

## OUR PRO BONO PROGRAM



Sheppard Mullin has a long tradition of providing legal services to people and community organizations who could otherwise not afford access to legal representation. Many of our attorneys have a strong desire to give back to the community in which they live, and the provision of high-caliber legal services to people of limited means (as well as to charitable and civic organizations) is one way to fulfill that need. We encourage our attorneys to contribute to their communities in many ways, including through the provision of pro bono legal services.

We endorse the goals for annual per attorney contributions of pro bono time under applicable Rules of Professional Conduct and as promulgated by the American Bar Association and/or applicable state bars and bar associations. Individual attorneys are encouraged by these organizations to contribute at least 50 hours per year to pro bono work. For approved pro bono work performed by associates, their “credited” non-chargeable hours can include all hours spent on approved pro bono matters and up to 50 hours of other “credited” non-billable activity per year.

We have a Pro Bono Committee consisting of partners and associates from each of our offices. The Committee works to develop, identify and approve projects for Firm representation. Offices also receive cases from local referring agencies that pre-screen potential clients for income eligibility and legal needs.

Our attorneys have assisted with a wide variety of legal issues relating to education, political asylum and other immigration matters, children's rights, domestic violence, criminal matters, creditor-debtor relations and landlord-tenant relations, among others. Sheppard Mullin attorneys also provide pro bono services outside the litigation arena, including providing counsel to non-profit developers of affordable housing and “micro businesses,” as well as those seeking to preserve historic landmarks.

# Recent Pro Bono Achievements

## Making An Impact on the Lives of People with Disabilities

Sheppard Mullin recently achieved two historic victories on behalf of New York City's persons with disabilities.

### *Taxis for All Campaign v. Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC)*

As a result of the historic settlement in a case challenging the New York City taxicab fleet for not being wheelchair accessible, New York City has agreed to have the New York taxi fleet, which is currently only 1.8% accessible, become 50% accessible over the next six years. The case will transform the lives of tens of thousands of elderly and people with disabilities in New York City.

### *Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled (BCID) et al. v. Mayor Bloomberg, et al.*

Represented a class of 900,000 disabled residents of New York City. After trial, a federal judge issued a 119 page ruling that New York City discriminated against people with disabilities in its failure to plan for their needs in large scale disasters such as Hurricane Sandy.

“ The Court's ruling today is a landmark victory for New York City's residents with disabilities. For the first time, they will be provided with an equal chance of survival during disasters. ”

~ Sid Wolinsky  
Director of Litigation, Disability Rights Advocates

Other recent notable achievements by our Pro Bono team include:

## Asylum Cases: Saving Lives

Obtained asylum for an active member of a pro-democracy group that worked to promote democracy and end the violence perpetrated by the Syrian government against its own people. Our client was monitored by the Syrian government and fled after being brutally beaten by Syrian security forces.

Obtained asylum for Mr. N., a Rwandan national who fled his home country after he was repeatedly detained, beaten, and tortured by the Rwandan national police because he made statements questioning Rwandan government policies.

## Adoption Project: Creating New Families

In 2013, Sheppard Mullin dedicated over 970 hours to finalize the adoptions of 53 children.

## Leading by Example

San Francisco partner Neil Popovic embodies our core values as a Firm. Below are some of Neil's recent pro bono activities:

- Authored an amicus brief in the U.S. Supreme Court addressing international human rights issues in support of the University of Texas admissions policy.
- Authored an amicus brief in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in a human rights challenge to the imposition of juvenile life without parole sentences. Our clients are Amnesty International and Human Rights Advocates.
- Assisted on a contract for an architectural firm providing pro bono design services for the development of a shelter complex for victims of the sex trade in Ethiopia.
- Supervised research project to address the applicability of human trafficking laws to “johns.”
- Supervised immigration matters under the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project.

## Our Pro Bono Partners and Clients



NYLPI

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

If you would like to learn more about our attorneys and what they are up to, please visit us at [www.sheppardmullin.com/probono.html](http://www.sheppardmullin.com/probono.html)

**SheppardMullin**