

advocate



2020

Bar

Pro Bono Awards

4th November 2020

Kindly sponsored by:



About Advocate

We exist because committed barristers across England and Wales care about access to justice for everyone.

Advocate is the Bar's national charity that makes it possible for barristers to balance a dedicated practice with making a significant contribution to the community.

We match members of the public who need free legal help with barristers who are willing to donate their time and expertise in deserving cases for those who are unable to obtain legal aid and cannot afford to pay.

This year we have seen a stark increase in the demand for our services, and we have placed over 1,200 pieces of advice, drafting or representation with volunteer counsel so far this year.

If you would like to learn more about our work, please visit our [website](#). If you would like to donate and support our work, you can do so [here](#).

The Awards

Sponsored by LexisNexis

This year we received a record breaking 51 nominations across seven categories. The award categories this year are:

**Young Pro Bono
Barrister of the Year**

**Pro Bono Chambers'
Professional of the Year**

**Junior Pro Bono
Barrister of the Year**

**Pro Bono Chambers
of the Year**

Pro Bono QC of the Year

**International Pro Bono
Barrister of the Year**

**Lifetime Achievement in
Pro Bono, the Sydney
Elland Goldsmith Award**



The Judges

The 2020 Bar Pro Bono Awards judging panel consists of:

Chair: Lord Goldsmith QC

Advocate Founder and
President

Amanda Pinto QC

Chair of the Bar of England
and Wales

John van der Luit-

Drummond

Editor, The Legal 500, UK Bar

Katherine Duncan

Chair of the Young Barristers'
Committee

Catherine Calder and

Rachel Holmes

Co-Chairs of the Legal Practice
Management Association

Leanne Targett-Parker

Chair of the Bar Council Pro
Bono and Social Responsibility
Committee

Julie Bishop

Director of the Law Centres
Network

Philip Bennetts QC and

Ryan Richter

Co-Chairs of the Employed
Barristers' Committee

The Secret Barrister

**"I would like to extend a
massive thank you. Without
your help, mine and my child's
life would have been
devastatingly different.**

Your services saved me.

I can't thank you enough."



Young Pro Bono Barrister of the Year

Criteria

- Recognising the commitment to pro bono work demonstrated by young barristers in recent years, this award celebrates a barrister at the beginning of their career showing exceptional dedication to increasing opportunities for access to justice.
- Particular consideration will be given to those who have demonstrated a significant time commitment over the last year.
- Nominees for this award must be under seven years' call (those currently undertaking pupillage are also eligible) and should demonstrate that they are leading the pack in encouraging others to undertake pro bono work.



Nominees

There were 17 incredible nominees in the Young Pro Bono Barrister of the Year category this year.

1 Crown Office Row Junior Environmental Law Team, Emma-Louise Fenelon, Charlotte Gilmartin, Rajkiran Barhey, Darragh Coffey, Tom Beamont

Anna Hoffmann, 4 Pump Court

Catherine Jaquiss, Goldsmith Chambers

Chloe Lee, Spire Barristers

Christopher McCarthy, Field Court Chambers

Gemma Carr, Spire Barristers

Harriet Wakeman, Temple Garden Chambers

Jennifer MacLeod & Emma Mockford, Brick Court Chambers

Nominees

Joe-han Ho, 39 Essex Chambers

Joshua Griffin, Hardwicke

Lawrence Youssefian, Goldsmith Chambers

Malvika Jaganmohan, St Ives Chambers

Michael Etienne, Garden Court Chambers

Naomi Hart, Essex Court Chambers

Sam Brodsky, Gray's Inn Tax Chambers

Sam Fowles, Cornerstone Barristers

Sarah Barber, No18 Chambers



1 Crown Office Row Junior Environmental Law Team



In the past 12 months, five young barristers have spent hundreds of hours representing a number of small environmental charities, grassroots communities and NGOs. They have typically faced significantly better-resourced and more experienced opponents.



The QC who supported the team with their pro bono work emphasised that their “efforts have fallen outside the scope of their day-to-day practice” and that many of the cases involved significant amounts of time in court and even more time preparing. The QC noted that it can be very difficult to find young lawyers willing to give up so much time to unpaid work and he is delighted that the members of this team have repeatedly stepped up to do so.



Rajkiran and Charlotte represented the Dangstein Conservancy in a four-day planning appeal, having also provided significant amounts of advice and drafting. The coordinator described how they both “rapidly mastered this complex case” and was grateful for their helpful advice. Particularly praised was Rajkiran’s “outstanding grasp on the substantive issues at stake”.



Emma-Louise Fenelon, Charlotte Gilmartin, Rajkiran Barhey, Darragh Coffey, Tom Beamont

Emma-Louise and Darragh represented the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust in a three-week long planning appeal that aimed to protect Askham Bog, a Sight of Special Scientific Interest. A trustee of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust described Emma-Louise and Darragh as having guided them expertly and being instrumental in achieving a successful outcome. He noted that the Trust felt “exceptionally fortunate to have their services”.

Tom and Rajkiran are currently advising a family on matters of employment, tenant, and whistleblowing law, along with potential breaches of environmental regulations. Emma-Louise has been acting pro bono for a number of NGOs and a well-known climate activist intending to intervene before the European Court of Human Rights.

According to the Director of Casework at the Environmental Law Foundation, all five barristers have, between them, “given many hundreds of pro bono hours” to support underfunded communities and NGOs and given “a voice for local nature protection”. She described the level of work as “unique amongst ELF’s chamber’s members”.



Anna Hoffmann

4 Pump Court



A diligent and hardworking barrister, Anna has committed significant amounts of time to her pro bono work. She was part of the team of barristers working pro bono for Sir John Major in the prorogation case (Miller 2), has worked on a number of cases for Advocate, and has previously assisted newly arrived refugees on their rights at the height of the refugee crisis in 2015 in Berlin.

She is currently working with Anthony Speaight QC (also nominated) on a case for Advocate regarding a student who had her funding withdrawn by the Student Loans Company after they claimed she had been fraudulently taking money. Anna and Anthony have been working on this case for some time and they expect it to have huge implications for students accessing financial support.

Since beginning to volunteer with Advocate in August 2019, Anna has given more than 40 pro bono hours to assist those who need it. She is described as bright and knowledgeable, as well as able to empathise with vulnerable, confused or worried clients. She is a hard worker and able to work quickly to tight deadlines because she is “motivated to see justice done”.

A Senior Caseworker at Advocate noted that Anna clearly has “genuine passion to use her skills to help the most vulnerable”. She gives clear advice and is considered “a true asset to both chambers and Advocate”.

Catherine Jaquiss

Goldsmith Chambers



Catherine has a longstanding commitment to pro bono and has taken on some impressive pro bono international human rights cases this year.

