

T H E A N N U A L
PRO BONO CHALLENGE

Sponsored by the
WACO-MCLENNAN COUNTY
YOUNG LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
In partnership with **Baylor Law.**

“Pro bono service should be embedded in the practice of law. Without it, many of our most vulnerable citizens are deprived of rights that would have been vindicated with a lawyer’s assistance. I encourage all lawyers to donate their time to help those in need.”

-Wallace B. Jefferson, Former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas

“I am responsible to assure that all persons have access to competent representation regardless of wealth or position in life. I commit myself to an adequate and effective pro bono program.”

-Texas Lawyer’s Creed

Objective:

To promote and highlight the *pro bono* activities of licensed attorneys in McLennan County, Texas.

Pro Bono Challenge:

The Waco-McLennan County Young Lawyers Association encourages all licensed attorneys in McLennan County to meet the State Bar of Texas aspirational goal that each Texas attorney render at least 50 hours of legal services to the poor each year. We challenge all attorneys to report their *pro bono* and public service activities for the annual period beginning January 1 and ending the following December 31st to the *Pro Bono* Challenge coordinator to meet the collective goal of 2,500 hours by December 31, 2017.

Goal:

To reach 2,500 hours of total *pro bono* activities in the period from January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018.

Eligibility:

All licensed Texas attorneys residing or practicing law in McLennan County, Texas.

Outstanding *Pro Bono* Service Award

At the end of the reporting year, the attorney with the highest amount of hours spent on *pro bono* activities will receive the Outstanding *Pro Bono* Service Award from the Waco-McLennan County Young Lawyers Association to be honored at the May bar luncheon.

***Pro Bono* Activities Reporting to *Pro Bono* Challenge Coordinator**

The Waco-McLennan County Young Lawyers will designate a member as the *Pro Bono* Challenge Coordinator, who will solicit *pro bono* reporting from attorneys who reside or practice in McLennan County. Further, the coordinator will survey the various legal clinics and programs for total individual and collective participation hours. The coordinator will also work with Baylor Law School to keep records for the Challenge.

Definition of *Pro Bono* and Public Service Activities:

- 1) *Pro Bono* Activities
 - a. Legal advice and representation including:
 - i. The direct provision of legal services to the poor without an expectation of compensation, or at a substantially reduced fee, whether civil or criminal;

- ii. Services without a fee, or at a substantially reduced fee, related to simplifying the legal process for, or increasing the availability and quality of, legal services to poor persons;
 - iii. Legal services without a fee, or at a substantially reduced fee, rendered to charitable, public interest organizations with respect to matters or projects designed predominantly to address the needs of poor persons;
 - b. Participation in Baylor Law School events, including, but not limited to, the People’s Law School, Adoption Day, Veterans Clinic, Immigration Clinic; volunteering with Greater Waco Legal Services or Mission Waco Legal Services; volunteering at the McLennan County Dispute Resolution Center (*pro bono* mediations); along with representation commenced as a result of referral from these programs without an expectation of compensation, or at a substantially reduced fee.
- 2) Public Service: service-oriented activities sponsored by the Waco-McLennan County Young Lawyers Association, service to an organization in a legal capacity (such as ‘counsel’ for a board, not solely serving as a board member), or service to the community for the advancement of legal issues (such as working on access to justice issues in the Texas Legislature or serving on State Bar committees focusing on *pro bono* or access to justice). Specifically, judging in the Region 12 High School Mock Trial Competition, participating in the Habitat For Humanity group projects, and participating in Law Day events count for our *Pro Bono* Challenge.

Other Benefits to Participating:

The State Bar of Texas *Pro Bono* Mentor Program allows an attorney serving as a mentor or mentee on a *pro bono* case to claim up to 5 hours of credit, including up to one hour of ethics. Visit <http://www.texasbar.com/Content/NavigationMenu/LawyersGivingBack/LegalAccessDivision/MentorProgram.htm> for more information.