



PUTTING THE *SERVICE* IN "FULL-SERVICE LAW FIRM"

Open any newspaper and you will see how many businesses address an economic downturn. They offer less for more. Dickinson Wright has chosen a different way to address the business challenges we all face. We have redoubled our commitment to our community by offering legal representation to more low income individuals and non-profits...for free.

Our pro bono program is not window dressing. It is a commitment of our 260-lawyer firm that spans all levels of attorneys and all practice groups. ***Dickinson Wright believes:***

- ***in making a strong commitment.*** In 2008, our lawyers provided over 4,000 hours of pro bono legal services. In 2007, Community Legal Resources named us Pro Bono Firm of the Year.
- ***in second chances.*** Our lawyers have helped numerous individuals expunge minor criminal offenses from their records, leaving them with the chance for a brighter future for their families.
- ***in honoring service.*** Our lawyers have partnered with Project Salute to help veterans receive the benefits they deserve.
- ***in fairness.*** Working with the Accounting Aid Society, we have helped dozens of low income Michigan residents file their state and federal tax returns, often resulting in the return of money to them and to Michigan.
- ***in our community.*** Our lawyers have helped dozens of non-profit agencies achieve tax exempt status, merge with other non-profits, expand their offerings and build their resources.

As the stories on the following page attest, our commitment to providing pro bono legal services is fundamental to the way we do business. ***It is what makes us great lawyers. It is what makes us a great law firm.***

If you know an individual or organization that may need our help, please contact **Rick Haberman**, a Member at Dickinson Wright and its Pro Bono Coordinator, at **313.223.3676** or **rhaberman@dickinsonwright.com**.

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Great lawyers. Great law firm.



“It was a homeowner’s nightmare. Our client contracted with a window company to make improvements to her home. Unfortunately, instead of making her house better, the window company made it worse. While performing the “improvements” on Arlene’s home, the company’s workers put a hole in her roof, which they never repaired. Also, the windows were not properly installed and the siding and gutters began to fall off of the house after a matter of months. The window company simply ignored her complaints. After a three-day jury trial, Arlene finally received some satisfaction. The jury awarded her every cent she had lost. For us, pro bono means that there is someone to fight for the ignored.” - *Sherry O’Neal & Tiffany Buckley (Member and Associate, Detroit, MI)*



“My client, an award-winning photographer from Hudsonville, Michigan, could not bear the tragedy of losing the personal stories of the Last of the Last, the twelve surviving veterans of World War I. Using every dime of his own money, he began traveling the globe to capture their images and legacies, to save the vanishing personal histories of World War I veterans. When he came to Dickinson Wright, his photographs of surviving American World War I veterans had just been accepted for exhibition at the Pentagon and he wanted to establish a charity, Survivor Quest, to capture the stories of survivors and use them to educate, to inspire and to preserve the history of the courageous men and women among us. Survivor Quest was granted 501(c)(3) status on January 8, 2009 and is already building its first exhibits to take this snapshot of history, this reminder of the cost of freedom, to colleges, universities and museums throughout the free world.” - *Leslee Lewis (Member, Grand Rapids, MI)*



“I am helping a federal prisoner appeal his conviction on drug and weapons charges. Although the cause may be a somewhat unpopular one (my client has been in and out of prison for the bulk of his adult life), I took the case because I feel strongly that everyone is entitled to adequate representation throughout the legal process. For me, the “cause” here is bigger than just my client. It’s the idea that any citizen facing the criminal justice system is entitled to a strong defense, regardless of their wealth.” - *John Schuring (Associate, Grand Rapids, MI)*



“Working through the ACLU of Michigan, I was asked to defend a “SLAPP suit.” The acronym -- Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation -- does not quite capture the wrongness of what it is. The purpose of a SLAPP suit is to burden a citizen who is speaking out with an onerous lawsuit in an attempt to shut them up, knowing that even a frivolous lawsuit takes money and time to get rid of. In this case, my client lived next to a business which had recently upgraded its stamping facilities and ran them day and night, in violation of local noise ordinances, gravely affecting her health. We were able to successfully defend the lawsuit while also drawing local TV news to the problem. Eventually, the city woke up and started enforcing its ordinances. Without the support of pro bono attorneys, this woman would have either had to continue to live in misery or move.” - *Daniel Quick (Member, Bloomfield Hills, MI)*



“My client was convicted of welfare fraud in 1996. Since that time she raised a son who is now a senior at Cass Tech and will attend Michigan State next year. She also has legal custody of two other children, ages 5 and 7, who depend on her. My client worked hard after her conviction to support and raise her family and to better herself, but a mistake over a decade old was threatening her future in the medical field. We succeeded in having that conviction removed from her record, and now our client can compete for the future she deserves.” - *Timothy H. Howlett, (Member and Group Head, Detroit, MI)*



“My client was a single mother living in a small one bedroom apartment near downtown Detroit. The apartment’s sprinkler system was plagued with problems, and one day the sprinklers went off for no reason. Our client’s apartment was flooded and all her possessions ruined. Not only did she have to get a new apartment for herself and her child on short notice, she had no money to replace her family’s possessions. The apartment complex was not returning calls and no lawyer would take on such a small case. Within a month of our involvement, the apartment’s insurer settled our lawsuit and our client was able to replace what she and her family had lost.” - *Rick Haberman (Member, Detroit, MI)*

The list could go on. We have helped artists protect their intellectual property, homeowners rebuild their homes, and community groups improve their neighborhoods. For us, making our communities a better place for everyone is always good business.

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