

PRO BONO HONOR ROLL

The State Bar of Nevada Board of Governors and the Access to Justice Commission extend a special thanks to the following attorneys who generously accepted cases in December 2015, through the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, Washoe Legal Services, Nevada Legal Services, Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevadans and Southern Nevada Senior Law Program.

Attorneys who accepted new pro bono cases:

Justin Allsop	Jeffrey Hall	Rebecca Miller
Boris Avramski	Daniel Heidtke	Aaron Motschenbacher
James Barrington	Rachel Jacobson	Brian Nelson
Eunice Beattie	Carla Jaroch	Eric Pepperman
Brian Blackham	Kevin Kampschor	Holly Priest
Kim Boyer	David Krieger	Yianna Reizakis
Adam Breeden	John Krieger	Charlene Renwick
William Brown	Ishi Kunin	Jennifer Roberts
Michael Carman	Shoshana Kunin-Leavitt	Colin Seale
Marilyn Caston	James Leavitt	Therese Shanks
Shelly Cooley	Patricia Lee	Kendal Weisenmiller
William Curran	Kate Lowenhar-Fisher	Marshal Willick
Shan Davis	Susan Maheu	Shannon Wilson
Tracy DiFillippo	Bradley Marx	Timothy Wiseman
Rachel Donn	Colleen McCarty	Bruce Woodbury
David Gutke	Robert McPeak	Adam Woodrum

Attorneys who participated in clinics, Ask-A-Lawyer, or Lawyer in the Library programs:

Bryce C. Alstead	Michael Esposito	Maren Parry
Robert Blau	Cherie Fletter	Kelly Perri
Elizabeth Brickfield	Christopher Fowler	Doug R. Rands
Alexis Brown	Joseph Geller	David J. Reese
Rebecca Burr	John George	Devon T. Reese
Bryan J. Carpenter	Sihomara Graves	Brad Richardson
Sarah V. Carrasco	Jack S. Grellman	Arturo Sanchez
Brandi Cassidy	Rebecca Haines	Corey Schmutz
Theodore E. Chrissinger	Jill Hanlon	Tamatha R. Schreinert
Travis H. Clark	Terry Johnson	Kari Stephens
Alison Colvin	Gabrielle Jones	James Smith
Linda N. Daykin	Mark Lichtenfeld	Frank Toddre
Laura Deeter	Ryan MacDonald	Kristin Tyler
Alice Denton	Susan Maheu	Soraya Veiga
Shirley Derke	Theresa Mains	Clark V. Vellis
Courtney Dolan	Christine Miller	Jason Walker
Sabrina Dolson	Greta Muirhead	Kendal Weisenmiller
Gerald M. Dorn	Susan Noyce	Homa Woodrum
	Rebecca Paddock	

◀ **BOLD honors multiple cases accepted and/or sessions conducted within the month.** ▶

BLWM Bauman Loewe Witt & Maxwell, PLLC Attorneys at Law

BAUMAN LOEWE WITT & MAXWELL, PLLC

is pleased to announce that

MICHAEL C. MILLS

has joined the Firm as a Partner. Mr. Mills has successfully served insurance and trucking clients for over 25 years. Mike focuses his civil litigation practice in the areas of trucking defense, coverage litigation/opinions, bad faith defense, appellate practice, premises liability and insurance defense. Mike is actively involved in the :

Defense Research Institute
Council & Litigation Management Alliance
Trucking Industry Defense Association

Transportation Lawyers Association
Las Vegas Defense Lawyers
Nevada Trucking Association

Mike recently obtained the designation of Certified Litigation Management Professional from the CLMA. He also serves as General Counsel to the Nevada Trucking Association. Mike will immediately impact our ability to serve our defense and trucking clients in Nevada, Utah and Arizona. Learn more about Mike and his practice by visiting his award winning blogs at www.NevadaLawBlogs.com. Please allow Mike or any of our other attorneys to assist with your legal needs.

