassurance’ I needed.”*

Betsy is a volunteer team leader at the Cardiff Law School and Support Through Court partnership, supporting vulnerable litigants in person. Whilst many excellent students volunteer at the in-court service, Betsy has been singled out for praise by the Service Manager. Leading a team of 8 student volunteers, Betsy has attended numerous hearings, providing the most vulnerable with practical and emotional support.

Her willingness to go “over and above” set her apart. In one case, Betsy travelled to Newport every day for a 4-day divorce settlement hearing, at her own cost, supporting an anxious client. Betsy also supported a partially deaf 99-year-old client with a poor English language skills, and confused by the court process. Accompanying her to a permission to appeal hearing, the client reported that Betsy was the only person she had been able to understand throughout. Simple things like repeating everything that the judge was saying, and the consequences, were of enormous benefit. The client was granted permission to appeal, notably the Judge ruled that the appeal would have to take place on a day on which Betsy was available.

### Jessica Mathew, The University of Surrey

*“[Jessica’s] passion and enthusiasm is inspiring; engaging others in pro bono work and improving access to justice.”*

Having volunteered with the death penalty abolition charity Amicus ALJ as a grants-writing assistant for several months prior to starting her studies, Jessica took her passion for this cause with her to the University of Surrey, where she quickly dedicated herself to the University’s Missouri Project. For two years Jessica has organised and led student groups to review data regarding patterns of bias in death penalty cases in Missouri, in the hope that this information can be used to help defendants avoid the death penalty in the future. Jessica has further supported Amicus through running awareness and fundraising events and debates in aid of the organization.

In addition, as a member of Junior Lawyers Against Poverty, Jessica has worked with the charity Big Leaf to design and deliver several ‘informative

and engaging' sessions on life in the UK for young refugees, including sessions on employment law, and democracy. Jessica has also encouraged and organised groups of undergraduate students - as well as young refugees who had benefitted from the programme previously - to get involved in running information sessions over the past two years.

### **Benjamin O'Connell, University of Essex**

*"Ben has consistently exceeded all expectations. He is extremely client-focused, with a clear passion for helping vulnerable clients access advice."*

Inspired by his experience of being made homeless at 17, Ben has shown exceptional commitment to pro bono work. He began volunteering at University of Essex Law Clinic in October 2020, focusing on housing and family law. Over the past year Ben has taken on more cases than any other volunteer, accounting for more than one fifth of the overall caseload! As Deputy Student Director and then Student Director for the clinic, he has also given a voice to the concerns and interests of student volunteers within the clinic, helping to shape it into a "better institution."

Ben is involved in other projects at the clinic, including relaunching an advice outreach in Jaywick- one of the most deprived areas in England - he also leads the Innocence Project and the Housing and Homelessness Project, which operates in partnership with local charity Beacon House, Ben has been key to expanding this collaboration, visiting weekly. Last summer he undertook to review over 150 casefiles to improve the provision of emergency s188 accommodation to clients in priority need. Beacon House says this project transformed the local authority's approach, resulting in more street homeless clients being accommodated on an urgent basis.

### **Annabel Priest, University of Chester**

*"Annabel's clear guidance to, and mentoring of, the student volunteer team has allowed our volunteers to provide effective support to the Senior Caseworker. This support has been life changing for the recipients of this assistance, most notably by preventing deportation to Syria where refugees would typically be at high risk of harm."*

Annabel has played a pivotal role in managing the Immigration Project at the Chester Community Law Project (CCLP). As a CCLP Project Manager, she ensures student volunteers are ready and able to support the Senior

Immigration Caseworker at Eastgate Chambers in advising Syrian refugees applying for Indefinite Leave to Remain. Within the last six months, 50 refugees had their applications approved. Thanks to Annabel's leadership, the Project has been able to respond to a high caseload of complex matters, ensuring that families who have escaped harm can stay within the UK. Annabel has made this success a reality through her absolute commitment to the project. From developing excellent relationships with stakeholders and students to fitting the effort into her existing university and work responsibilities, Annabel has made sure that pro bono is essential to her work in the legal field.