Recently, she drafted submissions to the UN Human Rights Council to highlight the suffering of stranded refugees in Lesbos, after a fire destroyed their camp. The Chair of Fenix Humanitarian Legal Aid (FENIX), an NGO supporting refugees in Camp

Moria, Lesbos, described Catherine's contribution as "invaluable". She has been supporting FENIX for the last year, assisting refugee families who wish to be reunited and they are incredibly grateful to Catherine for her time and effort and is impressed with the quality of her work.

Catherine also regularly volunteers to represent immigration detainees for Bail for Immigration Detainees (BID) and is unwavering in her commitment to BID's clients. She has supported the UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group for many years, speaking regularly at their monthly legal meetings and providing advice at their legal advice clinics, where colleagues note that her "compassion for the organisation's clients is obvious to all".

She maintains good relationships with the people she helps, which can clearly be seen in her assistance of a young client she has been assisting since 2014. Catherine has successfully secured this client leave to remain in the UK on three occasions and is currently working on his fourth application. Her co-founder of The Trans Equality Legal Initiative, an organisation they set up in 2016 to give a legal voice to the trans and non-binary community, noted that "these applications are far from straightforward and involve a huge amount of work".



Chloe Lee

Spire Barristers



Recruited within the Justice First Fellowship Scheme, Chloe has demonstrated a keen commitment to ensuring access to justice for those most vulnerable in society. Her commitment and passion are repeatedly commended by those who know her. Since starting her second six in March, Chloe has provided a number of in-depth pieces of advice to pro bono clients through Advocate.

This is particularly impressive considering how early Chloe is in her career.

However, her passion for access to justice started long before she got on her feet as a barrister. Chloe spent the first year of her Justice First Fellowship working at Advocate as a caseworker, where she developed a podcast called 'Voices in Family Law' that provided information about navigating and accessing the justice system to litigants in person.

Chloe is also an active committee member of the Young Legal Aid Lawyers Network. She "was instrumental in the instigation of a Leeds-based group, which regularly provides seminars and training to nurture the next generation of social justice lawyers."

During Justice Week 2020, Chloe, with assistance from other pupils, took the lead on a project on behalf of the Family Law Bar Association, creating videos that were aimed at improving access to justice for those who need it. The Senior Clerk at Spire stated that "without Chloe's vision, organisation and passion, the end product would not have been of the high quality that it was".

Christopher McCarthy

Field Court Chambers



Working as the junior on a seminal Court of Appeal case, Christopher dedicated an enormous amount of time to ensure a positive outcome. As his paid practice came to a complete standstill during lockdown, Christopher spent what was a particularly difficult time during his career to help vulnerable people who needed it.

The case concerned landlord licensing provisions in the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and the protections afforded to tenants of unlicensed landlords, meaning it had wide-ranging implications for many vulnerable tenants across Wales. Christopher worked on the case as a junior under Sarah Salmon (also nominated) and assisted with preparation and representation.

Christopher spent many hours during lockdown preparing for this very demanding appeal, which they eventually won. A solicitor on the case described it as “put together with the utmost care and attention, leaving no stone unturned.” As a result of Sarah and Christopher’s hard work, tens of thousands of private rented sector tenants in Wales are now better protected against eviction.

The Head of Chambers at Field Court Chambers was very impressed with Sarah and Christopher’s work, as well as “their insight, compassion and public spiritedness”, noting that this is the first time in his tenure that he has personally recommended someone for a Bar Pro Bono Award.



Gemma Carr

Spire Barristers



A strong work ethic and a professional maturity beyond her years are just two of the strengths highlighted in Gemma's nomination. Despite only securing tenancy in September 2020, Gemma has been assisting a father in a complex High Court international child abduction case. She has taken on seven pieces of work so far with support from a senior barrister who she sought out to assist her. She has devoted many hours to this case and provided exceptional client care. She is highly committed and intends to remain involved with this case until it is resolved.

A caseworker at Advocate described Gemma as having "stepped up as a true social welfare barrister", during what has been a particularly difficult time for those struggling to access justice. Alongside the complex abduction case, she has taken on other pieces of pro bono work through Advocate and treats them all with great care.

Even before taking on her own cases, Gemma has been committed to access to justice, working tirelessly as a major contributor to Chambers' Family Law Online Newsletter, providing access to free legal updates. She was also involved in a project on behalf of the Family Law Bar Association, where she was instrumental in attracting members of the local judiciary to get involved.

Gemma's dedication to helping others is what sets her apart. She is driven by a desire to ensure that all clients have access to top quality advice and representation, and she is happy to provide it pro bono whenever necessary.

Harriet Wakeman

Temple Garden Chambers



Since completing her pupillage in 2018, Harriet has undertaken a wide variety of pro bono work and been praised for her compassionate and thorough approach. She is to be particularly commended for her willingness to take on cases with tight deadlines.

One such case was taken through Advocate recently, where Harriet provided detailed advice to a client who had been the victim of historic child sexual abuse. She worked tirelessly to ensure that she could provide advice to the vulnerable client within the limited timeframe.

This is just one of many cases that Harriet has taken on through Advocate. She has also provided extensive advice on data protection law to a struggling litigant in person who was facing a large multinational company, as well as frequently assisting those navigating the appeals process. One of these benefits clients said: "Bearing in mind that barristers have lots of cases to deal with, [Harriet] really made me feel as if I was her only client". Other pro bono clients that she has supported through Advocate expressed their gratitude afterwards too. One described Harriet as "professional, polite and completely thorough", while another described her as "a delight to have on board".

In addition to her work with Advocate, Harriet has also frequently been instructed by Bail for Immigration Detainees. Through this work she has been able to achieve grants of immigration bail for many applicants, ensuring that they have a voice in court and being a friendly face during a stressful and uncertain time.



Jennifer MacLeod & Emma Mockford

Brick Court Chambers



Jennifer and Emma are jointly nominated for their work supporting the Richford family. Harry Richford was born on 2nd November 2017 and died seven days later. A series of catastrophic failures both during labour and after his birth led to him being so severely brain damaged that his family was advised to switch off his life support. After the hospital repeatedly claimed that only minimal errors had been made and there was no need for an inquest, the Richford family called for one themselves.



Jennifer and Emma represented Sarah and Tom Richford at the three-week long inquest with the support of solicitors at Arnold & Porter, found through Pro Bono Connect. They dedicated huge amounts of time to the case, even staying in rented accommodation outside of London for the duration of the inquest, which lasted for three weeks and saw evidence being given by 34 witnesses.

All involved highly praised Jennifer and Emma's work, including the Coroner who commented that "they both represented the best of the barrister profession, and that it was an honour to have them appear before him". Harry's grandfather could not express his gratitude strongly enough, stating that their work will impact his family for a lifetime, and that they both went above and "beyond what anyone could expect from a top London barrister".