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ONE FOCUS



LAWYER IT FORWARD

BY NATALIA VANDER LAAN, ESQ.

The start of my pro bono career as an experienced attorney was very similar to the start of my legal career as a staff attorney — I was full of both assumptions and expectations. While my assumptions were sometimes unfounded, my expectations were always surpassed.

Pro bono work is not always galvanizing as depicted by Hollywood films on the silver screen. Pro bono volunteers are not Richard Gere in *Primal Fear* — dazzling, outspoken and crafting victories with cunning legal manipulations. We rarely see the inside of glamorous courtrooms, as most of our work is performed in legal clinics throughout Nevada. While the people we counsel typically have very limited resources, the fact remains that they are in desperate need of legal help. Their gratitude makes our volunteering all worthwhile.

No, we do not get to be Richard Gere's character, but we do have an opportunity to be one of *A Few Good Men*. Of course we advise on divorce, personal injury, landlord-tenant issues and even on small-claims cases, but the most rewarding work comes from helping victims of domestic violence and abuse. This is where I get to be a real-life hero, bigger than the silver screen's Lt. Daniel Kaffee. These are the times when my expectations truly are surpassed.

It is never easy to hear a story about physical or emotional abuse, and it is harder yet when you hear it directly from the victim. I was raised in a safe home with a warm environment, so the tales of violence and abuse recounted to me during my first few months at the free legal clinics were especially difficult for me. It was, and still is, impossible for me to leave my clients' problems at the office. Their violent environments are always on my mind, even in the safety of my own house, as I consider how best to help them make it stop.

Hearing about the abuse suffered by the victims of domestic violence never gets easier, and it never gets less painful to hear about someone's pain. However, I have found a way to cope with that without giving up: I learned to draw strength from the fact that I bring help to these women in need. I realize that if I resign, and if others like me, who at times can also become emotionally overwhelmed and overworked, give up, then these women full of fear, who have gathered what's left of all their strength to seek our help, will simply be abandoned and continue to be abused. So, I go back every month, more often if I can. I sit, I listen and I advise. It's not unusual for half of the time to be spent simply providing emotional support and

encouragement; both can be of equal importance to the legal advice I give. It is not enough to tell the victims of domestic violence what to do. They also need to know that they have the ability to do it. They need to hear that they can overcome their fears and, most importantly, they need to know that there is an advocate on their side, in their corner, available to help.

Not every situation has a favorable outcome or goes as it should, and these cases are the ones that trouble me most and motivate me even more. I met with a young woman who had, almost two years earlier, left her abusive husband. He threatened her life and hit their children, but he was wealthy, and so her case was lost in the system. His money and influence buried her case. We found it. We uncovered it. We dug her out of the system and placed her on the right path. She is still fighting today.

Along with the dark times that people are going through when they confide in us, pro bono work does have its bright side. It has given me the opportunity to meet wonderful people who selflessly devote their lives to helping others. Their passion and sacrifice is truly inspirational. Their willingness to share their professional experience has helped me in my legal career, both with my pro bono work and also with my private practice.

I am amazed at the number of people involved in pro bono work. Some, like me, help whenever they can. Others, like the attorneys that mentor me in my pro bono work, do it full time. However, no one does it alone. There are organizations and resources not only devoted to helping those in need, but also to assisting the attorneys performing pro bono work. So, if you want to become involved with helping those who are truly in need, if you want to do pro bono work — do it! A great support network exists, so come to the free clinic. Take a case and make a difference! **NL**



NATALIA VANDER LAAN was born and educated in Poland, where she received her first law degree. She received her second law degree from McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento, California. In 2013, Vander Laan relocated to Minden and opened her own practice to serve the needs of her new community. The Vander Laan Law Firm offers its clients legal services in various areas, including estate planning, family law, personal injury, workers' compensation, and business organization and management. Vander Laan is an Inspire One! Ambassador; Inspire One! Is an initiative of the Nevada Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission.