



Introduction

In this issue we profile the inaugural Pro Bono Awards Ceremony held in Johannesburg on 7 October 2014. ●

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Inaugural Pro Bono Awards Ceremony: 7 October 2014

The very first Annual Pro Bono Awards Ceremony in South Africa was held at the stylish Katy's Palace Bar in Johannesburg on 7 October 2014. 150 attorneys, advocates and mediators attended the event that was ably MC-ed by attorney and social media expert Emma Sadleir.

The event was held to recognise the impressive contribution made by pro bono attorneys (part-time and full-time), law firms and advocates to the lives of low-income people in South Africa. Journalists reporting on pro bono matters, drawing the public's attention to cases that change the lives of the poor, were also recognised. The aim of the event was to honour and celebrate this important work and also increase and grow the involvement and commitment of the legal profession.



The Judges NIC SWART

Nic is the CEO of the Law Society of SA (LSSA) and the founder and director of Legal Aid and Development (LEAD), responsible for the professional training of attorneys. He is a member of various law faculties and sits on a number of boards. In addition, he practices as an attorney and mediator. He holds BA LLB and B Com degrees from the University of Pretoria and UNISA.

ALICE BROWN

Alice is an international human rights advocate and an expert on the use of law for the public good. She has extensive experience in civil rights litigation and social justice philanthropy and currently advises, speaks and does research on public interest law, philanthropy, social justice and non-governmental organisational effectiveness. She was the director of the Ford Foundation (South Africa) for many years. She holds a law degree from New York University and history degrees from Dartmouth College and North-western University.

JONATHAN KLAAREN

Jonathan is a Professor of Law at Wits University Law School and is based at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WiSER). He served as Dean of the Wits Law School from 2010 – 2013 and as Director of the Mandela Institute from 2005 – 2007. He holds a PhD in sociology from Yale University and law degrees from Wits and Columbia Universities.

AUDITOR: GRANT THORNTON

Grant Thornton (previously Kessel Feinstein) is the fifth largest auditing, tax, outsourcing and advisory firm in South Africa, with 10 offices across the country.

AWARD CATEGORIES, FINALISTS AND WINNERS

LAW FIRM AWARDS

Presented by Nicolette Naylor, Senior Programme Officer, Ford Foundation

Highest number of pro bono hours by law firm with over 50 professionals

WINNER: Fasken Martineau

Fasken Martineau has a long history of involvement in pro bono work, initially during apartheid as Bell Dewar and Hall. In 2010 a dedicated pro bono department was established. The pro bono department provides legal advice and representation in employment, housing, refugee,



maintenance and domestic violence matters. All the attorneys in the firm participate in pro bono work.

FINALIST: Norton Rose Fulbright South Africa

Norton Rose Fulbright SA sees itself as a firm with a commitment to social responsibility and human rights work. Its work in this arena dates back to the 1980s. The firm has consistently offered advice and legal representation to not only low-income individuals and communities, but to non-governmental community based organisations, trusts, charities and foundations.



FINALIST: Webber Wentzel

In 2003, Webber Wentzel established a pro bono department to provide free legal services to a variety of communities. The pro bono practice provides legal services on issues related to land reform, housing, education, healthcare, children's rights, gender equality and service provision. One of their core projects aims to secure constitutional equality for women.



Highest number of pro bono hours by law firm with 10 to 50 professionals

WINNER: Mervyn Taback Inc

Mervyn Taback Inc's pro bono work covers labour matters and including litigation, arbitration, the drafting of documents and appearing in court and tribunals for clients. In 2013 the firm successfully litigated against Ford Motor Company South Africa, securing a favourable settlement for 13 former employees. Directors of the firm sit in court as acting judges on a pro bono basis.



FINALIST: Schindlers Attorneys

Schindlers Attorneys offers a range of services in legal areas including commercial, litigation, conveyancing, labour, intellectual property and consumer law. Schindlers has been working and continues to work to save the Zoo Lake Bowls Club and as recently as September 2014 secured an order halting the eviction of the tenants. The firm represents Stobbs and Clark who are seeking to have medical marijuana legalised.



The Judging Process

The 3 judges reviewed all nomination forms submitted. The awards were allocated on the basis of the pro bono hours carried out by law firms, attorneys and advocates and for the best media coverage of pro bono matters. The law firm hours were aggregated according to the number of professionals in each firm. The judging process and decisions were reviewed and audited by Grant Thornton to ensure non-partiality, fairness and correctness.

Keynote Speaker: Judge Kathie Satchwell

Kathie Satchwell was a student activist at Rhodes University during the apartheid years, playing a support role for Steve Biko and other detainees. She practiced as an attorney for 18 years, during which time she dealt with pass law courts with the Black Sash and CALS, representing detainees, political activists, prisoners, and conscientious objectors. She appeared at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission presenting a memorandum on human rights abuses. She was appointed to the bench in 1996, and since then has handed down many innovative and path-breaking judgements. She's had a long association with a number of NGOs (POWA, Black Sash, Learn and Teach and Media Defence Trust) and is currently a Trustee of the Nelson Mandela's Children Fund.



