

GIVING BACK

PRO BONO & COMMUNITY SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2022



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Richards, Layton & Finger's commitment to serving others runs deep. Not only have our lawyers been acknowledged leaders of the Delaware bar for more than a century, but our firm has also played an important role in building and improving our community. We have invested significant time and resources to develop our attorneys and professionals into dedicated community leaders. And the investment has certainly paid off—collectively we have made a real difference to many of our neighbors in need.

I'm proud of the many ways our lawyers have fully embraced the importance of giving back. Year after year we advocate for Delaware's vulnerable and underserved, including the poor, minorities, people with disabilities, children, seniors, and the LGBTQ+ community. Through our pro bono efforts, we have experienced firsthand the personal and professional fulfillment that comes from doing meaningful work. Most importantly, though, we are creating deep roots in our community and working together to improve the lives of others.



Lisa A. Schmidt
FIRM PRESIDENT

A MESSAGE FROM OUR COMMITTEE CHAIRS

We can all be proud to be part of a firm that truly values pro bono service. And it's not just words: Richards Layton has developed a thriving pro bono program that allows attorneys to donate their talents to causes that are meaningful to them, credits pro bono work as billable hours, and features specialized pro bono teams to help attorneys readily take part in projects that offer valuable professional development opportunities while making a difference.

Our five pro bono teams provide substantial assistance to those in need in our community and beyond. Our work includes serving as child attorneys, representing victims of domestic violence, and assisting indigent seniors with end-of-life needs. We represent local and global non-profits, and we work on civil rights cases in the Delaware District Court. In addition to the efforts of our teams, we conduct a variety of important pro bono initiatives, helping to revitalize distressed areas of our community, championing underserved children, and working with Lex Mundi to advance non-profits around the world.



Russell C. Silberglied
COMMITTEE CHAIR



Mark V. Purpura
COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR

& OUR PRO BONO COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE

Committee Leadership



Russell C.
Silberglied
*Committee
Chair*



Mark V.
Purpura
*Committee
Vice Chair*



Lisa A.
Schmidt
President



Doneene K.
Damon
*Immediate Past
President and
Chief Diversity
Director*

Directors



Monica M.
Ayres



C. Malcolm
Cochran



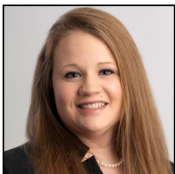
Mark D.
Collins



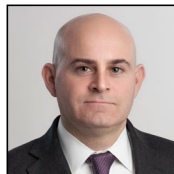
Brock E.
Czeschin



Jennifer C.
Jauffret



Beth Gansen
Knight



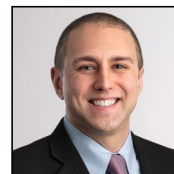
Mark A.
Kurtz



Elisa Erlenbach
Maas



Joshua J.
Novak



Drew G.
Sloan



John Mark
Zeberkiewicz

& OUR PRO BONO COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE

Counsel



Jennifer Veet
Barrett



Cory D.
Kandestin

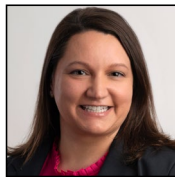


Christine M.
Morabito



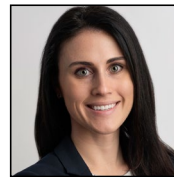
Marisa
Terranova
Fissel

Senior Attorney



Stacey Novinger
Smith

Associate



Sara C.
Thompson

Staff



Melissa
Lennon
*Chief Legal Talent
Officer*



Paul D.
Webb
*Director of Marketing
& Business
Development*



Danielle A.
Nowaczyk
*Director of
Attorney
Development*



Lisa
Portale
*User Support
Manager*

THE POWER^{OF} CARING

Richards, Layton & Finger (“RLF”) attorneys and staff continued to undertake pro bono engagements in large numbers during FY 2022, with 74% of the firm’s attorneys participating in pro bono and community service (“PBCS”) projects. During the year:

- RLF attorneys and staff logged more than 5,100 hours on PBCS matters.
- 83% of the firm’s associates recorded PBCS time during the year.
- 62% of our directors spent time on PBCS matters.
- 89% of our counsel participated in PBCS.
- Our staff provided administrative support on nearly all PBCS matters.
- The firm opened 41 new PBCS matters during FY 2022.



