

PRO BONO COMMITMENT

Spiegel & McDiarmid is a mid-sized, Washington law firm with a national practice. We characterize ourselves as a litigation firm with a substantial concern for the public interest. We choose clients and cases with goals that are essentially consumeristic in nature, and we are involved in far more than our share of cases on the cutting edge of the law. Our practice has grown from a base involving primarily energy issues to one that includes environmental, communications, antitrust, false claims, transportation and government affairs issues.

The firm provides *pro bono* services to worthy public interest activities to aid individuals and organizations. The goal of the *pro bono* practice is to benefit both the client and the community as a whole. The firm has made a significant commitment of time and resources in support of *pro bono* work, and attorneys receive credit towards their annual billable hours for approved *pro bono* matters. In Spring 2004, the firm was one of 12 Washington, DC law firms to receive an award from the DC Circuit Judicial Conference Standing Committee on *Pro Bono* Legal Services. The award was given to firms that met the Committee's *pro bono* hours goal of 40% of lawyers having 50 or more *pro bono* hours per year.



The firm has been involved in many other *pro bono* activities of national significance, including representing a plaintiff in an FCC suit that secured the manufacture of cell phones with usability features for the visually impaired; filing an amicus brief in the Supreme Court for the National Insurance Consumers Organization in a case involving sex discrimination in annuity policies; representing Pennsylvania citizens in the Centralia mine fire dispute; obtaining landmark legislation protecting against asbestos in schools; and establishing the obligation of public bodies to accept on a nondiscriminatory basis political advertisements regardless of content. In providing *pro bono* services, the firm seeks to apply its already developed expertise in cases involving issues such as antitrust law, administrative law and First Amendment rights.

Our goals for *pro bono* work are not significantly different from our goals for our practice in general, and we are committed to providing the highest quality legal services possible to *pro bono* clients. We accept *pro bono* cases where we believe that the rights of individuals or groups have been violated, or where a legal responsibility has been ignored with adverse social consequences, subject to the availability of firm resources and potential conflicts with the interests of existing clients. Our goal is that our *pro bono* cases will challenge the attorneys who work on them and provide an opportunity to positively influence the development of the law.

REPRESENTATIVE CASES

- Providing legal representation involving an innovative FCC suit under the Telecommunications Act of 1996 that secured the manufacture of cell phones with usability features for the visually-impaired for our client Dr. Bonnie O'Day. Spiegel & McDiarmid partner Scott Strauss was awarded the 2004 Access Award from the American Foundation for the Blind for his work on this case;

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- Assisting the ACLU with a police misconduct case in the District of Columbia;
 - Assisting public access programmers, the ACLU, and others in protecting First Amendment rights to local access channels on cable television, including a very favorable settlement for a public access programmer in Palestine, Texas;
 - Working with the Lawyers' Committee on Civil Rights Under Law on matters involving employment discrimination and the antidiscrimination provisions of immigration legislation;
 - Providing legal advice and representation to people affected by HIV on matters involving discrimination, debtor-creditor rights, health insurance, employee benefits, housing and other issues;
 - Working to enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act on behalf of the Deaf;
 - Assisting the Natural Resources Defense Council in enforcing compliance with National Environmental Policy Act requirements applicable to the strategic nuclear weapons program;
 - Assisting in a class action brought by Haitian farm workers under the antitrust laws, in part, and involving employment discrimination by the sugar industry;
 - Assisting the Lambda Legal Defense Fund in analyzing claims of sexual orientation discrimination against a national security agency;
 - Working to develop a consumer-oriented position regarding legislation to revise the Public Utility Holding Company Act; and
 - Supporting an attorney of the firm who worked as an election observer in a South Africa free election.

For more information about the *pro bono* program at Spiegel & McDiarmid, please call Scott Strauss or Carol Gloss at 202.879.4000.

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