



**Student  
Pro Bono  
Awards  
2017**



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

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017  
Members Dining Room  
The House of Commons



## Welcome from the Attorney General

I am very pleased to welcome you to the House of Commons for the LawWorks and the Attorney General's Student Pro Bono Awards 2017.

I commend the many law students who have dedicated time to provide pro bono advice to thousands of people in England and Wales who need legal advice but can't afford to pay for it. Advice is given in a variety of areas such as family, welfare benefits, personal injury, employment, housing and small claims. Over 2,600 students have willingly given 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 are gaining 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 today's 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 celebrate the best in the pro bono field and every year I look forward to seeing the passion and enthusiasm that students bring to their work. 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 of the students nominated across the four categories have demonstrated a tremendous amount of skill, initiative and willingness of spirit and should be very proud. The awards also incorporate the Access to Justice Foundation Award and the winners of the Law School Challenge.

I would like to extend my gratitude to this year's panel of Judges: Joe Egan, Vice President, the Law Society; James Harper, Head of Customer Engagements, LexisNexis; Alison Padfield, Co-Chair of the Bar Council Pro Bono Panel; and Isla Grant, Senior editor, LawCareers.Net, who have given their time and cast their expert eye over the shortlist and agreed the winners of this year's awards. I would also like to thank LexisNexis for kindly sponsoring this event.

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



Attorney General

## Welcome from the LawWorks Chair of Trustees

We are very pleased to welcome this year's shortlisted nominees to the House of Commons for the annual LawWorks and Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards.

The most recent LawWorks Clinics Report highlights that over a third of clinics in the clinics network operate with law schools. These clinics alone received over 16,000 enquiries, a significant increase on the previous year. In research conducted by LawWorks, 96 per cent of students said that as a result of their experience in student pro bono they believed that they would participate in pro bono again later in their career.

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. 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. On behalf of LawWorks, I am hugely grateful to all the students nominated and the Law Schools which support them. For me, it is one of the most inspiring aspects of our work and gives us great hope for the future.

LawWorks received a number of high-calibre nominations and the diversity of projects nominated across the four categories is particularly impressive. The Award categories are: 'Best contribution by an individual student'; 'Best contribution by a law school'; 'Best contribution by a team of students; and 'Best new pro bono activity'.

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.

We also welcome the winners of the Law School Challenge to the Award ceremony for the fourth year. Their imaginative efforts in raising money for LawWorks and our sister charity, the Bar Pro Bono Unit is greatly appreciated. We are also joined this year by the runners-up.

We are delighted that this year's Awards celebration will be hosted by His Honour Sir Robin Knowles CBE.

Congratulations to all the shortlisted candidates; 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 of a being in the profession, as well as making us all better lawyers.

Alasdair Douglas  
Chair of Trustees



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**Student Pro Bono Awards 2017**



**The Law Society**

# 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 at the House of Commons.

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 s 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.

The Access to Justice Foundation Award aims to recognise the work of individuals and educational bodies in promoting and supporting access to justice. Reflecting the work the Foundation itself does, we received nominations from law schools across the country which promote, support and fundraise for the work of the pro bono sector.

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

- Rebecca Agliolo, University of Cambridge
- James Cairns, University of Sheffield School of Law
- Patrick Chindo, University of Hull School of Law
- Northumbria Law School, Northumbria University

The nominations were judged by the Foundation's trustees and we are delighted to be announcing the winner at the Student Awards celebration in the House of Commons.



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## **LawWorks and Bar Pro Bono Unit Law School Challenge 2017**

LawWorks and the Bar Pro Bono Unit would like to congratulate and thank all those who participated in the Law School Challenge 2017. Their hard work and dedication to our charities is greatly appreciated.

This year, 11 teams participated in the Law School Challenge in order to raise funds for LawWorks and the Bar Pro Bono Unit. They used their creative skills to come up with innovative ways to raise the most money, embarking on a number of fundraising endeavours that ranged from an end of year fashion show to the famous mannequin challenge.

In particular, LawWorks and the Bar Pro Bono Unit would like to congratulate University College London (UCL) Law Society for winning the 2017 Law School Challenge and to the London School of Economics as runners up.

We also commend Nottingham Law School, the University of Birmingham, the University of Warwick and BPP Law School.

The other participants in the Law School Challenge were:

- Lancaster University Law School
- University of Law Birmingham
- University of Lincoln Law Society
- University of Liverpool Law School
- University of Northampton Law Society

We would also like to congratulate University College London for raising the most money in the Law School Challenge by the end of January. LawWorks and the Bar Pro Bono Unit would like to extend their gratitude to K & L Gates LLP, the Master of the City of London Solicitors' Company and the Law Society.