OUR INITIATIVES

Various initiatives were continued during FY 2022. The Pro Bono and Community Service Committee continues to advance the purposes of the firm's PBCS program, including:

- Giving back to the community we serve
- Enhancing the firm's reputation and the RLF brand
- Associate recruitment, development, and retention
- Community involvement and relationship building with individuals, public officials, non-profit organizations, and institutions throughout Delaware and beyond
- Relationship building within the firm
- Client development
- Professional development training for all attorneys

One of the firm's largest pro bono projects has been its ongoing work on behalf of **Central Baptist Community Development Corporation ("CBCDC")**. Under the leadership of retired director **Robert Krapf** and **Mark Kurtz**, the firm dedicated over 150 hours in the past year representing **CBCDC** in connection with its Eastside Rising initiative, an effort to revitalize Wilmington's Eastside community through housing improvement, workforce development, and economic empowerment. Our efforts included negotiating a joint venture agreement; reviewing and preparing memoranda of understanding and contracts involving workforce training programs, low-income housing rehabilitation, and promotion of home ownership; advising on loan financing transactions; and advising on various matters of Delaware law, including employment law matters. This initiative has improved both the infrastructure and the quality of life in a significant section of our community. During the past year, **Jennifer Jauffret, Robert Krapf, Mark Kurtz, Jake Crosetto, R. Parker Havis, Ellen Rosaio, and Susan Stewart**, among others, contributed their time to this project.



PRO BONO PROGRAMS

The Federal Civil Panel. The firm participates in the Federal Civil Panel under the auspices of the U.S. District Court for the District of Delaware. Through this program, the firm receives referrals from the Federal District Court of cases filed by indigent plaintiffs. The cases typically involve alleged civil rights violations. Through this program, it is intended that attorneys will have the opportunity to first-chair active litigation matters in the Delaware District Court. The Federal Civil Panel Team is led by **Kelly Farnan**.

The Non-Profit Team. This team's goal is assisting non-profit organizations with various legal projects, including drafting incorporation documents, answering legal questions, and serving on or counseling non-profit boards. It is a popular team among the firm's attorneys, with 41 members. The Non-Profit Team is led by **Elisa Erlenbach Maas** and **John Mark Zeberkiewicz**.

In FY 2022, the Non-Profit Team hosted a variety of presentations directed to attorneys who serve or are interested in serving on a non-profit board of directors. On October 26, 2021, **John Mark Zeberkiewicz** presented an insightful in-house CLE on board governance. On February 24, 2022, the Non-Profit Team hosted a virtual CLE with **Pamela Leland, PhD, Chief Learning Officer of the Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement ("DANA")**, titled *From Connection to Collection: The Many Ways Board Members Can Help Raise Funds*.

On May 9, 2022, the Non-Profit Team hosted the CLE, *First Time Non-Profit Board Experiences*, featuring panelists **Dorronda Bordley**, Director, TeenSHARP; **Ally Ewing**, Director and Member of the Executive Committee, Christina Cultural Arts Center; **Richard Facciolo**, Director, Music School of Delaware; **Nicole Henry**, Director, Catholic Charities Diocese of Wilmington; **Brian Mammarella**, Director, YMCA of Delaware, Central Branch; and **Kate Mowery**, Founder and Vice President, International FoxP1 Foundation, among others. This discussion provided insights into the expectations, benefits, and opportunities presented to those who volunteer for leadership positions on non-profit boards, and highlighted the various missions and causes being championed by members of the firm.

The Office of the Child Advocate Team. The Office of the Child Advocate ("OCA") Team is comprised of 31 attorneys and led by **Jennifer Jauffret**. Over the course of the year, 12 RLF attorneys represented 15 children in abuse and neglect proceedings, providing an important service to the court and the children as well as valuable litigation and counseling experiences for our lawyers. Our attorneys dedicated over 235 hours to serving as child attorneys in FY 2022. Since the inception of this program over 20 years ago, RLF attorneys have dedicated over 14,100 hours to the representation of 264 children in these Family Court proceedings.

PRO BONO PROGRAMS

On November 16, 2021, **Jennifer Jauffret**, OCA Team leader, **Cory Kandestin**, **Greg Ladner**, and **Claire Love** led a presentation for the firm's attorneys highlighting their involvement over the years with the Office of the Child Advocate and the positive personal and professional experiences gained from serving as child attorneys.

Nicole Henry and **Melissa Lagoumis** served as guardians *ad litem* to three boys who have been successfully placed in the guardianship of their maternal aunt. Through meetings with the children and their respective guardians, as well as appearances at Family Court hearings and conferences, Nicole and Melissa ensured that the children's best interests were recognized and respected.

Claire Love, **Kinsey Lenehan**, and **Robert Troiano** worked with the **Department of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families (DSCYF)** to find a home for an infant born to teen parents who had extensive histories with the **Division of Family Services ("DFS")** and were unable to care for the child. Although efforts were made to place the child with family members, he ultimately found a home with a loving and nurturing foster family. The court recently ordered termination of the parental rights of his birth parents, thus freeing him for adoption.

Edmond Kim, among others, under the supervision of **Amanda Steele**, worked with DFS to find a suitable home for an infant who was born substance exposed and was abandoned by his mother at the hospital following his birth; the identity of the father was unknown.

Cory Kandestin, **Edmond Kim**, and **Rachel Sharp** are representing a baby boy whose mother cannot care for him due to substance abuse and lack of stable housing; paternity has not been established.