Jennifer and Emma's dedication to this case has not only been priceless for the Richford family, but has also had huge ramifications for future maternity services at the NHS Trust, hopefully sparing other families the same pain.

Joe-han Ho

39 Essex Chambers



An avid believer in access to justice, Joe-han took on a pro bono case that he initially thought would require a day's work and instead spent two years and two months providing a vulnerable client with justice and closure.

When Joe-han began working with her in 2018, his client was facing a complex costs dispute following a successful debt claim against her sister. To make matters more complicated, she struggled with the English language, her papers were voluminous and disorganised and only available in hardcopy.

Joe-han organised the papers, before beginning to draft correspondence for the client and familiarising himself with the highly technical area of law that her case related to. The case progressed slowly, with a provisional assessment only being obtained in May 2020. In August 2020, after much correspondence and an application against them, the defendant finally agreed to pay the costs of the provisional assessment in full – a significant five-figure sum. The client was delighted with the outcome and “very grateful for all the work, time and effort that Joe-han provided”.

In total, Joe-han spent in excess of 100 hours on this case, entirely pro bono. This included large amounts of time speaking to the client, organising documents, researching the law, and drafting highly technical documents, correspondence, and a witness statement. Joe-han described it as “worth every minute”.

A senior caseworker at Advocate described Joe-han as going above and beyond providing the client “with not only robust advocacy but with the care she deserved”.



Joshua Griffin

Hardwicke



Joshua has been committed to pro bono for years and as a new tenant he now makes it an important part of his practice. He joined the Advocate volunteer panel in November 2019 and has since taken on five cases, involving nine separate pieces of work. This work has required over 50 pro bono hours.

One of his recent cases involved a claim made against the client for a civil parking charge. Joshua went above and beyond for this client, even identifying a professional negligence claim that underpinned the case. Joshua showed great empathy when dealing with this client and took great care and attention when working on the case.

Joshua is patient and kind and has been noted as having “an innate desire to assist others for no personal gain”. His compassion and ability to work well with clients, some of whom struggle to communicate, sets him apart as a “role model for promoting pro bono work”.

In addition to the cases he takes on through Advocate, Joshua has also previously been a volunteer for Citizens Advice and has also assisted in drafting Lasting Powers of Attorney for the Alzheimer’s Society. He has a continued and consistent commitment to pro bono work and to enabling access to justice.

Lawrence Youssefian

Goldsmith Chambers



A volunteer with three different organisations, Lawrence is generous with his time and devoted to helping others in any way he can.

Lawrence volunteers as a reviewer and takes on cases for Advocate. He has selflessly offered many hours of pro bono assistance since starting to volunteer in November 2019. Lawrence recently provided advice, drafting and representation at a tribunal hearing. The client was incredibly grateful for his support, describing Lawrence as “an asset to Advocate”.

He also regularly accepts instructions from Bail for Immigration Detainees (BID), recently being instructed on two separate bail applications taking place on the same day. Lawrence was able to secure bail for both applicants. Countless individuals assisted through BID have benefited from Lawrence’s kindness and generosity, and a solicitor who regularly instructs him stated it is always possible to call on Lawrence for help.

He also volunteers his time at the Somers Town Legal Advice Corner (STLAC), and has provided assistance across a range of matters, including international human rights law, immigration procedures and citizenship. He is described as treating every case with an intrinsic sense of urgency, which greatly reduced many clients’ anxieties. He also acts as a mentor to student interns at STLAC.

Lawrence also takes on pro bono clients on a direct access basis and is committed to ensuring that cutting-edge legal knowledge is easily accessible. He has delivered five seminars since joining Goldsmith Chambers in January 2019, the most recent of which had around 190 attendees.



Malvika Jaganmohan

St Ives Chambers



“A leading light” for the Bar in respect of her commitment to pro bono, Malvika not only takes on her own pro bono cases but is also a strong advocate for others to do the same.

Malvika regularly takes on pro bono work through Advocate and on behalf of the Centre for Women’s Justice. Most notably, Malvika represented a victim of domestic violence at multiple court hearings, while the other party was being represented by a Queens Counsel.

Where Malvika has been unable to assist a client, she has gone above and beyond to ensure that the client is not left without support. She has used her own networks and advertised on social media, successfully obtaining assistance from alternate counsel this way.

Her clients are incredibly grateful and describe her as “kind and generous”. Those at the Centre for Women’s Justice describe Malvika as “sympathetic, rigorous and highly efficient”, and they are immensely grateful for the work she has carried out for them.

Her dedication to pro bono extends beyond the clients she is individually able to help. Malvika champions the interests of young lawyers and has published articles promoting the benefits of pro bono work. She has been quoted in Today’s Family Lawyer and had her profile published by LSESU Law Society’s Pro Bono Division on their blog.

Michael Etienne

Garden Court Chambers



Empathetic, honest, and hardworking, Michael has been instrumental to Just for Kids Law and the children and families they support.

Michael regularly provides pro bono advice and representation to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities who are facing exclusion. He recently represented a child with her disability

discrimination claim against her school, after she was permanently excluded for behaviour attributed to her social communication disorder. Thanks to Michael's involvement, the school settled the case. He has also persuaded the Independent Review Panel to quash a number of permanent exclusions, enabling young people to return to their schools and get the education they deserve.

He is praised by clients and colleagues alike, in particular for his dedication to his cases and his invaluable support. He is described as always "approachable and responsive", as well as "very hands on and thorough". He builds an excellent rapport with the young clients he works with, making sure to speak directly to them, and treats them with respect, compassion, and empathy at all times.

His kindness and willingness to help are both repeatedly highlighted as key strengths. His drafting and oral submissions are clear and to the point, while he tackles his cases with "vigour, grace, and humanity". An excellent communicator, Michael goes above and beyond for every client he supports.



Naomi Hart

Essex Court Chambers



Dedicating more than 250 hours to pro bono matters in the last 12 months, Naomi is committed to access to justice for all. Her pro bono clients range from individuals facing an Employment Tribunal to international NGOs and developing countries' governments, but no matter how big or small their case, she tackles them all with the same steadfast commitment that she brings to her paid work.

She has volunteered to take on numerous cases through Advocate and does not shy away from time-intensive or professionally challenging work. She frequently volunteers for the Chancery Litigants in Person Scheme (CLIPS) and is part of a group designing a new Employment Scheme, which has seen her liaising with the clerking teams and Head of Chambers about how this may work for juniors at Essex Court.

Clients and colleagues alike praise Naomi's dedication. She commits hours of her time to her pro bono work, ensuring that she can provide the best possible help. A senior barrister she sought out to lead her on a complicated case described how Naomi "worked extremely hard" and "took each new setback in her stride". The client on that particular case felt "consulted and well advised all the time", finding Naomi "approachable and genuinely able and happy to help".