Once again we would like to say a big thank you to all the universities that participated in the Challenge for the valuable contribution you have made to LawWorks and the Bar Pro Bono Unit.

# Information on the shortlisted finalists for the LawWorks & Attorney General Student Awards 2017

## Best Contribution by a Law School

### Cardiff Law School

*"We have identified issues regarding potential personal liability on (often elderly) club trustees. Unaddressed, this is acknowledged by the WRU to have potentially devastating effects upon small Welsh communities as volunteers risk personal assets, and communities risk potential loss of rugby clubs at their heart"*

Cardiff Law School has an extensive pro bono portfolio including projects covering miscarriages of justice, an NHS continuing care scheme, an environmental law project, a pilot with Mencap Cymru of "legal toolkits" for extensive use by adults with learning disabilities, a free legal advice service for Welsh rugby clubs, and a global justice project. The innocence project dealt with 30 serious criminal appeals cases, and had a case referred by the CCRC to the Court of Appeal which was overturned. The project also raises awareness of wrongful conviction issues eg giving evidence to the Justice Select Committee, holding an annual Innocence Week and a conference attended by 13 universities and other organisations. The NHS continuing care scheme

recovered £90,000+ in wrongly-paid nursing home fees. The global justice scheme partnered with a human rights law firm, Amnesty International and RAID (Rights and Accountability in Development) to assist with Kenyan Slum Clearance and Tanzanian Gold Mine litigation.

### Lancashire Law School

*"Can I thank you and all the team for your assistance in resolving this matter. It was a long day but with an excellent end result. It was extremely helpful that the mediation team were highly experienced. We have previously used mediators where costs have been in the region of £3,000"*  
Mediation clinic client

The Law School's Clinic operates weekly and students work in pairs, supervised by a solicitor, to interview the client and to provide a letter of advice within 14 days. Supported by students in year 3 and a network of 8 firms; since opening to the public in 2015 it has dealt with 508 enquiries and offered 164 appointments; this last year 65 students have volunteered in the clinic. Written advice is provided on a variety of topics, including housing, family,

children, consumer disputes and employment. A 'Pop-Up Shop' also operates in partnership with the CAB and opens weekly in the City Centre, inviting the public to drop-in for free legal advice from students. There is also a Mediation Clinic providing civil, commercial and workplace mediation services to the local community - mediations are conducted by students who have completed CMC accredited training and then join the 'Mediation Panel'; there are currently 31 students on the Panel.

### Northumbria Law School

*"The Law School's most ambitious pro bono undertaking is the Student Law Office (SLO). All students on the Law School's Masters level law degree (approximately 185 each year) work in the SLO throughout their final year. Since 1 January 2008 the SLO has dealt with over 4,000 new enquiries from members of the public and businesses and recovered over one million pounds for clients."*

In the 2015-2016 academic year, 209 students dealt with 306 cases and recovered £38,230 in compensation for

## ***Best Contribution by a Law School (continued)***

clients. In addition to monetary compensation, they have assisted victims of domestic abuse obtain injunctive protection, have represented parents in applications for contact with their children and have advised tenants facing eviction. Each year SLO students and staff provide more than 10,000 hours of free legal help to clients. Using current legal aid Legal Help rates, this amounts to over £500,000 worth of free advice every year. In addition, Northumbria Law School was one of the first law schools in the UK to pioneer a Streetlaw programme and has recently begun working in partnership with the Personal Support Unit (PSU) to establish a service in the civil courts in Newcastle.

### **Plymouth Law School**

*“The Law Clinic aims to enrich student educational experience and enhance employability, while also providing legal advice or support and information for the benefit of the wider community.”*

The Plymouth Law School Law Clinic provides client-facing services in Employment and Family Law, Refugee Family

Reunion and Tenancy Advice. Projects include The South West Employment Rights Centre (SWERC), a Refugee Family Reunion project run in partnership with the British Red Cross to provide advice and representation to vulnerable refugees separated from their families by war, conflict and persecution, and the Tenancy Advice Centre which has worked with 39 clients on private tenancy issues. The clinic is developing a social security law pilot, and runs a successful partnership with Citizens Advice that trains students as Gateway Assessors and Advisors. The Law Clinic also encompasses an inter-disciplinary project, the Medico-Legal project, which runs in collaboration with the Peninsula Medical School and the clinical negligence department of a local law firm. In addition to the Clinic’s social welfare law work, it has also developed a thriving Business Start-Ups and entrepreneurship hub reaching out to assist community groups who are developing small business initiatives as well helping student entrepreneurs and existing small businesses. The Law Clinic is represented on a number of city wide networks such as the Plymouth Volunteer and the Refugee and Asylum Seeker network.