Congratulations to the following OCA Team members who were named to the **Office of the Child Advocate's Pro Bono Honor Roll in FY 2022**: **Brock Czeschin**, **Nicole Henry**, **Travis Hunter**, **Jennifer Jauffret**, **Cory Kandestin**, **Gregory Ladner**, **Kinsey Lenehan**, **Claire Love**, **Amanda Steele**, and **Sandy Xu**.

Protection from Abuse Team. The Protection from Abuse ("PFA") Team consists of 20 attorneys who assist **Delaware Volunteer Legal Services, Inc. ("DVLS")** with obtaining Protection from Abuse Orders for victims of domestic violence. The PFA Team dedicates its time to handling protection from abuse proceedings, including representing victims at virtual hearings throughout the COVID-19 shutdown. In FY 2022, **Sara Thompson** was named as the **PFA Team leader**.

PRO BONO PROGRAMS

On May 19, 2022, the PFA Team hosted *How to Handle a Protection from Abuse Case*, a CLE presented by **DVLS attorneys Tom McDonough and Jacki Chacona**. On June 9, the PFA Team hosted a “Lunch and Learn” CLE with the summer associates, featuring **Family Court Commissioners Danielle Blount and Para Wolcott**, who presented the CLE, *Preparing for a Protection from Abuse Hearing: Perspectives from the Bench*.

Tianshu (Allie) Ji, Melissa Lagoumis, and Sandy Xu teamed up to serve as first-time volunteers on three PFA cases with the guidance and support of DVLS attorneys. All three matters involved representing women in prosecuting their PFA petitions against their spouses or significant others from physical, verbal, and emotional abuse.

Wills Team. This team of 28 attorneys is headed by **Monica Ayres** and offers services, through DVLS, to indigent clients with estate planning and related needs. In addition to the preparation of wills, the team offers various other estate-planning options, such as the creation of health-care directives, durable powers of attorney, HIPAA authorizations, and planning documents for the disposition of last remains. This pro bono offering affords valuable one-on-one counseling opportunities for our lawyers.

Co-Counsel Project. Private law firms are asked to provide pro bono attorneys to partner with the Public Defender’s Office on serious felony cases. Our attorneys serve as second chair and are expected to research, prepare, and argue motions, such as suppression of evidence. The firm has 11 attorneys on this team.

Unaccompanied Minors. The firm participates in training attorneys to represent unaccompanied minors coming to Delaware. **Marcos Ramos and Marisa Terranova Fissel** lead this team, supervising associates as they receive requests for representation in Family Court guardianship and immigration cases.

Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation. RLF is the Delaware member firm of Lex Mundi, which is comprised of more than 150 member law firms spanning 100 countries across the globe, and the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation. Through the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation, the firm’s attorneys provide legal support to global organizations focused on societal changes that will improve lives and communities around the world.

LexMundi
Pro Bono Foundation

AD HOC PROJECTS

All firm attorneys are invited to suggest and participate in pro bono and community service projects that reflect their interests. During FY 2022, RLF attorneys were engaged in a variety of *ad hoc* PBCS projects, including serving on boards and committees, setting up new non-profit organizations, researching issues of law for non-profits, and organizing fundraising efforts to promote various causes. Below are some of the more significant *ad hoc* PBCS projects in FY 2022.

- In 2022, RLF real estate attorneys **Sara Wagner, R. Parker Havis, Philip Micha,** and paralegal **Susan Stewart,** helped the Ministry of Caring, Inc. in a number of acquisitions facilitated by generous donors in the Wilmington community. The Ministry has added a “secret garden” to its childcare center, and is also in the process of obtaining an unused property for a yet-to-be determined purpose. We are assisting the Ministry of Caring to obtain HUD and other financing for its Villa Maria project, which will provide homes to low- and moderate-income seniors. Brother Ronald Giannone, the Ministry’s founder and executive director, said, “We are grateful to Sara Wagner [an attorney who has served 10 years on the Sacred Heart Village II board of directors and is now its vice president] and her colleagues at Richards, Layton & Finger for their willingness to do the legal work required so that we can go to the settlement table with HUD and DSHA.”

- Firm attorneys **Russell Silberglied** and **Nicole Pedi,** along with summer associates **Ashly Riches** and **Naseeba Saeed** and paralegals **Ann Jerominski, Lynzy McGee,** and **Rebecca Speaker,** among others, represented a nearly destitute musician and part-time school band teacher in the collection from a local guarantor of his settlement of a copyright infringement lawsuit stemming from over 300 of his written music lessons being used to make mobile apps. After RLF filed a complaint in federal court and initiated litigation activities, the defendant paid the pro bono client 100% of what was owed, not including any interest, attorneys’ fees, or punitive damages.
- **Professor Mary Dozier,** a psychology professor at the University of Delaware, developed an evidence-based behavioral intervention protocol called Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up (ABC) to enhance parental responsiveness among parents of vulnerable infants. At UD, Prof. Dozier administered ABC protocols and developed a staff capable of training parents and care providers to administer the ABC intervention to infants around the country. **John Mark Zeberkiewicz** and **Brian Mammarella** assisted Prof. Dozier by forming a non-profit Delaware corporation, **ABC Parenting Institute,** through which Prof. Dozier and her team continue their good works.