Naomi also actively encourages others to take on pro bono work. She regularly provides advice to other juniors in Chambers about pro bono opportunities and recently spoke at an event hosted by the Chancery Bar Association encouraging members to volunteer for CLIPS.

Sam Brodsky

Gray's Inn Tax Chambers



A strong desire to give back to the community and an ability to face any challenges brought by his pro bono work set Sam apart from his peers. He actively encourages his colleagues in chambers to also take on pro bono work, reminding them that it should simply be a natural part of their practice.

Sam's pro bono cases tend to sit outside his specialist practice area, but this does not deter him from giving every case his all. He commits any extra time or effort necessary to prepare his cases and ensure that he understands them completely, so he can simplify complex legal issues for his clients and clearly explain all of the options open to them. One client described Sam's work as "above and beyond" what they had expected, giving them "so much hope for a positive outcome".

Not only is he a hard worker, Sam is also personable and friendly, putting clients at ease when facing great challenges. One client, who Sam was brought in to help at the end of a complicated trial described how he brought "hope into the proceedings for the short time he was there", instilling fresh faith in the justice system. The presiding Judge commended Sam's work on this case, stating he was "immensely impressed by how he dealt with this last-minute instruction".

Despite the short amount of time that he worked with her, this particular client praised Sam's humanity, humour, and ability to manage her expectations. She considered him to be one of the best lawyers and expects to see him go far. This sentiment is echoed by his Senior Clerk, who has "no doubt he will succeed at the Bar and end up on the Bench".



Dr Sam Fowles

Cornerstone Barristers



Despite being only in his second year of practice, Sam has worked on complex and high-profile pro bono cases which have had significant impact on both an individual and a national level.

Sam was a key member of the team acting pro bono for Joanna Cherry QC MP, challenging the decision to prorogue parliament in 2019.

Most significantly, he drafted submissions stating that if the court found the prorogation decision to be unlawful, it must both grant declaratory relief and overturn the decision. His nomination highlighted that his were the only submissions that made this argument, and their impact is clear from the court's decision to declare the prorogation unlawful and null and void.

This is not the only time that Sam has faced a significantly bigger opponent. He regularly acts pro bono against government agencies or departments, as well as appearing (often successfully) against barristers many years his senior.

Those who work with Sam are particularly impressed by his intellect and passion, as well as his ability to articulate complex arguments in a coherent manner. He has also been praised for his "generosity of spirit" and his kindness.

He is highly committed to his pro bono work, with well over a third of his practice being taken on in a pro bono capacity. He typically undertakes multi-day hearings that require several months of preparation and has devoted approximately 12 to 16 weeks to pro bono work in the last year.

Sarah Barber

No18 Chambers



After starting her second six in April 2020, Sarah immediately began taking on pro bono work and has made a huge impact on the lives of a number of vulnerable clients.

In the last six months, she has taken on 18 pieces of pro bono work through Advocate, which includes more than 10 separate instances of representation. She regularly takes on multiple cases at a time, often across a variety of legal areas, and her work is of such a high standard that clients often ask for her to assist them again.

Sarah goes above and beyond for her clients, providing ad hoc telephone assistance, or taking on work at very short notice. In one recent case, she helped the client to prepare a position statement alongside her existing court commitments, having only been notified of the hearing the day before.

Some of her recent cases include complicated family matters. One particular case included allegations of parental alienation, domestic, sexual and child abuse, which saw Sarah advise and represent the applicant mother at a First Hearing and Dispute Resolution Appointment. Sarah was able to successfully persuade the court to put the matter before a District Judge.

Head of Chambers at No18 Chambers commended Sarah for her work on “several very challenging cases” that she has dealt with “professionally and with dignity”. Sarah has given more than 40 pro bono hours to Advocate during the last six months and a Caseworker described her as being “a pleasure to work with” and “incredibly professional”.



Junior Pro Bono Barrister of the Year

Criteria

- This award highlights the outstanding pro bono work of a junior barrister practicing in any area of law.
- They must have demonstrated significant commitment to the pro bono ethic over the last year, whether through the dedication of considerable time and expertise or through the undertaking of cases that have a substantial impact on the client, community, or the access to justice sector.



Nominees

There were 14 outstanding nominees in the Junior Pro Bono Barrister of the Year category this year.

Amritpal Bachu, 1 MCB

Anthony Eskander, Church Court Chambers

Bojana Asanovic, Lamb Building

Emma Daykin, Lamb Building

Josephine de Souza, 12 Old Square

Justin Bates, Landmark Chambers

Kiaron Whitehead, BPI Limited

Martin Hirst, Hirst Law

Sailesh Mehta, Red Lion Chambers

Nominees

Sarah Blackmore, Spire Barristers

Sarah Pinder, Goldsmith Chambers

Sarah Salmon, Field Court Chambers

Tim Naylor, The British Horseracing Authority

Zimran Samuel, Doughty Street Chambers



Amritpal Bachu

1 MCB



Demonstrating a significant and longstanding commitment to pro bono, Amritpal dedicates considerable time to his pro bono cases. He volunteers for both Advocate and the Free Representation Unit (FRU) and is highly valued by both organisations.

A caseworker at Advocate highlighted his impressive commitment, describing Amritpal as a “valued member of Advocate’s volunteer panel”, who clearly cares and understands his clients. A trustee/reviewer at Advocate also praised Amritpal’s work, noting that he has provided invaluable assistance to his clients, often at short notice.

Amritpal has volunteered with FRU for over 10 years and took on more cases than any other volunteer in 2019. He often worked on their more complex cases and stepped in to take over a case at the last minute when the previous volunteer suddenly became unavailable.

The Chief Executive at FRU was particularly impressed with Amritpal’s dedication to his clients, describing him as “sympathetic, kind, and willing to go the extra mile to get the right result”. He has also frequently assisted other volunteers at FRU with their pro bono work and had a “substantial impact on not only his clients but on FRU as an organisation”.

Amritpal’s Senior Clerk claims that what “sets him apart is his instant ability to identify with the plight of his pro bono clients”. He understands what it is like to struggle, which means he goes above and beyond for those he helps.

Anthony Eskander

Church Court Chambers



For 18 months Anthony took on only pro bono cases. He volunteered at Waterloo Law Centre, took on numerous cases through Advocate, and assisted many law firms who were unable to take on cases that were not deemed 'financially viable'.

One of the many clients he recently helped described the impact of Anthony's support, the "huge peace of mind" following the successful conclusion of the case. She stated that "thank you seems such an inadequate response" but she "will always be grateful".

Anthony supported the Financial Crime department at Rosenblatt Limited, where he instructed on a series of cases. He worked tirelessly over many months on an extremely complex multi-million pound, multijurisdictional, carbon credit fraud, which was severely hampered by the global pandemic. His assistance has had "a life changing effect" on Rosenblatt's clients. "Without him, his expertise and generosity with his time, they would not have had the access to justice they required".