### **The Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice**

*“The Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice (HKC) at Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) is a pioneer of legal education and training. HKC offers an extensive portfolio of pro bono and charity projects designed both to widen access to the profession but also provide access to justice for all at a time when it is needed most.”*

There are a wide variety of projects that students get involved in. HKC Refugee Family Reunion Clinic works with the British Red Cross and helps many vulnerable men and women who would otherwise be deprived of access to their families. To date the clinic has submitted 58 applications and has a 90% success rate in reuniting families and providing much needed support. Sheffield Hallam Court Helpdesk has assisted over 100 litigants in person at Sheffield Combined Courts Centre since October 2014, while the Law Clinic has 30 active clients. HKC Criminal Appeals Clinic is currently assisting 47 individuals by investigating convictions and assisting prisoners with preparing an application to the Criminal Cases Review Commission

## Best Contribution by a Law School *(continued)*

(CCRC). Many of the prisoners helped by The Clinic are also vulnerable prisoners who would struggle to articulate themselves to the extent necessary to make a successful application - the HKC Clinic therefore provides a valuable opportunity by offering help to those who would otherwise be unable to pursue a review of their conviction.

### University of Birmingham Law School

*"Our projects aim to assist individuals: (1) through offering free legal advice in those areas of law where it is most needed; and (2) through sharing information that empowers individuals, enabling them to understand their own legal rights and responsibilities."*

The University Pro Bono Group consists of 206 student volunteers across fourteen different extra-curricular projects, addressing different areas of legal need. The Free Legal Advice Group's clinic has advised over 225 clients on different areas of law, and has increased capacity by 50%, bringing in a new law firm partner with a team of family lawyers able to supervise more cases. Students

also volunteer with the SIFA Fireside Charity by providing advice to the homeless and drug and alcohol dependants, and have delivered interactive workshops and presentations for SIFA on topics such as: rights for EU migrants; debt awareness; benefits; and modern slavery. Students provide casework and research assistance for Birmingham Community Centre, including on a citizenship case heard by the Court of Appeal in January 2017. Other projects include clinic referrals from the Environmental Law Foundation, and miscarriages of justice referred by the Centre for Criminal Appeals, and an international project with Oxfam, Greenpeace and Action4Justice developing website content on the conduct of public interest litigation.

### University of Bristol Law School

*"Delivering cogent, professional and timely advice to our clients is at the heart of all pro bono work carried out at the Law School... With 88% of clients saying they would recommend the Law Clinic to someone else, we are proud of the service we continue to provide"*

Pro bono work is undertaken at the University of Bristol Law School across three organisations – the Law Clinic, Human Rights Clinic, and Pro Bono Society. The Law Clinic has three main initiatives: direct client case work; 'StreetLaw' presentations and information events; and drop-in sessions with partnership organisations like the cancer charity CLIC Sargent and the Bristol Drugs Project. The Clinic takes referrals from other local pro bono organisations, such as the CAB and the Avon and Bristol Law Clinic (ABLC), and supports a new Litigants In Person project in collaboration with the University of the West of England Law Clinic and the CAB. Having taken on over 150 cases already this academic year, the Law Clinic is set to triple the number of cases completed two years ago. The School's Human Rights Clinic is a student run organisation producing high-quality reports concerning a range of Human Rights issues in collaboration with international partners.



## *Best Contribution by a Law School (continued)*

### **University of Manchester School of Law**

*“Manchester Free Legal Help provide an invaluable service that we, in the PSU, very much value. Their service adds to the support and guidance that litigants in person can obtain within the Civil Justice Centre and the ‘free legal advice clinics’ really benefit many of the PSU clients.”*

Manchester PSU Co-ordinator.

The School of Law’s flagship Legal Advice Centre, started in 1999 provides free advice to members of the public not eligible for legal aid. Such is the demand for the Legal Advice Centre’s services that the Law School has expanded the service to include Manchester Free Legal Help (MFLH) in the City’s Civil Justice Centre, running drop in advice clinics in the areas of family law, housing law and immigration, and the East Manchester Legal Advice Centre (EMLAC) in Openshaw – a deprived part of the city. 296 clients received legal advice across all Legal Advice Centre practice areas during the 2016/17 academic year, including at both the university campus office and

the East Manchester centre, and 449 clients received advice at Manchester Free Legal Help in 2016. Students also volunteer in specialist clinics including the innovative, multi-award winning, Dementia Law Clinic, run with the health charity Making Space, using Skype in order to conduct client appointments at locations around the country and saw 53 clients in 2016.