Highest number of pro bono hours by law firm with less than 10 professionals

WINNER: Mabaso Attorneys

Mabaso Attorneys deals exclusively with employment and labour law issues. The firm has been involved in a great many pro bono cases. Some have involved obtaining writs of execution in order to enforce compensation awards; others have involved opposing review applications. The firm has litigated against both private and government employers for their clients.



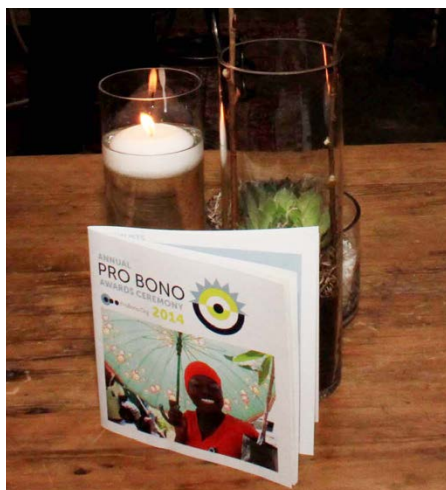
FINALIST: Clarks Attorneys

Clarks Attorneys provides legal assistance in an array of family law matters. The firm staffs ProBono.Org's Domestic Violence Legal Clinic at the Randburg Magistrate's Court. In addition to staffing the clinic and representing pro bono clients referred to them by ProBono.Org, Clarks takes on matters referred to the firm by the Law Society of the Northern Provinces.



FINALIST: Dlamini Attorneys

Dlamini Attorneys' expertise includes corporate litigation, labour law, energy law and competition law. Low income Pro bono work is further used as a teaching opportunity for candidate attorneys.



INDIVIDUAL ATTORNEY AWARDS

Presented by Nicolette Naylor, Senior Programme Officer, Ford Foundation

Highest number of pro bono hours by full-time pro bono attorney

WINNER: Tricia Erasmus (DLA Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr)

Tricia Erasmus is a senior associate in the pro bono department at DLA Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr. Her areas of expertise include refugee law, access to information, general High Court litigation, constitutional and human rights law. She has been instrumental in the case of SAHA and R2K v Minister of Police and Another, where she assisted the applicants in bringing a High Court review application in terms of PAIA to provide information on places or areas declared as a National Key Point Complex in terms of the National Key Points Act.



FINALIST: Moray Hathorn (Webber Wentzel)

Moray Hathorn was appointed to helm the pro bono department at Webber Wentzel in 2003. Using constitutional and administrative law, Moray has guided the department to also take on cases related to gender based violence, traditional leadership, HIV discrimination in the workplace, post-restitution support to land reform beneficiaries and evictions. Moray and his team represented the Protea South informal settlement in eviction proceedings against the City of Johannesburg. The matter was heard by Justice Wright in the South Gauteng High Court and resulted in an interdict (to stop demolitions) and an order to provide interim basic services to the indigent households.



FINALIST: Ayanda Khumalo (Webber Wentzel)

Ayanda Khumalo is a senior associate in the pro bono department at Webber Wentzel in Sandton. She actively deals with issues related to socio-economic rights, administrative law, labour law, insurance litigation, non-profit organisations and refugees. Ayanda recently represented a vocal gay rights activist, Dr Semugoma facing improper deportation to Uganda and persecution under the Anti-Homosexuality Bill. The legal intervention by Ayanda ultimately lead to Dr Semugoma being granted a specialised skills work permit in February 2014.



Highest number of Pro Bono hours by part-time pro bono attorney

WINNER: Elze Lamprecht (Norton Rose Fulbright SA)

Elze carries out her pro bono work at the same time as running a busy practice. In her own words: "I believe that giving back to society is not a responsibility; it's the only way of living that makes sense. There are vulnerable people in society whose rights we must protect. I feel privileged to be used for this purpose. The pro bono matter I've been involved with has brought home to me how critically important it is to fight for the rights of victims of abuse in a country like ours."



Sandile Mabaso (Mabaso Attorneys)

Despite working at a relatively small firm, Sandile completed many hours of pro bono work in 2013. Work of this volume for a small firm entails not only an enormous sacrifice of time, but also of financial resources. As a labour law specialist, Sandile took on many matters from the SASLAW advice office, staffing it regularly, making himself available on short notice, and offering assistance at the Labour Court.



FINALIST: Tiny Musesengwa (Bowman Gilfillan)

Pro bono clients have benefited from Tiny's specialised knowledge of corporate law, through her work at Ishishini

Lethu (a legal clinic for SMMEs) and for other NPOs. Tiny has also ventured out of her comfort zone, dedicating significant hours to family law, domestic violence and housing law.