He also supports younger members of the Bar and those trying to enter the profession, acting as a mentor through the Bar Council and Inner Temple. He spends time with A Level students in Manchester and is a trustee of GT Scholars, a charity that helps children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds obtain A*-C grades at GCSE.

Anthony's approach to pro bono has "dramatically impaired his own career trajectory as a financial crime barrister" but demonstrates what he believes the Bar is all about – helping those who cannot otherwise obtain access to justice.



Bojana Asanovic

Lamb Building



For many years, Bojana has shown extraordinary dedication to The AIRE Centre, supporting it on a number of highly complex cases. Much of this work aims to do significantly more than help just the individual being represented - its goal is to reduce, or even neutralise, systemic injustice.

In the last year in particular, Bojana has been extremely generous with her time and has assisted The AIRE Centre with a number of important strategic litigation issues. One such case challenged the lawfulness of a regulation permitting the removal of EU nationals pending their appeal against deportation. The case was successful and even resulted in the Home Office amending its policy to reflect the Court's findings.

Bojana tackles all of her pro bono work at The AIRE Centre with the same dedication as her paid clients. Her colleagues consider her to be "essential to the quality and success of The AIRE Centre's interventions", which are vital in safeguarding the rights of EU citizens. She has spent hundreds of hours working on these cases.

She is also the Chair of the UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group and has been since 2016. She plays a large role in the charity, contributing to significant amounts of legal and policy work. Bojana is highly respected by peers, whom she directly supports and encourages. She completes her pro bono work quietly, not looking for or expecting recognition for it. Few people are aware of quite how much pro bono work she undertakes.

Emma Daykin

Lamb Building



Emma has consistently given up her time to take on pro bono work but must be particularly commended on a case she recently concluded with the British Red Cross.

The client was an Eritrean unaccompanied minor who was appealing the decision after his asylum application was refused because the Home Office alleged he was Ethiopian. He had exhausted all other options and had applied to Advocate for assistance. Emma, an expert in disputed Eritrean/Ethiopian nationality protection appeals, volunteered to help, assisting with at least six different pieces of work, including representing the client at his appeal hearing during the height of the pandemic.

Emma committed huge amounts of time to prepare the bundles and draft documentation. She worked hard to build a good relationship with the client, who had been let down by previous counsel, and ensure that she gave him the space to tell his story.

The casework coordinator at the British Red Cross described how Emma gave the client confidence and brought a level of energy and brilliance to her work, supporting a client who “was fatigued after three years of legal struggle”. The client himself found Emma to be “extremely professional, approachable, and respectful” and is grateful for her work and the chance he now has to build a life in the UK. Emma’s contribution to this case has been truly life changing for her client.

Emma’s Senior Clerk describes her work as exceptional and a Caseworker at Advocate noted that she “has made an inspiring commitment to access to justice”.



Josephine de Souza

12 Old Square



A role model and mentor, Josephine shares her knowledge and experience with others who take on pro bono work, as well as actively assisting individuals who need help.

Through her voluntary work with the Community Advice Programme, Josephine provides advice and support to vulnerable individuals who require urgent assistance with family, housing, immigration, and other social issues. She also volunteers to take on cases with Advocate and supports Ealing Equality Council.

Her pro bono advice to vulnerable clients is described as “invaluable”, and clients leave appointments “confident that their case is in great hands”. Colleagues describe her as dedicated and hardworking, as well as generous with her time.

She works hard to encourage and support the next generation of lawyers, advising many students from non-lawyer family backgrounds. Josephine has also given practical training to students and acted as a mentor to many young aspiring lawyers from a diverse range of backgrounds. She actively encourages her colleagues to take on pro bono opportunities and supports them through the process. Colleagues note that “her extensive knowledge of the Family Courts has been shared generously with those taking on such work for Advocate” and her guidance is always appreciated.

Justin Bates

Landmark Chambers



Experienced in taking pro bono cases himself, Justin actively encourages others to get involved and will frequently seek out juniors to support him on complex pro bono cases to give them opportunities to further their professional development.

Justin aims to take on a pro bono case every month and is more than happy to undertake significant amounts of work in the lower courts, as well as in the High Court or Court of Appeal. He volunteers with Advocate as both a volunteer barrister and a reviewer and has carried out more than 200 hours worth of pro bono work in the five years that he has supported the organisation.

Repeatedly highlighted is Justin's commitment to encouraging younger barristers to take on pro bono work. He emphasises the experiential and social benefits of undertaking pro bono and has been directly responsible for getting others to do pro bono work, not only in Landmark Chambers, but also in other sets. He is a "genuine ambassador" for the pro bono community and has a "strong and sustained commitment" to pro bono.

Justin acts as a mentor within Chambers and is commended for his desire to "ensure that future generations of barristers grow up with a strong desire to ensure that the most disadvantaged and marginalised members of society have the opportunity to access justice when there is no public funding available to them".



Kiaron Whitehead

BPI Limited



Passionate, committed and a force of nature. Someone who will stand up for peoples' rights and who gives something back to society. Kiaron's pro bono clients firmly believe that his quiet sacrifice and hard work deserve to be rewarded.

Kiaron is an employed barrister and gives up significant amounts of his free time to support his clients. He sacrificed most of his 2019 Christmas break with his wife and young son to meet and communicate with one applicant, whose three-day trial started in early 2020. His hard work for this client, who said "he literally transformed my future", paid off as he was able to negotiate a significant financial settlement.

His negotiation skills also helped another client reach a settlement, after Kiaron spent over 100 hours preparing the case, drafting documents, and patiently explaining everything to the client to make sure he understood. Beyond his time commitment, Kiaron made his client feel valuable and that his case was not just one of many.

In addition to all of the work he puts into each case, Kiaron also frequently makes sure to secure pro bono costs orders for the Access to Justice Foundation, enabling the funds to be recirculated back into vital pro bono services.

It's important to note that Kiaron's nomination is exclusively supported by clients he has helped. They cannot speak highly enough of what he has done for them and are all eager for him to know just how big an impact he has had on their lives.

Martin Hirst

Hirst Law



An active and enthusiastic member of the Chancery Litigant in Person Scheme (CLIPS), Martin devotes significant amounts of time and energy to his pro bono clients. Colleagues and clients alike highlight Martin's desire to see justice done and are impressed by the level of commitment with which he tackles his pro bono cases.

Martin has taken eight full days' worth of shifts at the High Court so far this year, assisting clients at incredibly short notice. One such client commended Martin for his perseverance, and explained that "Martin had a very large, amazing impact on" their firm's chances of survival.

Another client, also assisted through CLIPS, could not "thank him enough for his efforts and remarkable diligence". The client was particularly grateful for Martin's excellent communication, which put his client at ease during a difficult situation.