AD HOC PROJECTS

- **Russell Silberglied** is a member of the board of directors of **The Mariano Rivera Public Foundation** ("MRPF") and serves as its corporate secretary and counsel. In the last year, he has regularly provided legal advice on contracts, licenses, and other matters. Additionally, Russ solicits the help of other RLF attorneys on MRPF matters. For example, **Jason Rawnsley**, **Jennifer Siew**, and RLF summer associates **Jessica**



Blau and **Gabrielle Rossi** represented MRPF in registering and enforcing the foundation's copyrights and trademarks on its signature fundraiser t-shirts against a series of infringers. Additionally, **Sara Wagner** has assisted Russ in his advice to MRPF in connection with real estate and state grant issues. The firm contributed nearly 200 hours to MRPF in the past fiscal year.

- Under the supervision of directors **Kevin Gross** and **Sara Wagner**, summer associates **Ryan Brady**, **Naseeba Saeed**, and **Alison Sayers** researched various legal issues on behalf of the **Legal Services Corporation of Delaware, Inc.** The pro bono assistance included summarizing CARES Act rules, deadlines, and options; reviewing options for the pro se administration of estates where the client is heir to the property in foreclosure; and researching the issue of whether an attorney can be hired by a mortgage company/lender and sworn in as the executor of an estate for the purpose of initiating foreclosure proceedings.



**Legal Services Corporation
of Delaware, Inc.**

- **Phil Micha** assisted **Delta Outreach & Education Center, Inc.** with the sale of a property in Wilmington. He helped negotiate a purchase and sale agreement, advised the organization on environmental issues regarding the contaminated property that was subject to a Brownfield Development Agreement, including assignment of the agreement, and assisted with the real estate closing. Delta Outreach & Education Center provides educational and social services, cultural enrichment, and personal developmental skills primarily for adolescent girls.



AD HOC PROJECTS

- **Edmond Kim** assisted the **International FOXP1 Foundation**, a non-profit aimed at building a global community that empowers and supports families and individuals with FOXP1 syndrome, by reviewing its governing documents and drafting documents in support of its operations. He also researched and summarized the requirements of Pennsylvania's Solicitation of Funds for Charitable Purposes Act in preparation for the International FOXP1 Foundation to raise funds for its cause. **Katharine Lester Mowery**, who is a founder and vice president of the foundation's board of directors, was the supervising director.



- **Mark Purpura, Stephanie Norman, Zach Kmetz**, and summer associate **AJ Dillione** assisted Inevitable Foundation, an organization breaking down the barriers that keep disabled screenwriters from reaching their potential. The team helped Inevitable Foundation create an LLC through which individuals who receive fellowships or are otherwise involved in the organization's activities can access insurance and other benefits offered by the organization, given the significant obstacles to healthcare equity and justice for disabled freelancers.
- The firm is a pro bono partner for the **Second Chance Employment Collaborative**, launched in 2021 by **JPMorgan Chase and Wilmington Alliance**, in partnership with **Delaware Volunteer Legal Services, Wilmington HOPE Commission, Delaware Center for Justice**, and **Project New Start**. Firm attorneys assisted the participants of the Second Chance Employment Collaborative with the expungement process and the filing of FDIC waivers in order to pursue employment in the financial, healthcare, and IT sectors. Associates **Dorronda Bordley** and **Caroline McDonough** served as pro bono attorneys for the **Second Chances Record and Expungement Fair** on April 28, 2022. Overall, 500 individuals received services at this event, and the volunteer attorneys alone assisted 68 individuals.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

The Bancroft School Mentoring Team. The firm has a longstanding relationship with **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Delaware's Mentoring Program**. For years firm attorneys and staff, individually and in pairs, have served as mentors to children in kindergarten through fifth grade at **The Bancroft School**. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 the mentoring program was delayed and then eventually moved to a virtual setting in the spring of 2021. The members of the team look forward to returning as in-person mentors at the school when it is safe to do so.

Leadership Council on Legal Diversity's Success in Law School Mentoring Program. In 2020, the firm began participating in the LCLD's Success in Law School Mentoring Program, which matches attorneys at LCLD member organizations with 1L students of diverse backgrounds. The Mentoring Program provides guidance and support to diverse law students during their first year of law school and beyond. The firm's 2021-22 LCLD mentors were **Doneene Damon, Samuel Gray, Kevin Gross, Maya Jackson, Tianshu (Allie) Ji, Angela Lam, Caroline McDonough, Kate Mowery, Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk, Nicole Pedi, Matthew Schwalm, and Cassandra Thompson**, among others.



