



Access to Justice Program

MARCH 2022

ALEXANDER BLEWETT III SCHOOL OF LAW
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA



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History of the Pro Bono Program

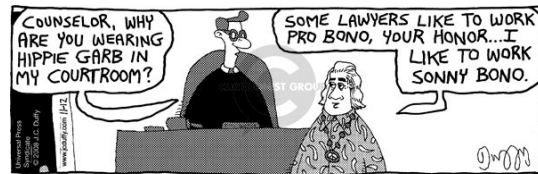
- ▶ During the 2017-2018 AY, the Law School created a voluntary Pro Bono Program with support from Professor Gross, SBA, and law school leadership.
- ▶ The goals of the Pro Bono Program are to:
 - ▶ (1) support and encourage student awareness of their **professional obligation** to engage in Pro Bono service,
 - ▶ (2) provide **hands-on learning opportunities** for students through approved Pro Bono service opportunities, and
 - ▶ (3) promote, encourage, and **recognize** Student, Staff, and Faculty participation in Pro Bono service



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What is Law Student Pro Bono?

- ▶ The Pro Bono Program focuses on the promotion and development of professional legal values and the **delivery of free legal services** to underserved persons, communities, and organizations.
- ▶ Service in the Pro Bono Program is limited to **law-related service** that meets an access to justice need.
- ▶ It **does not include non-legal volunteer work**, and it does not include service for which any **compensation or academic credit** is received.



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Who may participate in Pro Bono?

- ▶ All students (regardless of year in law school)
- ▶ Are you required to do Pro Bono while in law school? No.
 - ▶ Different from Clinical requirement (academic – required To graduate)

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Why do Pro Bono?

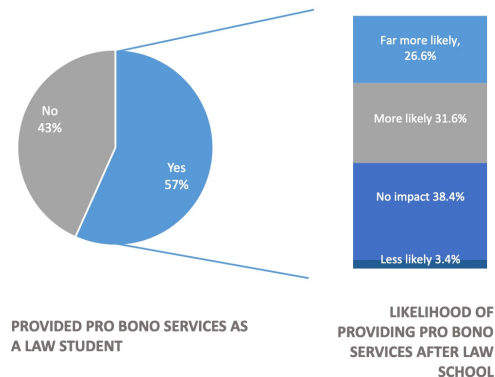
SUPPORTING JUSTICE

A Report on the Pro Bono Work of America's Lawyers



FIGURE 20. IMPACT OF PROVIDING PRO BONO AS A LAW STUDENT ON PRO BONO SERVICE PROVIDING AFTER GRADUATING

- ▶ Students benefit by
 - ▶ increasing their knowledge and marketability,
 - ▶ gaining practical experience,
 - ▶ developing skills,
 - ▶ enhancing their reputations and
 - ▶ exploring alternative career opportunities



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Why Else do Pro Bono? (Recognition)

Students who complete **at least 15 hours of Pro Bono service** during their **first** year in law school receive a "**Dean's First Year Student Pro Bono Recognition**" certificate.

- ▶ Students who complete **at least 15 hours of Pro Bono service** during their **second** year in law school receive a "**Dean's Second Year Student Pro Bono Recognition**" certificate.
- ▶ Students who complete **at least 20 hours of Pro Bono service** during their **third** year in law school receive a "**Dean's Third Year Student Pro Bono Recognition**" certificate.
- ▶ Students who complete **at least 50 hours of Pro Bono service** during their **law school career** receive a **notation on their law school transcript** that they completed the Law School Pro Bono Service Program requirements.
- ▶ Students who complete **at least 150 hours of Pro Bono service** during their **law school career** receive:
 - ▶ A "**Pro Bono Honors**" notation on their law school transcript
 - ▶ An **announcement** during the graduation ceremony and a notation in the graduation ceremony materials that the student is graduating with "**Pro Bono Honors**"

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Pro Bono Fair

CELEBRATE
PRO BONO
www.celebrateprobono.org

National Pro Bono Celebration
October 24-30, 2021

Pro Bono Passport -

Court Appointed Special Advocates	FREE	Partnership Health Clinic	Veterans Advocacy Clinic
Missoula Housing Authority	Self-Help Law Center	DPHHS: Aging Services Bureau	Community Dispute Resolution Center
FREE	International Rescue Committee	ASUM Legal Services	Montana Legal Services Association
FREE	MHB Indian Law Clinic	Crowley Fleck PLLP	River Mountain Immigration (FREE)

- ▶ This year was the Fourth Annual Pro Bono Fair. **There were over 255 sign-ups for the 13 organizations!**
- ▶ **SBA Sponsors Lunch**
- ▶ Pro Bono Passport to encourage participation



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Pro Bono Fair 2022



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Pro Bono Opportunities



Missoula
Housing
AUTHORITY



TRUST MONTANA



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Montana Afghan Project

- ▶ Many organizations working together:
 - ▶ Alexander Blewett III School of Law
 - ▶ American Constitution Society
 - ▶ International Rescue Committee
 - ▶ MLSA
 - ▶ Montana Supreme Court Statewide Pro Bono Program
 - ▶ Respond Crisis Translation
 - ▶ Upper Seven Law
 - ▶ Over 190 Lawyers throughout the state



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Clinics

- ▶ Legal Services Developer Estate Planning Documents Clinics
- ▶ MLSA Family Law Clinic



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Pro Bono Hours Provided by Classes

- ▶ **Class of 2019 – 724 hours, by 17 students**
- ▶ **Class of 2020 – 2,033 hours, by 34 students**
- ▶ **Class of 2021- 3,100 hours by 41 students**
- ▶ **Class of 2022 (3Ls) – 2,300 hours by 48 students**
- ▶ **Class of 2023 (2Ls)– 1,800 hours by 40 students**
- ▶ **Class of 2024 (1Ls)– 68 hours by 17 students**
- ▶ **Over 10,000 hours total!**

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Questions?



WITH GREAT
POWER
COMES GREAT
RESPONSIBILITY



"The function
of freedom is
to free
someone else."

Toni Morrison

Pro Bono – those
who have received
opportunities have
a responsibility to
pay it forward

Lawyers have a license to practice law, a monopoly on certain services. But for that privilege and status, lawyers have an obligation to provide legal services to those without the wherewithal to pay, to respond to needs outside themselves, to help repair tears in their communities.

RUTH BADER GINSBURG
FORMER US SUPREME COURT JUSTICE
MARCH 2014