### **University of Strathclyde**

*“On a personal level, my legal knowledge was made more concrete on a range of issues. However, for my clients, I feel like the additional training, reflection and skills-based learning led to my confidence in assisting them being hugely increased.”*  
LLB student

The University of Strathclyde Law Clinic provides advice in various forms: an online advice service caters to those who need basic advice, an Initial Advice Clinics providing one-off advice from volunteer solicitors. The main form of legal advice offers legal advice and representation

up to and including in tribunals and the lower courts in a wide range of areas including housing, consumer and employment issues. The Clinics projects include help to asylum seekers in collaboration with the Refugee Survival Trust, to victims of gender based violence in partnership with Rape Crisis Scotland, to the homeless at a local shelter, and to alleged victims of miscarriages of justice in collaboration with the Miscarriage of Justice Organisation. The Law Clinic has also begun the process of launching a Food Banks and Benefits Project in which advice and assistance is provided to those who find themselves in need of emergency housing or having had their benefits sanctioned unfairly, and a Small Business Law Unit to help social enterprises, charities and the unemployed who aspire to set up businesses. The Law Clinic also runs Public Legal Education projects within local schools and prisons, and provides litigants in person at housing tribunals with the necessary legal knowledge to argue their own cases.



## Best Contribution by a Team of Students

### BPP Leeds Mock Trial Team

*“The work of the Team has been exceptional this year. Over the last 16 months alone, these 65 volunteers have worked with more than 1220 young people. This Team has consistently demonstrated its dedication to providing a quality public legal education service. However, it is the volunteers’ courage and resilience that is perhaps most inspiring.”*

The BPP Leeds Mock Trial Team delivers BPP’s Mock Trial project – giving young people an opportunity to learn about the criminal justice system by taking part in a trial, exploring the roles within Court, the use of evidence and the trial process. The team travels across Yorkshire delivering sessions in schools, as well as accommodating schools at BPP using the specially designed mock court rooms. The Team recently showcased the ‘Goldilocks trial’ (designed for younger participants) for the Solicitor General as part of his visit to the law school. Last year, they were approached by the Citizenship Foundation to help pilot its new ‘Quality Mark’ scheme for school resources. The ‘Goldilocks trial’

resource became the first of its kind to receive the Quality Mark validation and was described as ‘exemplary’ by the assessors. The ‘Goldilocks trial’ resource is now accessible to thousands of primary schools across the country via the Smartlaw website. This Team has taken public legal education in Yorkshire to another level – enthusing young people not only to want to understand the law but improving their confidence and self-esteem as they learn.

### LawBot Ltd – University of Cambridge

*“LawBot merges technology and law so that victims of crime can talk to it about their situation and obtain advice... LawBot is 100 per cent legally accurate, its makers say, and derives its answers from relevant statutory law... As well as the initial legal assessment, LawBot offers features such as being able to summarise its opinion in legal language that users can take to the police to streamline the questioning process”*  
The Times

Launched by a group of law

students at the University of Cambridge LawBot is an online chat program which aims to help potential victims of crime understand how the law applies to them. It does not offer legal advice but does attempt to determine whether a crime has been committed, with reference to relevant statute law and offers suggestions on how to take the case further. It is targeted particularly at young people for whom a chat interface is natural and intuitive. It has featured in The Guardian, The Times and the Law Society Gazette, and won first prize in the Cambridge Digital Innovation challenge. In its first month of operation, LawBot attracted over 20,000 interactions with its chat interface.

### LiP Service Bristol, University of Law, Bristol University and the University of the West of England

*“This scheme has not only provided a fantastic referral opportunity for advice agencies and solicitors, it is the first time all 3 universities in Bristol have collaborated on a pro bono project.”*

## **Best Contribution by a Team of Students** *(continued)*

The Bristol legal community were approached by the Judiciary from the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre to ascertain whether any assistance could be offered to Litigants In Person (LiPs) who were increasingly appearing before the court and who were unprepared for the court process and its demands. The 3 universities in Bristol decided they would collaborate on a scheme called “LiP Service”; a twice weekly information session for LiPs appearing before both the civil and family court. Information sessions have been delivered to a diverse range of LiPs and solicitors and volunteers from local advice agencies learning about where they can refer LiPs to for further support. Attendees at these sessions are provided with a tour of the court, an information session of approximately 1 hour which covers amongst other issues: the court process, the language of the court and how to prepare a case most effectively. Attendees are provided with an information hand-out to take away with them and, if further advice is required, effective signposting for tailored advice is offered. This service was described as ‘invaluable’ by a solicitor and ‘wonderful’ by an attendee.