ADVOCATE AWARD

Presented by Advocate Aboobaker SC, Chair of Pro Bono Committee, General Bar Council

Highest number of pro bono hours by an advocate

WINNER: NADINE FOURIE

Nadine is an advocate in Group One who serves on the group's Pro Bono Committee.

She is available to assist Cliffe Decker Hofmeyr on a regular basis in finding suitable counsel for their pro bono matters.

Her areas of expertise include constitutional and human rights law, public and administrative law, labour, pension fund and media law.



FINALIST: EMILE VAN DER MERWE

Emile is a junior advocate based at Pitje Chambers, Johannesburg. He has demonstrated remarkable commitment to pro bono work and has frequently been congratulated by judges, magistrates

and other lawyers for his eagerness to assist on a pro bono basis. He has taken on numerous time-consuming intestate and estate related matters with a commitment to the children, widows and others left behind.



FINALIST: CATHERINE WELSCH

Catherine is an advocate based in Johannesburg. She has assisted with a number of matters at the Pro Bono. Org Family

Law Clinic. Her most notable case was related to the murder of Brenda Hedges, by the estranged husband of the deceased's daughter. Catherine worked tirelessly for over a year to obtain Domestic Violence Protection orders and to ensure that the accused was arrested and the matter brought to trial.



MEDIA AWARD

Presented by Ferial Haffajee, editor, City Press

Most comprehensive coverage by a journalist of pro bono legal cases or projects

2014 WINNER: Victoria John (Mail & Guardian)

The Legal Resources Centre nominated Victoria for her extensive, in depth and excellent coverage of all issues relating to children and the right to education.

Her coverage of education cases, including the LRCs class action against the Department of Education, Eastern Cape, has kept one of the greatest post-apartheid challenges in South Africa in the public eye. She writes regular columns on children's rights drawing attention to the multitude of problems faced by children.



FINALIST: Shain Germaner (The Star)

Shain ensured that ProBono. Org's One Child a Year campaign received the spotlight and was given good coverage in the press. He recently became involved in reporting cases handled by ProBono.Org and wrote an in depth piece on one particular woman's plight. Shain's



focus on the most vulnerable sectors of society, and his detailed article which went beyond reporting and analysis, to also the telling stories of victims of domestic violence cannot be underrated at a time when people often become statistics.

FINALIST: Nomfundo Manyathi-Jele (De Rebus)

Writing for a magazine, which targets the legal profession, Nomfundo has played a crucial role in cultivating

an awareness of and enthusiasm for pro bono work amongst its members. She has written countless articles on pro bono work, its importance, and how to go about it. In this way, Nomfundo, as a legal journalist, has also played an integral role in access to justice for poor people in South Africa.



PROBONO. ORG'S NATIONAL DIRECTOR'S SPECIAL MENTIONS: 2014

Patrick Bracher of Norton Rose Fulbright SA, for his 8-year commitment to hosting ProBono.Org's Constitutional Law radio programme every fortnight on Radio Today.



Christine Jesseman for her service on the Board of ProBono.Org and her exceptional role at DLA Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr in promoting and actively assisting pro bono matters.



Hoosen Sader of Saders Attorneys, for his long-standing and lifelong dedication to pro bono work, which started during the apartheid years, and has continued unabated.



Teresa Swart, Magistrate at the Germiston Children's Court, for going beyond the call of duty in ensuring that children in her court are treated with respect and dignity and are properly represented.



Alfred Wolpe of South African Mediators cc, for his involvement in providing pro bono mediations and training for ProBono.Org and our beneficiaries for the past 8 years.



EVENT SPONSORS

The **Ford Foundation** took the plunge earlier this year by contributing significant funding towards this inaugural Pro Bono Awards Ceremony. We greatly appreciate their firm commitment to the work of ProBono.Org, as well as to the importance of this event for the legal profession.

We also greatly value the contributions of the other sponsors:

Legal publishers **Sabinet**, **Juta**, **LexisNexis**, **Legalbrief** and **Without Prejudice** all provided financial, as well as in-kind trade, sponsorships. **Legal Aid SA** and 8 Johannesburg-based law firms (**Bowman Gilfillan**, **ENS**, **Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr**, **Fasken Martineau**, **Hogan Lovells**, **Norton Rose Fulbright SA**, **Webber Wentzel** and **Werksmans**) all provided financial sponsorship.

Katy's Palace Bar provided the grand and spacious venue at a heavily discounted rate and Spier donated cases of red and white wine.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following service providers:

Michele Dean of Limeblue for the design work and beautiful photographs; Lloyd Piater of The Natural Agent for the digital expertise; Freshly Minced for organising the event with such excellent and calm efficiency; and The Principality for their PR and media services.

Event photographs taken by Yolanda van der Stoep and Michele Dean.