The Emmanuel Dining Room Teams. RLF lawyers and staff are dedicated to continuing the firm's longstanding community outreach effort of serving meals each month to the homeless and working poor within our community at the Ministry of Caring's Emmanuel Dining Room. As of March 2020, the firm's 9 Emmanuel Dining Room teams included over 70 volunteers who traditionally served a total of 36 annual lunches at the Emmanuel Dining Room. Due to COVID-19, the Emmanuel Dining Rooms could no longer allow volunteers on site; as such, the firm made periodic donations to the Emmanuel Dining Room and continues to make direct contributions to its annual TurkeyThon fundraiser. In August of 2022, the firm's volunteers returned to Emmanuel Dining Room with 4 new EDR teams, led by **Albert Feeley, Jr., R. Parker Havis, Kathy Howard, and Melissa Lennon**. Our additional EDR volunteers are **Daniel Barrow, Avery Benesch, Mari Boyle, Ryan Brady, Morgan Harrison, Nicole Henry, Ken Jackman, Bernie Kelley, Kevin Kidwell, Linda Kish, Greg Ladner, Kinsey Lenehan, Sara Metzler, Katharine Lester Mowery, Grace Myers, Ismat Nawaz, Joshua Novak, Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk, Katie Reese, Naseeba Saeed, Alison Sayers, Griffin Schoenbaum, Stacey Smith, Marisa Terranova Fissel, and Nancy Whan Tong**.

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY OF SERVICE

On Martin Luther King Day, the firm hosts a Day of Service to commemorate the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and to promote outreach to those in need in our community. The firm's 2022 MLK Day of Service was again virtual, but we still made an impact. Members of the firm donated coats and other cold weather items to the **Ministry of Caring's "Operation Overcoat"** fundraiser, and we provided hot to-go lunches for 400 homeless and at-risk people who were served at **Emmanuel Dining Rooms East and West** on Martin Luther King Day. The firm held a virtual fundraiser and donated \$15,487 to **The WRK Group's** three entities (REACH Riverside, The Warehouse, and Kingswood Community Center), and we hosted a virtual MLK Day presentation featuring **Logan Herring, CEO of The WRK Group**.



Throughout FY 2022, the firm continued to support **Eisenberg Elementary School's food pantry**, which supplies students and their families with much-needed groceries and household items throughout the year. Eisenberg Elementary School serves over 500 children, many of whom are ethnically diverse and either homeless, living in poverty, or at risk. Unable to host an in-person collection for the Eisenberg Elementary School's Food Pantry due to the pandemic, the firm donated a record \$14,475 to the school's food pantry in FY 2021. **Brigitte Fresco** and retired CFO **Ed Pierce** advocated for and supported this project. Eisenberg Elementary is truly grateful for the firm's annual donations and the crucial role they play in servicing the basic needs of their students' families.

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY OF SERVICE

As part of our MLK Day of Service, individuals at the firm partnered with the **National Museum of African American History and Culture** and the **Smithsonian Institution's Transcription Center** to volunteer on their digital transcription project, helping to digitally transcribe more than 1.5 million handwritten pages found within the Freedmen's Bureau Records detailing enslaved people's journey to freedom following the Civil War. **Daniel Barrow, Jordan Cramer, Laura Dietrich, Cayla Dupuis, Chandler Elliott-Fehle, Samuel Gray, Maya Jackson, Kevin Kidwell, Edmond Kim, Angela Lam, Emily Mathews, Christine Morabito, Frank Sun, Sara Thompson, and Sandy Xu**, among others, together contributed over 65 hours to this national service effort. More information can be found at: <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/initiatives/freedmens-bureau-records>.

Working together on such service projects gives attorneys and staff who may not otherwise have regular contact the opportunity to get to know one another on a personal level while giving back to the local community.

I write to share that the entire Emmanuel Dining Room staff is humbly grateful for the charitable generosity provided by Richards, Layton & Finger in memory and honor of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. Dr. King inspired hope. He encouraged nonviolence, to dream, pride, inclusiveness, equality and to fight against injustice, but he also believed in RLF (Righteousness, Love, Faith). How ironic to see that the initials of Richards, Layton & Finger can also represent the beliefs of Dr. King, for he sincerely cared about others, just as you and all of your colleagues at Richards, Layton & Finger. Your generous sponsorship provided a delicious lunch that fed the spirit and soul of the families we served. The families were truly delighted.

Your ongoing support and generosity helps to change the lives of the men, women and children who come to the Emmanuel Dining Room hungry and who are in need. We continue to be the witness of the greatness you do.

*ReeNee & the entire EDR staff
Maureene LaFate, Program Director, Emmanuel Dining Room*

THE MINISTRY OF CARING INC.



NEW ASSOCIATE CLASS'S PRO BONO PROJECT

In 2020, the firm initiated a new tradition of a **Class Pro Bono Project**, a community service effort to be shared by all future entering classes. On June 14, the new 2021-22 associates spent 3½ hours volunteering with Waggies' staff to make dog treats. **Waggies by Maggie & Friends** is a non-profit dog treat company whose mission is to employ persons with intellectual disabilities. The proceeds from the sale of the dog treats support employment for members of the community who want to be a part of the workforce. **Daniel Barrow, Anastasia Bowes, Daniel Cole, Samuel Gray, Maya Jackson, Tianshu (Allie) Ji, Edmond Kim, Grant Kulonda, Thomas Malone, Emily Mathews, Zoe Matherne, Caroline McDonough, Daniel Pietaro, and Jennifer Siew** worked alongside Waggies employees to bake, package, market, and distribute the dog treats. Separately, the new associates solicited the firm to purchase products from and donate money that will continue to fuel the organization's mission.