### **Teesside Law Clinic**

*“The Students at Teesside Law Clinic are second to none. The closure of the local steelworks had a dramatic effect on the area. As a result of the student’s work supporting the clinic, ex-employees of the steelworks were able to support their families whilst they searched for work, pay their mortgage, rent and afford food for their families.”*

In response to a recent case involving the closure of the steelworks, the Students at Teesside Law Clinic agreed to assist those employees who were not represented by a union and as such were not represented in Employment Tribunals. 340 employees had been informed they would not be entitled to a ‘protective award’ as a result of the closure in respect of a failure to consult on redundancies. A meeting was arranged by the clinic at short notice in which students worked all evening gathering information. Students continued to work from 8am-9pm 5 days a week for 2 weeks, in addition to their lectures and

seminars. The clinic advanced claims on behalf of approximately 340 ex-employees, eventually submitting an application to the Employment Tribunal resulting in each client receiving £3,600 in respect of the protective award. In total the amount recovered was in excess of £1.2 million. Times were incredibly hard for those affected by the closure and these pay-outs went someway to assisting those affected in having funds to seek alternative employment, start businesses and look forward to a more positive future.

### **The University of Edinburgh Free Legal Advice Centre**

*“This is an innovative project that has been entirely student led. It has increased the profile of the Free Legal Advice Centre within the community, providing a valuable service, and has benefited our students.”*

The University of Edinburgh’s Free Legal Advice Centre has launched law specialist evening

## ***Best Contribution by a Team of Students*** *(continued)*

sessions. These are information sessions of 1 hour focused on a particular area of law, and are open to the public. The aim of the session is to focus upon an area of law and make this clear and accessible for the public. Students identify the sources of law, simplify the legal language, to explain the meaning and impact this can have upon an individual in their daily lives. Sessions included employment law, covering topics on wrongful and unfair dismissal, sexual harassment at work and what is discrimination and how to deal with it, and family law, in particular parental rights and responsibilities, legal capacity of children, and The Children's Hearing System. Feedback from previous sessions stated the session was helpful and informative.

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## Best Contribution by an Individual

### Juliette Addis – University of Law

*“The impact of Juliette’s pro bono work has been wide ranging and varied. Juliette’s help has been absolutely invaluable to members of the public from all walks of life. She has assisted with housing, employment, probate and educational issues, in addition to the direct and indirect support she has provided to victims of domestic violence. Juliette has provided real practical support to members of the public, from drafting legal documents to running cases and providing representation.”*

Juliette actively participates in a range of pro bono activities and is a trustee of Staffordshire Women’s Aid. She is the lead developer of a “Support with Court” programme, for which she provides training and support to volunteers who will accompany domestic violence victims to court and also used her experience with Women’s Aid to volunteer with the National Centre for Domestic Violence. Juliette has continued to volunteer with Independent Parental Special Educational Advice (IPSEA), advising and representing parents trying to obtain help for children

with special educational needs. She has taken on approximately 12 cases for IPSEA, and has been successful each time. Juliette attends a weekly clinic at a local law firm providing free advice to clients with housing issues and is responsible for interviewing clients and providing them with written legal advice and she also volunteers with Birmingham Legal Advice Clinic on a fortnightly basis, supporting volunteer lawyers to provide free legal advice to members of the public. She is now a caseworker with BRADICAL, an organisation which provides free of charge employment law advice to the low waged and unemployed. In addition, Juliette also provides invaluable support to the University of Law’s advice clinics and was a member of the winning team of the Law School Challenge last year.

### Rebecca Agliolo – Cambridge University

*“In many cases if you have been a victim of a crime you may not necessarily know whether legally you do have an action... Especially in cases of sexual offences you don’t want to go to the police and be subject*

*to a very intimidating and lengthy interrogation if you don’t feel that you have a valid claim. What LawBot can do is provide a confidential, secure and completely non-judgmental opinion on this matter... it can’t judge you, it simply provides access to legal knowledge”*

Rebecca is the co-founder and Commercial Director of LawBot: a free online chat tool, which promotes access to justice by translating ‘legalese’ into everyday language. It guides the user through a series of structured questions, helping them to understand how the law applies to them. LawBot covers 26 major criminal offences, including theft, violent and sexual assault and will soon extend its capability to family and contract law. Rebecca has forged links with several pro bono organizations and charities with aims complementary to those of LawBot. In particular, LawBot has partnered with Stay Brave UK and UK Says No More, advocacy organizations for victims of domestic and sexual violence. Rebecca has worked passionately and tirelessly to promote LawBot as a pro bono operation since it’s development in Summer 2016 and LawBot has rapidly attracted international

## Best Contribution by an Individual *(continued)*

recognition for its innovative and accessible approach, featuring in the national press, including The Guardian, Times and Law Society Gazette.