### **Daniel Scrase, BPP University**

*"Daniel's contribution and commitment to pro bono are unparalleled. He secures positive outcomes for clients and local communities while maintaining high standards of professionalism and supporting fellow students and staff."*

Daniel is an exceptional individual dedicated to pro bono work, with a particular focus on environmental law and climate justice. At BPP, Daniel played a key role in setting up the Environmental Law Clinic and is a working party member of the UK Environmental Law Association Wales. He is also the Director of the BPP Enterprise Clinic, one of the university's busiest advice services, where he mentors new directors and trains students. In addition, he is a trained Streetlaw volunteer and has delivered workshops on intellectual property law to arts students at Goldsmith University. Outside of BPP, he has been a driving force in the recruitment of staff and volunteers for the North Wales Law Centre Steering Group, where he co-wrote the bids that secured funding to employ the Centre's first staff member. Daniel's hard work and determination have helped make a positive impact on the people and communities he supports.

### **Amy Woodcock, University of Strathclyde**

*"With an exemplary academic record and a passion for continuous learning and professional development, she never shies away from new possibilities or challenging tasks."*

This is Amy's fourth year as a student volunteer at University of Strathclyde Law Clinic (USLC). Despite being a hugely demanding honours year for Amy, her dedication is unflinching. She joined as a first year undergraduate quickly taking on cases and representing clients. Her legal work is of a very

high standard, and she works incredibly well as a team player.

It is not only Amy's casework that makes her standout. Amy also volunteers for Scottish Women's Rights Centre (SWRC) a collaboration between USLC, Rape Crisis Scotland and JustRight Scotland. As student coordinator, Amy supports and mentors new volunteers whilst administering rotas, liaising with SWRC, university staff and reporting to the clinic's executive committee, alongside her normal volunteer duties. This year, Amy also organised two successful events; a joint event with JustRight Scotland and an International Women's Day event which she chaired very professionally. Amy shows enormous commitment and dedication and her kind and supportive approach has had an enormous positive influence on her team. She is a terrific role model to many other students.

## **Best Contribution by a Law School**

### **City Law School, City University of London**

*“The conversation about my situation was very detailed and insightful...the team took time to listen, empathise and this made a big difference to me personally.”*

City Law School has a 20-year history of supporting pro bono projects through valued partnerships with the legal profession and local organisations, aiming to nurture socially responsible future lawyers. The changes prompted by lockdown have worked well, and the relaunched clinic, City Community Legal Advice Centre (CityCLAC), is a new evolution of the service. The new areas of law and the more streamlined referral and triage process the clinic is able to provide means the clinic is now much more responsive to the complexity and volume of need in the community. In the last 16 months, over 400 students have undertaken pro bono work across City Law School's projects, which include the CityCLAC, School Exclusion and Company Insolvency projects, Refugee Law Clinic initiative, Environmental Policy clinic, as well as partnerships with the Free Representation Unit, Amicus, Freedom Law Clinic and Pro Bono Community. CityCLAC has advised over 300 clients in the areas of family, employment, housing, welfare benefits, general civil litigation, environmental, consumer and small business law. A further 215 clients were signposted and provided with information and guidance.

### **Climate Clinic, Grampian Community Law Centre, Robert Gordon University**

*“Grampian Community Law Centre has launched a ground-breaking Climate Clinic...this will serve to give people access to justice and a voice in local issues which affect communities and the future of the planet.”*

The Climate Clinic, forming part of Robert Gordon University's Law School, is the first university law clinic to focus on offering support and guidance to members of the public about planning, development, environmental and animal law. The clinic assisted the Save Slochy Woods campaign group in challenging a planning decision in the Court of Session. The decision was found in favour of the campaign group, which was an enormous victory for the centre, the community and the inhabitants of the woodland. The clinic is now involved with helping another local group challenge a decision to include a large community greenspace within a proposed energy transition



zone in an area of multiple deprivation. Ongoing projects include research projects looking into pigeon welfare and deer management policy; and representing members of the public in cases including alleged veterinary negligence, animal confiscation, and puppy farming. The clinic is currently assisting law students at the University of Edinburgh in setting up their own climate clinic to offer a similar service.