His peers are equally impressed with his pro bono work, with a silk stating that documentation that Martin has drafted is always "well presented, comprehensive, and well argued". Martin is determined to get the best possible result for his clients and treats both his paid and pro bono clients with the same level of respect and commitment. He gives great care and attention to the work he produces for his cases.

Martin has also supported Fairshare, a food bank, in relation to a property dispute and serves as an executive committee member of the UK Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists.



Sailesh Mehta

Red Lion Chambers



Sailesh has been taking on pro bono work for many years. He has worked on a broad range of cases but has particularly focused on supporting protestors in environmental cases.

Recently, he acted for the lead protestor who was campaigning against HS2. She was concerned about wetland nature reserves in Hillingdon being destroyed and public drinking water being contaminated. Thanks to Sailesh's work, she was acquitted at the end of a two-day trial. The client was incredibly grateful for Sailesh's support, in particular his advice and how he explained everything to her. She appreciated that he took the time to visit the site and described him as a "skilful legal advocate".

In addition to his work with HS2 protestors, Sailesh has also recently provided pro bono representation to vegan women who protested against Dolce & Gabbana's use of Orylag rabbits in their clothing. The solicitor who instructed him on the case was particularly impressed with how Sailesh worked through the night to complete written submissions in time. He also praised Sailesh's "dedication to justice and what is right, without regard to his own reward".

Sailesh has also written articles for *Legal Lifelines*, an initiative set up to empower those from communities that are suffering disproportionately from lack of legal support, and gives up his time to feature as a panellist on their webinar, 'Protest & The Law'.

Sarah Blackmore

Spire Barristers



"One of the most valued members of Advocate's reviewing and volunteer panel", Sarah leads by example when encouraging members of Chambers to take on pro bono work.

Sarah has volunteered with Advocate since 2013 and became a reviewer in June 2019. A caseworker at Advocate described Sarah as inspiring and caring, noting that she has selflessly offered weeks' worth of pro bono hours to help those who contact the organisation for assistance.

She is currently involved in an ongoing case through Advocate, in which she has been leading a junior barrister for the past four months. She has dedicated a huge amount of her time to this case and has already "agreed to see the case through to the end despite not knowing how many more months and hearings this may be". It has been an enormous relief to the client, knowing that he will continue to be represented.

In addition to her voluntary work with Advocate, Sarah actively encourages and provides support to members of Chambers looking to take on pro bono work in her capacity as Joint Head of Chambers. She also previously lobbied for Chambers to get involved with the Legal Education Foundation's Justice First Fellowship. Thanks to her support, Spire Barristers is the only Chambers nationally to have had two consecutive Justice First Fellows in conjunction with Advocate.

Sarah is described as an inspiring leader who is a leading light for the regional Bar in her support of access to justice.



Sarah Pinder

Goldsmith Chambers



Sarah volunteers with multiple pro bono organisations, provides training to younger barristers, and takes on additional responsibilities in Chambers all while maintaining a large and varied practice. She is considered a role model to others and is described as precise, totally reliable, and a pleasure to work with.

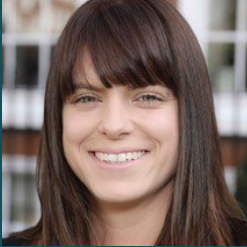
One organisation that Sarah supports is Amour Destine, which mentors and advocates for victims of gender-based violence and/or trafficking. Sarah is regularly available to assist the organisation and played a key role in forming a pro bono training programme for them. She is often contactable out of hours and over weekends to provide advice and support. The Founder/Director praised Sarah for her passion, genuine interest, and positive impact.

Since 2018, Sarah has worked on a group action, led by Anthony Metzger QC (also nominated), lodged on behalf of eight Commonwealth veterans. She has worked tirelessly drafting documentation, and providing hands-on guidance to the instructing solicitor. The solicitor noted that the “extent of pro bono work in this case has been significant” and praised Sarah for her “relentless drive in pursuit of justice”.

Sarah regularly volunteers to take cases on through Advocate and is also part of a select team in Chambers being instructed to advise on complex matters regarding reparations for female Yazidi victims of sexual violence in conflict. She has also joined Windrush Legal Angels, a pro bono organisation designed to support victims of the Windrush Scheme.

Sarah Salmon

Field Court Chambers



Described as the “first choice when recommending counsel”, Sarah tackles every case with diligence and professionalism.

Her nomination for Junior Pro Bono Barrister of the Year is supported by her opposing counsel in the seminal Court of Appeal case for which she is nominated. He highlighted that she “put in many hours of additional work” and described her

work as “an excellent example of what pro bono barristers can achieve”.

The case concerned landlord licensing provisions in the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and the protections afforded to tenants of unlicensed landlords, meaning it had wide-ranging implications for many vulnerable tenants across Wales. She led junior counsel Christopher McCarthy (also nominated) and worked tirelessly with him until the hearing in June.

The instructing solicitor was immensely impressed with her knowledge, describing her work as clear and concise. He noted that the case was so significant that “only high calibre counsel with a breadth of knowledge and meticulous research and drafting skills would do” and that Sarah was the clear choice.

Head of Chambers at Field Court Chambers was very impressed with Sarah and Christopher’s work, particularly under the difficult circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, and noted that this is the first time he has personally recommended someone for a Bar Pro Bono Award.



Tim Naylor

The British Horseracing Authority



Tim regularly provides advice and assistance to Cardiff Law School's Innocence Project and has done so for many years.

As one of the only university criminal appeals clinics left in the UK, Cardiff is responsible for more than 50% of all UK university submissions to the Criminal Cases Review Commission. They are the only university Innocence Project to have had cases referred to the Court of Appeal, and Tim was instrumental in these cases' success.

One such case took approximately three years to complete. Tim, along with Phil Evans QC (also nominated), worked with staff and students to gather evidence. They communicated with experts and visited Cardiff on several occasions to assist the students. After their appeal was rejected by a single judge at the Court of Appeal in 2016, they resubmitted it to the full court in 2017 and were successful. At the end of 2018, the client's conviction was overturned.

Tim has also assisted with a number of other cases, generously offering his time and expertise whenever it is needed. Since graduating from the university himself, he has unfailingly supported the Innocence Project and repeatedly given vital advice.

Zimran Samuel

Doughty Street Chambers



Between 10th April and 22nd June 2020, Zimran worked on a wholly pro bono basis for victims of domestic violence and abuse. He took on as many cases as possible where there was evidence of domestic abuse resulting from lockdown for clients who could not afford to pay or get legal aid. Zimran connected with local charities in Brighton but was also able to take on cases from across England and Wales thanks to remote working.

He worked closely with Rise, a domestic abuse charity in Brighton, and was praised by a domestic abuse caseworker for his help with a particularly vulnerable client. Zimran worked hard to understand the complexities of the case, which Rise had been supporting since January 2019. His skill and determination helped this client get the result she wanted in court, meaning “she is now living a life free from abuse and stalking” and no longer needs Rise’s support.