### **Roisin Donnelly** - University of Strathclyde

*“Roisin’s assistance in leading the Clinic has been invaluable. The Clinic has significantly developed and improved the way it operates over the last year; internally and externally, greatly improving the crucial service we provide in tackling Glasgow’s unmet legal need. This is in large part down to Roisin’s continued commitment to the Clinic and its core objective: access to justice.”*

Roisin has been a student advisor at the University of Strathclyde Law Clinic (USLC) since she joined in 2012 and has worked on 71 cases, the highest number of cases worked on by any student since the USLC was established in 2003. In that period, Roisin has advised and represented clients in a wide variety of areas and been involved in taking many cases to Court or Tribunal and is also an active advisor working on our Online Advice Clinic,

researching and answering online enquiries on various legal issues. She has also been a keen member of our Criminal Convictions Unit, investigating potential miscarriages of justice. From 2014-2016, Roisin took on the role of Firm Coordinator, supervising and mentoring a firm of 20-30 student advisors in their cases. For the 2016-2017 academic year, Roisin has undertaken the role of Deputy Student Director, responsible for overseeing the smooth running of the clinic’s service and ensuring the welfare of more than 280 students. Over this period, Roisin has been one of two students responsible for launching and coordinating the pilot of a new Foodbanks and Benefits Project, focusing on unmet legal need in Glasgow’s foodbanks and services for the homeless. She developed a strategy for the implementation of a drop-in benefits and legal advice service and oversaw its delivery.

### **Anna McCormack** - University of Leicester

*“Anna’s leadership of the University of Leicester’s Pro Bono activities has significantly*

*enhanced the impact of UoL’s efforts. Anna has successfully increased the number of students participating in Pro Bono from 80 to around 300 in one year; and has also initiated a number of new projects, partnerships and sources of funding.”*

Anna McCormack is a third year LLB student, who is Chief Officer of the University of Leicester (“UoL”) Pro Bono Group. Anna works with a Committee of 20 other students, and oversees the running of ten Pro Bono projects which are staffed by 300 student volunteers. Anna successfully oversaw the development of a number of new Pro Bono schemes including Project Light, an innovative collaboration between the Pro Bono Group and UoL School of Medicine, which aims to support homeless people in Leicester with both their legal and medical needs and a telephone advice service within the UoL Legal Advice Clinic (“LAC”). Anna initiated the establishment of a Pro Bono magazine, which has now published two editions and aims to raise awareness of pro bono services. She attained HEAR accreditation for all UoL Pro Bono projects, enabling over 150 student volunteers to receive HEAR accreditation

## *Best Contribution by an Individual (continued)*

this year. Anna enabled the Pro Bono Group to receive a Gold accreditation from the Students' Union – one of only ten student societies to receive this recognition and organised a Pro Bono networking evening, as well as a Pro Bono awards evening, both of which were attended by over 200 students, legal professionals and representatives from partner organisations. She has been proactive in charitable fund raising and also successfully obtaining Students' Union grants for Pro Bono. In addition, funding has also been secured for joining the CLOCK Project and assisting litigants in person at Leicester courts from 2017 onwards.

### **Demi McLean – BPP Law School, Manchester**

*“She is a shining example of a law student truly committed to the ethos of pro bono. As well as providing phenomenal support to people frightened to attend hearings alone, she has been instrumental in widening the impact of public legal education in Manchester and beyond to the Caymans Islands no less!”*

Demi McLean is studying the LPC at BPP University Law School in Manchester (“BPP”) where she participates in the Litigants in Person service, attending employment related hearings with self-represented claimants providing them with moral and administrative support. Demi volunteers two days per month for the Personal Support Unit, attending Manchester's Civil Justice Centre to provide support to litigants in person in civil and family proceedings and she has participated for two years in BPP's public legal education project, Streetlaw, in the capacity of presenter and Student Director, helping to personally deliver 7 workshops and coordinate a further 33 in local schools and youth offender institutes on topics such as Human Trafficking. Demi volunteers for the National Centre for Citizenship and the Law, conducting outreach work in the local courts with schools. Demi came up with the innovative idea of taking Streetlaw back to the Cayman Islands (where she originates from) to help raise legal awareness and aspirations amongst local school children. In December 2016 Demi visited 5 schools, introducing 123 schoolchildren to the criminal justice system through an

interactive mock trial. As part of Streetlaw Homeless Demi is currently rallying support amongst law students for a ‘Shoebox Appeal’ for a local homeless charity called Mustard Tree. The shoeboxes will include vital items and a pamphlet collating key legal information and signposting to services.