ANNUAL PRO BONO CELEBRATION

On June 8, the firm hosted its annual pro bono celebration to recognize the outstanding contributions and commitment of our attorneys and staff to our community. We embraced our ability to come together in person for the first time in three years to celebrate our shared accomplishments this past year and to renew our commitment to helping our community and those in need. **Doneene Damon** spoke of the firm's longstanding commitment to helping others and highlighted the value the firm places on pro bono and community service efforts.

Russell Silberglied, chair of RLF's Pro Bono and Community Service Committee, continued the firm's tradition of recognizing a staff member who has positively represented our firm in the community. **Kristina Francis** was recognized for being a dedicated volunteer in the areas of mental health and suicide prevention. She volunteers as a field advocate for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, where she has the opportunity to advocate to government officials for support of local bills that will benefit individuals' mental health. **Marisa Terranova Fissel** was recognized for her extensive pro bono and community service efforts, particularly as a child attorney through the Office of the Child Advocate, a leader of the firm's Unaccompanied Minors Team, and a member of the Pro Bono and Community Service Committee, as well as for her past and current participation on the boards of directors for Kids Runway for Research, Las Americas Aspira Academy, and Greyhound Pet Adoptions of Delaware.

Keynote speaker **Jennifer Davis**, President and CEO of Make-A-Wish® Philadelphia, Delaware & Susquehanna Valley, thanked **Christine Dealy Haynes**, **Maddie Jolles**, **Beth Gansen Knight**, **Janice Matier**, and **Chad Shandler**, whose pro bono efforts exceeded 135 hours and yielded a substantial bequest that will enable Make-A-Wish® to grant many more wishes to local children battling critical illnesses. Ms. Davis presented the firm with a **2022 Hope Hero Award** in recognition of the pro bono assistance provided.



From left to right: Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk, Beth Gansen Knight, Russell Silberglied, Jennifer Davis, Janice Matier, and Doneene Damon

& SPONSORSHIPS AWARDS

On behalf of the Pro Bono Committee, the firm sponsored the following events and activities during FY 2022:

Delaware State Bar Association. On October 25, the firm was a gold sponsor of the DSBA's Christopher W. White Distinguished Access to Justice Awards Breakfast. On January 17, the firm was a platinum sponsor of the DSBA's MLK Day Celebration Breakfast.



Office of the Child Advocate. The firm was a silver sponsor of the OCA's Annual "Jingle Mingle" held on December 9, which raises funds for foster kids to have opportunities and common childhood experiences such as attending summer camps and school field trips.



Office of the Child Advocate

Innocence Delaware. The firm was a gold sponsor of Innocence Delaware's inaugural Chasing Freedom Gala on May 19 and was presented with a Pro Bono Partnership Award for joining the organization in its mission to free the innocent of Delaware.

Human Service Council, Inc.'s Adopt-A-Family Programs. The firm received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Human Service Council, Inc.'s Adopt-A-Family Programs for the pro bono services provided by **Nate Stuhlmiller**, among others.

DSBA Excellence Award Recipients. **Tianshu (Allie) Ji** and **Mikell Washington** were honored as Excellence Award recipients at the Delaware State Bar Association's annual Haile L. Alford Memorial Breakfast on May 12 at the DuPont Country Club. The Excellence Award recognizes new and upcoming members of the profession who have demonstrated superior academic credentials, leadership qualities, and a commitment to community service.



& COLLECTIONS, DRIVES & CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

On behalf of the Pro Bono and Community Service Committee, the firm organized food drives and gift collections for those in need throughout the holiday season and in conjunction with the firm's annual MLK Day of Service.

Combined Campaign for Justice. Since 1999, the Combined Campaign for Justice ("CCJ") has supported Delaware's three non-profit legal aid agencies: Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. ("CLASI"), Legal Services Corporation of Delaware, Inc. ("LSCD"), and Delaware Volunteer Legal Services, Inc. ("DVLS"). **Joshua Novak** represents the firm by serving as the **New Castle County co-chair** for the CCJ. The firm annually solicits support for the CCJ and its fundraising efforts in order to best serve the legal needs of low-income Delawareans.

Thanksgiving Food Drive. RLF continued its tradition of supporting the Ministry of Caring's annual TurkeyThon, providing Thanksgiving dinners to the homeless, at risk, and working poor in our community. Due to COVID-19, the Ministry of Caring created an online donation link in order for our firm and our extended community to provide monetary support in lieu of a food collection. **Crystal Carter** and **Brigitte Fresco** put forth inspiring emails and unwavering support of this annual tradition, leading the firm to more than double its previous record by donating \$8,897 towards Thanksgiving dinners for hundreds of local families in need.