A solicitor who worked closely with him on other cases described Zimran’s generosity with his time as unparalleled. She noted that “witnessing Zimran in conference was a lesson in compassion” and that his capacity to assimilate information quickly is remarkable.

Zimran’s work had a huge impact on others, through collaboration or inspiring them to undertake their own pro bono domestic abuse work. He has continued to offer webinars and training workshops throughout the last few months, and has been involved in efforts to bring about changes in care regulations and the way domestic violence cases are dealt with.

The Chair of the Family Law Bar Association described Zimran as a leader in his field and worthy of recognition for his great work.



Pro Bono QC of the Year



Criteria

- This award is open to a Silk of any year appointment who has played a significant role in the promotion of access to justice over the last year through pro bono work.
- Consideration will be given to those who can demonstrate the importance and impact of their work and who are a positive force in encouraging others to undertake pro bono cases.



Nominees

There were six excellent nominees in the Pro Bono QC of the Year category this year.

Anthony Metzger QC, Goldsmith Chambers

Anthony Speaight QC, 4 Pump Court

Ben Collins QC, Old Square Chambers

Charles Ciumei QC, Essex Court Chambers

Ijeoma Omambala QC, Old Square Chambers

Victoria Wakefield QC, Brick Court Chambers

Anthony Metzger QC

Goldsmith Chambers



As leading counsel in a landmark group judicial review claim, Anthony took on a substantial amount of pro bono work. Anthony's work on this case "exemplifies his desire that those who are most vulnerable or disadvantaged and without means can have a voice".

This group action challenges the Ministry of Defence and the Home Office for historical breaches of policy and practices concerning Commonwealth veterans. The claim raises complex, nuanced issues of discriminatory treatment and has required a large amount of work.

The solicitor on the case described Anthony's knowledge and experience as immensely beneficial to the case. She praised his "masterful leadership" and praised both Anthony and his junior, Sarah Pinder (also nominated), as having a "combined relentless drive in pursuit of justice".

In addition to this case, Anthony regularly dedicates his time without remuneration. He has, among other things, been involved in other significant pro bono cases, is on the duty rota for Bail for Detainees, and assisted the immigration team in devising a specialist training programme for Amour Destine (a Community Interest Company supporting victims of gender-based violence and trafficking).

Joint Head of the Immigration Team at Goldsmith Chambers described Anthony as having "a true dedication to offering his time for free to benefit those who need it the most". Anthony actively encourages others to take on pro bono work and supports them in doing so.



Anthony Speaight QC

4 Pump Court



Throughout his career, Anthony has committed a large amount of his time to pro bono work. This year he has taken on two significant cases for Advocate, one of which is still ongoing. He has offered more than 70 pro bono hours to Advocate this year alone.

Anthony is currently leading Anna Hoffmann (also nominated) on a case regarding a student who had her funding withdrawn by the Student Loans Company after they claimed she had been fraudulently taking money. They have been working on this case for some time and they expect it to have huge implications for students accessing financial support.

This case has taken up significant amounts of time with the client facing numerous other personal difficulties, in addition to her legal battle. He is described as “grounded, practical and full of empathy”. Anthony has provided the client with hope and perspective, while the client, who was studying law until this became financially impossible, has repeatedly stated that she “hopes to be like him one day”.

Anthony has been described as “an inspiration to younger barristers”, encouraging them to actively take on pro bono work. He also displays a wider commitment to access to justice through his publications, such as in his work on contact tracing technologies. He is known to be ready to take unpaid work without question, and his Senior Clerk stated that he is proud “to have worked with him for as many years” as he has.

Ben Collins QC

Old Square Chambers



When the furlough scheme was announced, Ben undertook huge volumes of work pursuing legal challenges on behalf of those excluded from the scheme and from new sick pay provisions. He maintained positive pressure on the government, trying to obtain protection for some of the most vulnerable members of the labour market.

Ben has represented members of the Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain (IWGB) on a number of occasions, including challenging the Prime Minister's refusal to send the Brexit deadline extension request letter, highlighting the impact on low-paid non-British workers, and challenging the removal of the congestion charge exemption for private hire drivers.

The General Secretary of IWGB called Ben "a positive force in encouraging other lawyers to undertake pro bono work". A barrister that Ben led described him as calm, kind and considerate, and that she has "heard him promote and defend the need for pro bono work many times over".

Ben also acted for a client in her challenge to the Home Secretary's refusal to grant her UK residence. The client thought he provided "excellent, clear, and logical legal advice" and that he was generous with his time. She felt Ben always had her "best interests at the core of his focus" and is eternally grateful to him for his support.

Ben acts as a reviewer for Advocate, also sometimes taking on cases himself. He encourages pro bono work within chambers and has most recently been seeking members to join the Pro Bono Committee of the Employment Lawyers Association, which he sat on until last year.



Charles Ciumei QC

Essex Court Chambers



Regularly supporting Advocate and the Employment Law Appeals Advice Scheme, Charles promotes access to justice both through his own pro bono work and by supporting others. He has given over 200 hours to Advocate, worth more than £100,000.

A colleague from another set who Charles recently supported on a sensitive case praised Charles' input and advice, describing it as extremely valuable. He noted that Charles undertakes significant amounts of pro bono work and clearly cares about all of it. He also stated that "Charles' commitment and passion to pro bono work is infectious" and has directly influenced him in taking on more pro bono work.

Juniors at Essex Court Chambers speak highly of Charles' contribution to pro bono. He recently led Naomi Hart (also nominated) on a complex Court of Appeal case. She praised Charles for his guidance, support, and genuine selflessness, highlighting that there are "numerous pro bono clients indebted to Charlie without even knowing it".

His clients are as grateful to him as his colleagues, if not more so. The client in the Court of Appeal case described how Charles was with him for every single moment, keeping him well informed of his options and what to expect next. Charles is described as someone who "believes in what he does, believes in law and justice" and his client considered him to be exceptional, saying that it was a "true privilege" to be represented by him.

Ijeoma Omambala QC

Old Square Chambers



Pro bono work has always been a core part of Ijeoma's practice and career. She has been a reviewer for Advocate for many years and has given more than 150 hours of pro bono help to the organisation. She is described as having made an "inspiring commitment to access to justice" and she provides the same impeccable degree of advice and representation to all her clients, pro bono or otherwise.

She was previously instructed by Mind, the national mental health charity, to intervene in the Court of Appeal. While the case was about a maternity discrimination issue, Ijeoma noticed that there was a fundamental concern regarding adjustments that should be made by courts and tribunals for parties with serious mental health impairments or other vulnerabilities. Her work on this case raised greater awareness of this issue, highlighting the needs of vulnerable users and the use of the Equal Treatment Bench Book, which are likely to have a positive impact on many vulnerable users of court and tribunal services.

