

PUBLIC COUNSEL – INTRODUCTION

Public Counsel is the largest *pro bono* public interest law firm in the world. Over the last 36 years, Public Counsel has recruited over 35,000 volunteers and delivered over a quarter of a billion dollars in free assistance to the most vulnerable members of society, including abused and abandoned children, homeless families and veterans, victims of domestic violence, the forgotten elderly and victims of consumer scams.

Last year, with the help of over 3,700 *pro bono* attorneys and volunteers, Public Counsel helped nearly 26,500 individuals – including thousands of children – and 600 nonprofit organizations, ultimately providing more than \$66 million in free services. This equates to more than \$16.50 in free assistance for every dollar contributed. No *pro bono* public interest law firm in the world does more to help so many people.

THE WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS AWARD DINNER

This year's gala will be held on **Tuesday, June 19, 2007** at The Hyatt Regency Century Plaza in Los Angeles, California. The reception begins at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Established in 1976, the William O. Douglas Award Dinner is attended by nearly 1,400 leaders from the legal, business and political communities who gather together to support Public Counsel's work and to recognize individuals whose accomplishments have forever changed our nation and our world for the better. It is one of the largest dinners of its kind in the country raising approximately \$2.5 million annually to support Public Counsel's nationally recognized legal projects.

THE WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS AWARD

The recipient of the 2007 William O. Douglas Award is former U.S. Secretary of State and Ambassador to the United Nations **Dr. Madeleine K. Albright**. The Award will be presented by her predecessor as Secretary of State **Warren M. Christopher**. The William O. Douglas Award is presented annually to an individual of national or international prominence who exemplifies the very highest ideals of public service, justice, equal rights and freedom of expression. Prior honorees have come from the fields of public service, law, journalism and broadcasting:

- Governor Bill Richardson
- California Chief Justice Ronald M. George
- Vice President Al Gore
- U.S. Senator George Mitchell
- Congressman John L. Lewis
- U.S. Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt
- Sargent Shriver
- Shirley and Seth M. Hufstedler
- Ben Bradlee
- Steven A. Nissen
- U.S. Sec. of Commerce Mickey Kantor
- Stanley Mosk
- A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr.
- Morris Dees
- Alex Haley
- Fred Friendly
- Congresswoman Barbara Jordan
- James J. Brosnahan
- Laurence H. Tribe
- Gloria Steinem
- Paul Conrad
- William P. Gray
- John W. Gardner
- Jack Greenberg
- Norman Lear
- David L. Bazelon
- Tom Wicker
- Anthony Amsterdam
- Archibald Cox

Two or more additional awards are presented each year to honor individuals and/or organizations who have helped advance the cause of justice in our society.

THE CORPORATE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The recipient of the 2007 Corporate Achievement Award is **Southern California Edison**. SCE exemplifies the extraordinary corporate citizenship that is the hallmark of this Award. Public Counsel is honored to be able to recognize SCE for its remarkable and enduring leadership through the years to strengthen the fabric of our community and our society. Accepting the Award will be **John E. Bryson**, Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, and President of Edison International, the parent company of Southern California Edison. The Award will be presented by **Ronald L. Olson** of the law firm of Munger, Tolles & Olson.

The Corporate Achievement Award has been presented annually since 1992 to honor excellence in corporate social responsibility and exemplary community service. Prior honorees include:

- Best Buy Co., Inc.
- Microsoft Corporation
- Westfield Corporation, Inc.
- Deloitte & Touche
- Univision Communications, Inc.
- Arden Realty, Inc.
- Vons, A Safeway Company
- Mattel, Inc.
- Southern California Edison
- Ralphs/Food 4 Less Foundation
- AT&T
- Kaiser Permanente
- The Times Mirror Company
- Xerox Corporation

THE LAW FIRM PRO BONO AWARD

The 2007 Law Firm *Pro Bono* Award will be presented to **Holland & Knight LLP**. Over the past several years, Holland & Knight lawyers and other professionals have distinguished themselves in the breadth and sophistication of their *pro bono* efforts including work on many complicated and difficult asylum cases, assistance on SIJS (Special Immigrant Juvenile Status) matters, work on behalf of homeless individuals, special education cases through our Children Rights Project and work on behalf of nonprofit organizations through our Community Development Project and much more. Accepting the Award will be the Managing Partner of the firm, **Howell W. Melton Jr.**

In addition to their *pro bono* efforts to assist Public Counsel clients, a team of Holland & Knight attorneys spent hundreds of hours in the past year as Public Counsel's lawyers successfully negotiating the New Markets Tax Credit transaction to refinance the debt on Public Counsel's new building on very favorable terms.

Since 1978, Public Counsel has presented this award to a law firm or corporate legal department for leadership and advocacy on behalf of indigent, vulnerable and victimized members of our society. Past award winners have been recognized for their dedication to children's advocacy, creating affordable housing, establishing a nationwide public interest fellowship program and assisting refugees and families fleeing persecution, torture and death threats.