### **Ulster University Law Clinic**

*"I had the opportunity to engage with the Ulster University Law Clinic earlier this year and I was overwhelmed with the professional and compassionate attitude from everyone involved. The advice and legal opinion was invaluable."*

The Ulster University Law Clinic provides pro bono support from students in areas of law including employment, social security, family and corporate, as well as developing free public legal education materials and training. Students provided support for 134 cases in 2022-23. In family law, the clinic has created an online pathfinder for litigants in person that includes representation from the student cohort to identify the nature of support needed. This was described by the Department of Justice as "nigh on perfect". The clinic also facilitates placements in the voluntary sector and legal advice sector for undergraduate students. Placements involve students completing a programme of social security training and then working in advice clinics, supporting advisers and clients in their local communities. Through these placements, students have assisted in the delivery of advice to 12,000 clients across 37,000 different issues, helping to meet the demand for support in this area. Students have also organised outreach activities, most notably an online poverty symposium to address the growing crisis of food poverty, bringing together academics and policy workers from the children's sector.

## **Leicester Law School, University of Leicester**

*"[the] clinic has been an invaluable resource to our clients... [it] provide us with free legal information to empower women to take back the control in their own lives."*

The Legal Advice Clinic, part of the Leicester Law School, works closely with the student-led pro bono society at the University of Leicester. Together the clinic and society run 15 pro bono projects, of which client-facing activities are supervised by clinic staff and the rest are student-led. The clinic and society work hard to reach communities who may not be able to find their services online due to digital exclusion or language barriers; for example, the clinic established a court-based legal advice clinic for those attending family hearings to complement the existing student project offering legal help. The clinic also works with a number of partner organisations including the British Red Cross, New Dawn New Day women's organisation, Highfields Community Centre, Shama Women's Centre and the African Caribbean Centre. This work supports a wide range of service users including refugees, vulnerable women, garment workers, those affected by Windrush and other community members in need of legal support.

## **University of London Refugee Law Clinic**

*"From the bottom of my heart, it was the best service I received in my life. Whatever happens to my case, I'm going to be grateful. I've never seen lawyers like you....you tried very hard to sort out my case and tried things that the other lawyers didn't think to do before."*

The Refugee Law Clinic at the University of London is a clinical legal education project providing pro bono advice to appeal-rights exhausted asylum seekers in London. The clinic also provides training and practical experience for 50 law students and 40 volunteer lawyers each year. Established in 2020, the clinic's main legal focus is on advising and preparing fresh claims for asylum, an area consistently identified as underserved in the current legal landscape. The clinic takes on a high volume of casework and its current caseload of 45 comprises clients from over 20 countries ranging from 20 to 73 years of age. The clinic actively engages with over a dozen referral partners who have reported that the service makes a significant difference in being able to obtain legal advice for cases where it has been difficult to find support.

## **University of Plymouth Law School**

*"I have seen first-hand the work of the students ... as they go above and beyond expectations. Without their time and holistic approach, hundreds of individuals and children would not access advice."*

Working in several of the most deprived areas in the UK, Plymouth University Law Clinic provides vital pro bono legal advice to communities in the South West. Running weekly advice employment, family, immigration & refugee and welfare law clinics, the student-led service provides advice and assistance to people struggling with legal issues. More than half of all final year Plymouth Law School students participate in pro bono activities.

Students volunteering in the Immigration and Refugee Law Clinic assist vulnerable families who are attempting to stabilise their immigration status. The clinic participates in the Refugee Family Reunion project, in partnership with the British red Cross. In the Family Law Clinic students help people facing divorce or proceedings involving children, whilst the Welfare Law Clinic assists with Personal Independence claims and appeals, and offers welfare law advice. Together, these clinics help more than 200 people each year. Students deliver classes to local schools on international humanitarian law, and work with local non-profits to deliver a streetlaw programme. The law school has recently launched an environmental law clinic.

## Best Contribution by a Team of Students

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### **Company Insolvency Pro Bono Scheme Student Team, City University of London**

*“I wanted to say a big thank you for your assistance today. The initial chat before the hearing meant that I was prepared to appear before the court. I was pretty nervous today, but your kindness certainly helped to put me at my ease.”*

The Company Insolvency Project (COIN) provides advice and representation to litigants in person appearing before the winding-up court. A team of trained and supervised students administer the running of the scheme, providing information to litigants in person at the court weekly. Without the commitment of the student team, the service could not run. It is the only scheme of this nature and a lifeline for the clients, who rarely have the funds to be represented at this stage in the life of their company.