### **Billy Shaw – Nottingham Law School**

*“Billy has consistently received excellent feedback from his clients and the most direct impact of his work has been in the successful results he has secured for his clients in the Social Security Tribunal. These outcomes have not only resulted in clients receiving substantial financial benefit awards but has also given the most vulnerable in our community hope and confidence to fight against the Department for Work and Pensions in relation to their benefit decisions.”*

Billy has trained as both a Student Adviser and Free Representation Unit (‘FRU’) Representative. He was one of only two Nottingham Law School (NLS) LLB (Second

## *Best Contribution by an Individual (continued)*

Year) students to undertake tribunal representation in the Social Security Tribunal in summer 2016. He has currently represented seven clients in the Social Security Tribunal and recovered in excess of £74,000 in benefit entitlement. As a Student Adviser, Billy has interviewed and advised a number of clients across a variety of legal areas, including commercial and employment, and he was involved in piloting Skype client interviews in the NLS Legal Advice Centre. Billy was also involved in NLS's first Business and Enterprise Law Service casework file, which involved him assisting with the drafting of terms and conditions for a Human Resource service. Billy has also volunteered with the Sheffield Citizen's Advice and was the only volunteer to represent their clients in the First-tier Tribunal.



## Best New Student Pro Bono Activity

### Birmingham Employment Tribunal Streetlaw Project

*“The sessions plugged a very significant gap in the provision of information for litigants in person and were tailored to the particular needs we had identified.”*

The Employment Tribunal Streetlaw Project, developed by Birmingham Law School in collaboration with the Midlands (West) Employment Tribunal, was launched (following a successful pilot) during the 2016-17 academic year. The Employment Tribunal judiciary were finding that many more litigants in person were appearing before them without having taken legal advice, and being less well-prepared. To help address this issue 16 law students deliver weekly presentations during term time at the Employment Tribunal, providing an overview of the Tribunal process (including compiling a bundle of documents and preparing a witness statement) and what to expect at a hearing. Feedback has been so positive, the project is being rolled out nationally

– it is being piloted in the East London Employment Tribunal with discussions to launch in other locations. 100% of those attending the sessions rated the presentations as good or excellent, and 100% said it was likely they would use what they had learnt during their claim.

### BPP Pro Bono Centre’s Calais Initiative

*“The Calais initiative was created to highlight the plight of refugees...the initiative encourages students to use their legal and research skills to assist the vulnerable and disenfranchised.”*

In June 2016 BPP’s Pro Bono Centre team of 11 staff visited the migrant camp in Calais to provide supplies and support to Care4Calais (which delivers aid to refugees in France), and to meet with legal advisers to determine how BPP law students could assist. It was apparent that there were significant information gaps for refugees in the camp (and elsewhere in Europe) in relation to the asylum process.

As well as raising funds for charities working in Calais, the team devised the Calais Asylum Enterprise (CARE) research project, with students researching and producing leaflets (providing accurate information relatable to refugees) and online material about asylum in European countries. Following advice from Calais contacts the information is made available via social media and online. In terms of impact, the project also highlights the plight of refugees to the student body and engages a young audience in world issues.

### Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice, Sheffield Hallam University

*“Our Clinic successfully reunited a Syrian national who had suffered torture while serving in the army...His wife and sons will join him in the UK in March 2017.”*

The Refugee Family Reunion Law Clinic based at the Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice was established in light of

## Best New Student Pro Bono Activity *(continued)*

the refugee crisis, the removal of legal aid and the lack of sources of help for refugees in the local community. Refugee family reunion enables individuals granted the status of refugee to be reunited with their nuclear and pre-flight family members. Organisations including the British Red Cross, Refugee Action and local community groups refer clients to the clinic. The Clinic has received accreditation from the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner, and students are taking examinations to qualify as a Level 1 regulated immigration adviser. 58 applications have been made for family reunion, to date 22 have been successful, 30 pending and 6 rejected. The team prepare and submit appeals (involving often very complex cases), assisting with Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) applications.