THE JUSTICE IN ART & MEDIA AWARD

The 2007 *Justice in Art & Media* Award will be presented to **Monty Hall**, the host and emcee of one of America's most famous and beloved television game shows, "Let's Make A Deal." The Award recognizes Mr. Hall for his extraordinary commitment to charitable and philanthropic work. Most remarkable is his work on behalf of vulnerable children. Hall is the past President

and Chairman of Variety Clubs International (VCI), the world's largest children's charity. In 1981 VCI honored Hall with the lifetime title of International Chairman and, in 1983, he received its

prestigious International Humanitarian Award. Hall has played a leadership role in establishing and expanding medical care and treatment facilities for vulnerable children at U.C.L.A., Hahnemann College in Philadelphia, and Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto.

Since 1995, Public Counsel has presented the *Justice in Art & Media Award* to an individual or organization who has, through the arts or the media, helped advance the cause of equal justice in our society. The Award recognizes the dramatic positive influence that the media and the arts can have on shaping the public's view of our legal system and the rule of law.

THE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Community Leadership Award is presented to an individual or organization in the Los Angeles metropolitan region for diligent work on behalf of the public interest, particularly if their work has not received the attention it deserves or has gone largely unheralded. Past honorees include Los Angeles Times Columnist Steve Lopez, The J. Paul Getty Trust, Skid Row's only lawyer, the architect of nearly three decades of consumer protection laws, L.A.'s chief slumlord prosecutor, religious leaders working to reduce gang violence, children's rights advocates, and minority bar leaders striving for unity in our diverse community. (This Award is not being presented this year.)

PUBLIC COUNSEL'S NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED LEGAL PROJECTS

Public Counsel's work is organized into seven legal projects. Within each project there are numerous programs designed to address clients' unique and emerging needs.

Appellate Project (New) – In 2007, with the support of the State of California's Legal Services Trust Fund and in partnership with the Second Appellate District of the California Court of Appeal, Public Counsel launched the Appellate Project to assist indigent and *pro se* appellants and respondents. The Project includes a self-help clinic that provides indigent, *pro se* litigants with technical assistance and brief counsel and advice. Through the clinic, the Project also identifies litigants with matters that may be appropriate for *pro bono* representation.

Children's Rights Project – Assists over 6,000 children annually and is recognized as one of the largest and finest child advocacy programs in the country. The Project's work includes arranging adoptions for children to be adopted out of the foster care system into loving families, establishing guardianships for children whose parents are no longer able to care for them, assisting students in obtaining educational benefits, advocating for the parents of youth with physical and developmental disabilities in obtaining the public benefits to which they are legally entitled, and assisting homeless youth living on the streets to obtain permanent shelter and assistance needed to regain a life of hope and opportunity.

Child Care Law Project – Expands the availability and quality of child care in low-income communities by providing legal and other services to new and existing family child care providers and nonprofit child care centers.

Community Development Project – Strengthens the fabric of communities by assisting with economic development and low-income housing projects and by advising entrepreneurs, micro businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Consumer Law Project – Assists the victims of home equity fraud, door-to-door sales scams, *notario* fraud, automobile fraud, and vocational school scams. The project also provides assistance to debtors facing legal action and/or bankruptcy.

Homelessness Prevention Law Project – Works with homeless youth, adults and families to break the cycle of homelessness by helping them transition to permanent housing and access the social services and public benefits to which they are legally entitled.

Immigrants' Rights Project – Upholds America's promise by assisting refugees and families fleeing persecution, torture and death threats, aiding those who have suffered from abuse or domestic violence in the United States and representing children who have been cruelly abandoned.

NATIONALLY

Public Counsel has been a leader in developing innovative legal projects and programs, many of which have become national models. Public Counsel regularly provides technical assistance to other public interest law firms around the country to assist them in replicating programs in their communities.

Adopting Children Out of the Foster Care System – In 1998, Public Counsel became a leader in efforts to relieve a backlog of nearly 7,500 children who were waiting to be adopted out of the foster care system. Working with public officials, the bar, the judiciary and others, Public Counsel's Children's Rights Project assisted in developing the *Adoption Day* program, to expedite adoptions using *pro bono* counsel and the donated time and services of judiciary and courts. Today, the program has successfully processed over 6,000 adoptions and has been duplicated in 10 other cities throughout the United States.

Providing Legal Services to Non-Profits – Fifteen years ago, Public Counsel was at the forefront of *pro bono* public interest law when its Community Development Project began providing free legal services to non-profit organizations. Since then, dozens of local public interest law firms across the country have followed suit.

Securing a Public Education for Special Education Youth – Although the Supreme Court ruled in 1999 that schools must provide children with severe physical and emotion handicaps with a public education, many of these children do not receive the education to which they are entitled. Through its Children's Rights Project, Public Counsel developed an Education Rights program to work with these children's families to advocate for their rights and benefits. Today, the program has been recognized as a national model.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC COUNSEL

The board of Public Counsel includes senior leaders from the legal and corporate communities. Almost every major law firm in the country is represented on Public Counsel's board of directors, including eighteen managing and name partners. The board also includes eight General and Associate General Counsel and Directors of Litigation from major corporations such as CBS, Inc., City National Bank, DIRECTV, Fox Entertainment Group, The Los Angeles Times, Playa Vista, Southern California Edison and Union Bank of California, as well as senior non-legal executives from other major corporations.

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