Students are involved in every aspect of the case, from talking to clients to assisting volunteer barristers in court. Current students have been particularly noteworthy, showing a real commitment to access to justice over the post-Covid period when an increasing number of companies are experiencing financial difficulties. The scheme is appreciated by clients and the judiciary alike, with one high court judge noting it has supported the overriding objective of the court by ensuring litigants in person understand the process and their submissions are concise. On several occasions, adjournments have been secured so that clients can consider other steps.

## **School Exclusion Project, City University of London**

*“.. the School project is a fantastic organisation and I do not believe I would [have] been able to get my son reinstated without you. Can't thank you enough.”*

The School Exclusion Project provides parents and guardians with free representation at hearings when a child has been permanently excluded from school. It is a partnership between City Law School and Matrix and 11KBW chambers, who provide training and supervision. Students volunteer in the law and guidance around school exclusions, including on disability and special educational needs. Students take on cases, draft submissions, and represent parents at hearings.

85% of parents had 'little or no understanding' of exclusion procedure when they accessed the Project; 100% of parents found representatives helpful or extremely helpful in explaining procedure. 25% of the cases taken on led to some favourable decision at hearing, i.e. decision overturned at first Governing Body hearing, or a quashing direction at Independent Review. After quashing, the school is directed to reconvene the GDC where it must retake the decision. Overall, 10 students have had their exclusions overturned.

## **The Representation Team, The Aberdeen Law Project**

*“We are extremely happy with our outcome. ALP managed to set legal precedent in Scots law for guide dog access refusals, which will hopefully remove any ambiguity for any future access refusal cases.”*

In the last 12 months, the Aberdeen Law Project (ALP) representation team secured a 14% rent reduction in a fair rent dispute, obtained a four-figure loan repayment, secured over £3,200 in a deposit dispute, and successfully represented clients in consumer protection cases. The team successfully proved that a disability discrimination case did not fall under personal injury as alleged by an opposing party's solicitor in court and secured compensation and policy change for this.

Working in partnership with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) the project provides representation at SSSC hearings and fitness to practise panels for members which could result in members being struck off and losing their job. To date, they have a 100% success rate in representing members of the SSSC. As of January 2023, the team has processed more than 8,000 enquiries and taken on over 1,000 clients, with 24 cases engaged within the last 12 months.

## **The Immigration Project, University of Chester and Eastgate Chambers**

*“The students have provided invaluable support in assisting Syrian families who were resettled in the UK 5 years ago in applying for Indefinite Leave to Remain... The students have been hands on in supporting the drafting of applications and them through the APP. Often this means that the client will receive a decision within a matter of days or weeks compared to months.”*

The Immigration Project is a partnership between the University of Chester and Eastgate Chambers (responsible for delivering the Legal Aid contract for Immigration and Asylum cases across North Wales). The five students involved in the Immigration Project this year have made an outstanding contribution to pro bono by assisting 60 refugees to claim Indefinite Leave to Remain and/or Permission to Work since August 2022. The majority of those assisted fled the war in Syria and were offered asylum under the government’s Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. The student volunteers are led by a student Project Manager and assist a Legal Aid caseworker in his work with refugee clients. The students’ input into the Immigration Project enables the Legal Aid caseworker to move through his client list much more efficiently, thus ensuring refugee clients are provided with the assistance they need more quickly.

## **Liverpool Family Advice Project, University of Liverpool**

*“I would love to be involved in the project next year as an experienced student and help others learn the ropes as I’ve found this year’s experienced students incredibly useful. I am so grateful to be on the project, I’ve learnt loads from it and it’s given me some proper real-life skills to take into my future.”*

The Project provides advice and support to parents involved in private law disputes about children, assisting over 200 clients a year. It is led by 5 final year students undertaking casework with clients and provides training and support to the 30 second-year student volunteers. Since the current Lead Students took up their role the Project has assisted 123 clients.