Adopt-A-Child Holiday Gift Drive. In 1999, the firm "adopted" six children from the **Ministry of Caring's Adopt-A-Child program**; now, the Adopt-A-Child program is a longstanding and much-loved firm tradition. Each year RLF attorneys and staff are matched with homeless and at-risk children in Wilmington and given the children's holiday wish list, and we have adopted 2,283 local children in need over the past 23 years. Due to the ongoing challenges of COVID-19, the Ministry of Caring again collected online donations to enable parents of local children who are homeless or living in poverty to purchase their children's holiday wish list items. For the first time, the firm committed to adopting 200 children through this program. RLF far exceeded its goal—together we donated \$23,830, which provided gift cards for over 317 children in Wilmington during the holiday season. The overwhelming response from the firm's attorneys and staff epitomized the holiday spirit and surely brought joy to hundreds of children, as well as to us.



& COLLECTIONS, DRIVES & CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

Jeans Days. The firm offered monthly “Jeans Day” opportunities for employees to wear jeans in exchange for a donation to a specific cause. Each month a different non-profit organization was chosen, and the person who nominated the cause is given an opportunity to tell the entire firm why this particular organization’s mission is important. Through its FY 2022 Jeans Day fundraisers, the firm provided financial assistance to **Shake It Off, Inc., House of Hope Animal Rescue, United Way of Southeast, LA, American Red Cross, AIDS Delaware, YWCA Delaware, Team Western Kentucky Tornado Relief Fund, Junior Achievement of Delaware, Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition, The International Committee of the Red Cross, Nemours Children’s Health, Delaware Humane Association, and Make-A-Wish® Philadelphia, Delaware & Susquehanna Valley.**



Race Judicata. Despite a torrential downpour and gusty winds, **Daniel Cole, Tom Malone, and Zoe Matherne** represented Team RLF at the **17th Annual Art Connolly Race Judicata** on Saturday, May 7 at the Midnight Oil Brewing Company in Newark. The firm received awards for Largest Team, Zoe won 1st Place Female, and Dan earned 1st place in his age division.



The funds raised support the **Delaware Law Related Education Center, Inc. (DELREC)**, a private non-profit, 501c(3) organization that has provided services to Delaware’s schools and the community for nearly a decade. Its most widely known programs are the Delaware High School Mock Trial Competition, the “We the People” Competition, and Law Day in the High Schools. The firm served as an event sponsor, and more than \$11,000 was raised in support of DELREC.

The William E. Proudford Sickle Cell Fund, Inc. Under the leadership of **John Mark Zeberkiewicz**, individuals at the firm have collectively contributed well over \$20,000 to the Sickle Cell Fund, a pro bono client of the firm, through their donations and fundraising efforts in connection with their participation in the annual Delaware Running Festival.

Through these and other projects, firm attorneys are encouraged to continue to develop their skills and contacts, while giving back to the community in which they serve.

GIVING BACK

Richards, Layton & Finger is proud to have members of the firm dedicating their time and talents to serving in leadership roles in the following charitable organizations:

- [American Civil Liberties Foundation of Delaware Inc.](#), Mark Purpura
- [American Civil Liberties Union of Delaware](#), Board of Directors, Mark Purpura
- [American Red Cross of the Delmarva Peninsula](#), Board of Directors, Drew Sloan
- [American Red Cross of the Delmarva Peninsula](#), Board of Directors, Jake Crosetto
- [Beebe Healthcare](#), Real Estate Committee, Sara Wagner
- [Boy Scouts of America, Del-Mar-Va Council](#), Advisory Committee, Fred Cottrell
- [Brandywine Conservancy](#), Board of Directors, Secretary, Donald W. Sparks, II
- [Cameron Kravitt Foundation](#), Board of Directors, Doneene Keemer Damon
- [Cancer Support Community Delaware](#), Board of Directors, Mark Collins
- [Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Wilmington](#), Board of Directors, Nicole Henry
- [Centreville Layton School](#), Board of Directors, Anne Foster
- [Christina Cultural Arts Center](#), Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Alexandra Ewing
- [Combined Campaign for Justice](#), New Castle County Co-Chair, Joshua Novak
- [Cornerstone West Community Development Corporation](#), Board of Directors, Joshua Novak
- [Cornerstone West Community Development Corporation](#), Board of Directors, Treasurer, Alyssa Pietrobono
- [Delaware Bar Foundation](#), Board of Directors, President, Kelly Farnan
- [Delaware Greenways](#), Fundraising Committee, Philip Micha
- [Delaware Prosperity Partnership](#), Board of Directors, Doneene Keemer Damon
- [Delaware Volunteer Legal Services](#), Board of Directors, Treasurer, Donald W. Sparks, II
- [DirectWomen](#), Board of Directors, Mark Gentile
- [Downtown Visions](#), Board of Directors, Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk
- [Episcopal Diocese of Delaware](#), Chancellor Emeritus, Anne Foster (through 2021)
- [Equality Delaware, Inc.](#), Board of Directors, Mark Purpura
- [Equality Delaware Foundation](#), Board of Directors, Mark Purpura
- [First State FinTech Lab](#), Board of Directors, Doneene Keemer Damon
- [Golf Association of Philadelphia](#), Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Daniel Dreisbach
- [International FOXP1 Foundation](#), Board of Directors, Founder and Vice President, Katharine Lester Mowery
- [Jewish Federation of Delaware](#), Board of Directors, Chair, Russell Silberglied
- [Jewish National Fund, Delaware](#), Board of Directors, Russell Silberglied
- [Las Americas Aspira Academy](#), Board of Directors, Marisa Terranova Fissel
- [Legal Services Corporation of Delaware, Inc.](#), Board of Directors, President, Kevin Gross
- [Mariano Rivera Public Foundation](#), Board of Directors, Corporate, Counsel, Secretary, Russell Silberglied
- [Ministry of Caring, Inc.](#), Board of Directors, Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk
- [Music School of Delaware](#), Board of Directors, Second Vice Chair, Richard Facciolo
- [OperaDelaware, Inc.](#), Board of Directors, Samuel Nolen
- [Rodney Inn of Court](#), Executive Committee, Katharine Lester Mowery
- [Rodney Inn of Court](#), Treasurer, Travis Hunter
- [Rodney Square Conservancy](#), Board of Directors, John Ferko and Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk

GIVING BACK

- [Ronald McDonald House of Delaware](#), Leadership Advisory Council, Lisa Schmidt
- [Ronald McDonald House of Delaware](#), Building and Grounds Committee, Nicole Henry
- [Ronald McDonald House of Delaware](#), Development Committee, Christine Haynes and Kinsey Lenehan
- [Ronald McDonald House of Delaware](#), Strategic Planning Committee, Amanda Steele
- [Sacred Heart Village, I](#), Board of Directors, Christine Haynes and Danielle Andrisani Nowaczyk
- [Sacred Heart Village, II](#), Board of Directors, Sara Wagner
- Science, Technology and Research Institute of Delaware (STRIDE), Board of Directors, Robert Whetzel
- [Selective Service System for Delaware](#), Board, Fred Cottrell
- [Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Delaware](#), Deputy Governor, Samuel Nolen
- [St. Edmond's Academy](#), Corporate Board, Fred Cottrell
- [St. Joseph's University](#), Board of Trustees, Doneene Keemer Damon
- [St. Joseph's University Haub School of Business](#), Board of Visitors, Doneene Keemer Damon
- [St. Patrick's Center](#), St. Patrick's Day Society Fundraising Committee, Michael Collins
- [St. Thomas More Society](#), Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Michael Collins
- [Stroud Water Research](#), Board of Directors, Robert Whetzel
- [Structured Finance Association](#), Board of Directors, Doneene Keemer Damon
- [Sycamore Hill Church](#), Hockessin, Lead Trustee, Rudolf Koch
- [TeenSHARP](#), Board of Directors, Dorronda Bordley
- [Temple Law Alumni Association](#), Board of Directors, Daniel Cole
- [Temple University Beasley School of Law](#), Board of Visitors, Doneene Keemer Damon
- [Temple University, Fox School of Business](#), Real Estate Advisory Board, Vice Chair, Sara Wagner
- [The American University of Rome](#), Board of Trustees, Chair, Robert Krapf
- [The Forum of Executive Women](#), Board of Directors, Doneene Keemer Damon
- [The Grand Opera House](#), Board of Directors, Kelly Farnan
- [Ulster Project of Delaware](#), Board of Directors, John O'Toole
- [Village of St. John](#), Board of Directors, Anne Foster
- [Waldron Mercy Academy](#), Board of Trustees, Melissa Lennon
- [Weinberg Center for Corporate Governance at the University of Delaware](#), Advisory Board, Blake Rohrbacher
- [West End Neighborhood House](#), Audit Committee Member, Alyssa Pietrobono
- [William E. Proudford Sickle Cell Fund, Inc.](#), Board of Directors, John Mark Zeberkiewicz
- [Wilmington Classical Guitar Society](#), Board of Directors, Robert Guerrero
- [Wilmington Economic Development Corporation](#), Board of Directors, Tony Roustopoulos
- [Wilmington Friends School](#), Alumni Board of Directors, Katharine Lester Mowery
- [Wilmington Institute](#), Board of Directors, Vice President, Samuel Nolen
- [Working Group on Legal Opinions Foundation](#), Board of Directors, Treasurer, William Yemc
- [YMCA of Delaware, Central Branch](#), Board of Directors, Brian Mammarella

In addition to the many community organizations we serve, RLF attorneys play valuable leadership roles in various professional organizations, including the American Bar Association, Delaware State Bar Association, U.S. Civil Rights Commission Delaware Advisory Committee, Judicial Nominating Commission, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce, Estate Planning Council of Delaware, and Lex Mundi, among others.

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