### Project LIGHT, University of Leicester

*"The project is essential in providing support for all the organisations we work with... to help those who are vulnerable and in need throughout the wider Leicester population."*

The project is a collaboration between the Pro Bono Society at the University and the School of Medicine combining free medical advice for homeless people and legal advice and signposting. 24 law students were recruited, completing housing law training with the Legal Advice Clinic and volunteering with Citizens Advice Leicester. The project has developed, including collaborations with MLST, Action Homeless, the Bridge Charity and others. Advice is provided in a welcoming setting, and includes assisting individuals with housing applications and supporting them through the long legal process. The student volunteers gain valuable legal knowledge and skills. The project includes helping to serve food at a morning club and raising funds for local charities. The plan is to expand to work with organisations such as the Red Cross and Crisis teams to help individuals who are homeless and also refugees, and to also cover family problems associated with homelessness.

### University of Greenwich Legal Advice Centre PIP Form Filling Project

*"Feedback from social workers supporting clients from Greenwich has been excellent. They have found the service very impactful and invaluable to their clients."*

A Personal Independent Payment (PIP) form filling service was opened in November 2015 following a successful pilot supported by the Training, Policy and Welfare Rights Services Manager at the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The Project was extended in 2016 following an increase in demand, with 24 students trained in form filling holding approximately 3 sessions a week, including assisting clients over the summer break. 39 students have been involved in the project since the pilot, including placements with the Welfare Rights Service at Greenwich where they undertake appeal work. The project benefits local disability organisations, including Greenwich Advocacy for Disabled People and the local Oxleas NHS Trust, and has assisted with over 200 PIP forms.

## ***Best New Student Pro Bono Activity (continued)***

Clients with short time limits to complete forms are prioritised, supporting people who would otherwise struggle to find services that can help them, and in turn easing pressure on the advice sector in the borough.

### **The Welfare Rights Project, University of Leeds School of Law**

*“Support with completing the [PIP] form is of great importance to many clients, we are delighted the volunteers have committed to offering support in this area.”*

The Welfare Rights Project is run by the School of Law in conjunction with Leeds City Council Welfare Rights Unit. Since October 2016 a team of fifteen law students have provided one-to-one support for completing Personal Independent Payment (PIP) forms. The volunteer students receive training in welfare rights law and PIP documentation, with support and supervision from the Welfare Rights Unit (enabling the Unit’s staff to deal with more complex cases). Students gain experience of working with a different client base and an understanding of the effect of law and policy for service users. PIP applicants are often unable to complete a form

independently or accurately (for example, due to language barriers or learning difficulties). Between late October 2016 and early March 2017 90 clients were assisted, with 21 of 32 claims decided being successful. The City Council and the Law School have committed to expanding the service in 2017-18.

## About LawWorks

### Supporting and celebrating pro bono

LawWorks (the Solicitors Pro Bono Group) is a charity committed to enabling access to justice through free legal advice. We encourage, facilitate, support and celebrate the contribution of pro bono (by solicitors, law schools, law students and others) across England and Wales.

Supported by the Law Society, our work is informed by advice and support needs, developed in collaboration with partners and stakeholders and delivered by a network of committed volunteer lawyers and law students. We enable the provision of pro bono through:

- Supporting a growing network of around 230 local 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 legal resources;
- Our Not-for-Profit 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 1st tier social security tribunals (for Employment and Support Allowance and Personal Independent Payment appeals), 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.

LawWorks is a partner organisation for the Litigant in Person Support Strategy, working with Law for Life, the Personal Support Unit, RCJ Advice, the Bar Pro Bono Unit 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.

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.

## 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 over 100 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 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-Profit programme (including an 'Honorary Counsel' role for solicitors as a source of ongoing advice and support for a specific charity). Members have access to our training, online resources, newsletters and networking opportunities (including a quarterly pro bono forum and regional events), and also have the opportunity to contribute to our growing policy work.

For more information about membership of LawWorks and the difference your membership can make, please get in touch with Olga Ivannikova, our Membership Officer, at [olga.ivannikova@lawworks.org.uk](mailto:olga.ivannikova@lawworks.org.uk) or on 0207 092 3941, or visit our website at: [www.lawworks.org.uk](http://www.lawworks.org.uk)

## Other ways to support LawWorks

LawWorks is grateful for the support of trusts and foundations, and the donations of individuals and organisations. If you would like to support our work, please contact Kate Buchanan at [kate.buchanan@lawworks.org.uk](mailto:kate.buchanan@lawworks.org.uk) or call 0207 092 3947, or visit our website.

## LawWorks (the Solicitors Pro Bono Group)

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London, WC2A 1JF

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Twitter: @Law\_Works

Registered Charity number: 1064274

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