Lead Students are trained to work with clients, assisting with key aspects of legal proceedings. All the students on this team have shown care, commitment, and kindness to their clients in addition to providing them with a valuable legal service. This group of lead students have impressed everyone who has worked with them with their maturity, professionalism, and commitment to access to justice.

## **Immigration and Refugee Law Clinic, University of Plymouth**

*“With the team’s hard work, the case was successful, and my family is reunited. Because of their help my family is now safe and very hopeful for the future. My experience being a client of the law clinic and the help they have given me and my family is out of this world, and I could never imagine in the best-case scenario ever receiving the care and commitment they gave me.”*

The Immigration and Refugee Law Clinic (IRLC) is one of the pro bono student-led services provided by the University of Plymouth, assisting vulnerable families who are attempting to stabilise their immigration status whilst also facing poverty and discrimination. The Clinic also works in partnership with the British Red Cross providing a comprehensive Refugee Family Reunion advice and representation project.

This year’s student team of eight has worked on over 30 cases and shown huge commitment. Their work has included cases on long residence applications (20-year route), registration of children as British citizens, assisted vulnerable individuals struggling with the European Union Settlement Scheme and have helped refugees from various countries to apply for family reunion. Before speaking to clients, the students undertake thorough research on the clients’ countries of origin to understand their background and the circumstances that led to them fleeing persecution.





# Thank you to our Judges

- **Toby Brown**, Chair of National Pro Bono Week and Member of the Bar Council Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee
- **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 Manager, LawCareers.Net
- **Emma Rehal-Wilde**, Senior Pro Bono Associate, Baker & Mackenzie LLP and LawWorks Trustee
- **Lubna Shuja**, President, The Law Society of England and Wales
- **Deborah Smith**, Executive Director and Senior Counsel, Goldman Sachs and LawWorks Trustee

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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 member firms and in-house teams, 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. It also plays an important role in driving forward innovative and nuanced responses to access to justice crises.

Here at LawWorks we enable the provision of pro bono through:

- Supporting a growing network of over 300 independent pro bono clinics. We work with lawyers, law schools, 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®+);
- Our Not-for-Profits Programme, which facilitates volunteer solicitors from LawWorks members to provide free legal advice for smaller charities and not-for-profit organisations. We also provide legal training for charities, through documents, videos and live sessions developed by pro bono lawyers;
- Supervising and training volunteers to undertake in-depth end-to-end pro bono casework ('secondary specialisation'), in areas of social welfare law;
- 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, which links firms and in-house teams to pro bono opportunities easily and quickly, and Free Legal Answers, enabling individuals to receive initial or one-off legal advice.

## **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.

We have supported various groups for policy engagement including the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Pro Bono and Public Legal Education. We help facilitate the 'Legal advice sector monthly roundtable' with a range of legal and access to justice organisations to address challenges and legal issues that arise in the sector.

## **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 in 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 170 members, including some of the largest City and international firms, national, regional and local firms, and in-house teams, as well as law schools and charities.

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

Members have access to our training, online resources, newsletters, networking opportunities, and have the opportunity to nominate for our annual awards.

By joining LawWorks, your organisation would 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 membership 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, [membership@lawworks.org.uk](mailto:membership@lawworks.org.uk) or visit our website: [www.lawworks.org.uk/join-us](http://www.lawworks.org.uk/join-us)

### **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 impact of the pandemic, which has exacerbated the problems faced by disadvantaged individuals across the UK. As a charity, LawWorks is almost entirely dependent on donations, grants and other philanthropic funding, and the amount we are able to raise determines the scope and reach of our work.

We welcome one-off and regular donations, sponsorship of our events or platforms, and long-term support for our programmes. You can also leave a gift to LawWorks in your will or take part in a fundraising challenge.

The support of our donors enables LawWorks to sustain our vital work and ensure access to justice for those without means. If you would like to discuss supporting LawWorks financially, please contact Carrie Cuno, Head of Fundraising, [carrie.cuno@lawworks.org.uk](mailto:carrie.cuno@lawworks.org.uk), or visit our website: [www.lawworks.org.uk](http://www.lawworks.org.uk).





The LawWorks & Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards  
are kindly sponsored by:



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.

[www.lawworks.org.uk](http://www.lawworks.org.uk)

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