In addition to her extensive pro bono casework, Ijeoma has also taken on the role of advocacy trainer for Gray's Inn for over a decade. She has helped hundreds of barristers to become better advocates and encouraged them to take pro bono work. Her skill as a trainer has led to her being invited to undertake advocacy training in South Africa, Spain, Zimbabwe, and the US.

Ijeoma also finds time to champion equality, diversity, and inclusion initiatives, chairing Old Square Chambers' Black History Month seminar series and marking International Women's Day.



Victoria Wakefield QC

Brick Court Chambers



A “vocal, active and hugely energetic supporter of pro bono”, Victoria leads by example, ensuring that access to justice is woven into her practice. She “does not hesitate to assist” those with little or no resources to pay for legal services.

Victoria has been a reviewer for Advocate since 2013 and in that time has reviewed over 100 requests for assistance. She will sometimes actively seek counsel within chambers to assist on urgent or sensitive cases that she has reviewed. She also takes on a number of cases herself, with her most recent being a Court of Appeal case concerning an individual in a dispute with their local council, requiring over 80 hours of her time. This kind of dedication is the norm for her pro bono work, as she takes on every case “with exceptional levels of drive and commitment”.

In addition to the work she does for Advocate, Victoria also supports JUSTICE and Advocates for International Development (A4ID). She participates in a work experience programme for sixth form students, giving them an opportunity to learn about becoming a barrister, and acts as Brick Court Chambers’ Pro Bono Champion.

She considers pro bono to be “a fundamental and necessary part of her practice” and makes sure to impart this attitude on to younger barristers. Her support and encouragement enable many members of chambers to feel able to devote their time and energy to pro bono work. A junior barrister at Brick Court Chambers noted that no one “has been a more positive force in encouraging [her]” to commit to pro bono.

"I am sure you have a massive demand for the services you offer but I cannot thank you enough. The work you do is amazing and I hope you know the difference you make to people in similar situations to me."



International Pro Bono Barrister of the Year

Criteria

- The winner of this award will be a barrister of any call who over the last year has undertaken significant pro bono work outside England and Wales.
- Leading by example, they will be an excellent advocate for access to justice across the globe.
- Consideration will be given to the time commitment demonstrated by the barrister, as well as the extent of the impact of the pro bono work.



Nominees

There were five brilliant nominees in the International Pro Bono Barrister of the Year category this year.

Monica Feria-Tinta, Twenty Essex

Richard Honey, Francis Taylor Building

Samina Iqbal, Goldsmith Chambers

Sangeetha Iengar, Goldsmith Chambers

Schona Jolly QC, Cloisters

Monica Feria-Tinta

Twenty Essex



Monica is currently acting as counsel to West Timorese communities in an unprecedented claim for transboundary harm against Australia before the UN Special Procedures, which will set a world precedent concerning environmental harm from oil spills in a transboundary context. She has completed much of this work single-handed, supporting 13 regencies with this extensive and complex case.

The President of the West Timor Care Foundation has been fighting for justice for 10 years, seeking compensation for an oil spill that saw at least 40 million litres of crude oil poured into the Timor Sea. The spill disrupted the health and livelihoods of fishermen and seaweed farmers of West Timor, Indonesia, as well as causing catastrophic damage to the environment. Since Monica took on the case, she has been acting pro bono, putting together evidence and drafting documentation. The UN Special Procedures are currently dealing with the case, but the Foundation's President and the communities she has been supporting are immensely grateful for her help.

Monica has also worked on a number of other highly complex international cases, one of which was on behalf of ABColombia. She put in a considerable amount of work to ensure the protection of a Biosphere Reserve that "preserves fauna (including 44 endemic species), flora and DNA of invaluable importance for humanity". The programme and advocacy manager was hugely impressed with Monica's dedication to the case, in particular her attention to detail and the quality of the final document she produced.



Richard Honey

Francis Taylor Building



Richard dedicates over 200 hours every year to organising and undertaking pro bono work in Sierra Leone. He has been doing this since 2012 and since September 2014 has chaired the Working Committee of the UK Sierra Leone Pro Bono Network under the overall leadership of Dame Linda Dobbs.

The Network's work has been extensive and Dame Linda Dobbs claims that much of its success is due to "Richard's untiring commitment". She praised his leadership and stewardship of the Network and believes his time and expertise have been vital in ensuring the existence of the Network and enabling its work to take place.

The Vice Chair of the Network is also impressed with Richard's dedication and willingness to help. Richard works tirelessly to ensure that requests for assistance are met and is viewed by local stakeholders as a partner, rather than an outsider offering help. He has visited Sierra Leone on many occasions and has spent approximately 100 days there doing pro bono work.

Richard has been actively involved in the campaign to decriminalise the libel laws of Sierra Leone, provided assistance to the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency, and been directly involved in the drafting of bye laws for Freetown City Council's Transform Freetown programme. He has received many letters praising and thanking him for his work from a wide range of organisations and governmental departments that he has been able to help.

Samina Iqbal

Goldsmith Chambers



Despite being joint Head of the Immigration and Public Law team at Goldsmith Chambers, Samina finds time to shape the next generation of lawyers and has set up an organisation to enable her to do so internationally.

Samina recently co-founded Women Internationally Gaining Skills (WiGS), which delivers advocacy and legal skills training to female law students

internationally to help develop a more diverse pool of lawyers. It focuses on countries where there is a marked absence of female advocates and is already having a positive impact.

In March, WiGS successfully delivered its first project (with iProbono, the Centre for Advanced Legal Studies, the University of Dhaka, Role UK and UK Aid) in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This included advocacy training for students at Dhaka Law University, and for junior barristers and advocates, and meetings with High Court and Supreme Court Judges to better understand the skills they required from female barristers. They received great feedback from those who took part and they are now looking to develop WiGS further.

Samina has also presented a training webinar on the EU Settlement Scheme and played a key role in the development of a pro bono training programme for Amour Destine, a Community Interest Company that supports female victims of domestic and gender-based violence and trafficking.

She is widely respected by those who work with her and is described as a “fully committed individual who is a credit to the Bar and the wider legal community”, as well as having an “unquenchable desire for access to justice”.



Sangeetha Iengar

Goldsmith Chambers



Sangeetha has taken on a wide range of individual international pro bono cases, as well as supporting charitable organisations and working to implement access to justice programmes in other countries.

Among other things, Sangeetha has spent several weeks each year volunteering in Greece supporting asylum seekers and is now a board member for Fenix Humanitarian Legal Aid (FENIX), an NGO operating in Lesbos. She has undertaken significant amounts of casework in Greece, including instigating litigation that she hopes will push the Greek government to draft and publish a policy for vulnerable asylum seekers rendered homeless by the fire at Moria Camp, Lesbos.

She has also been providing advice to The Circle NGO on their Tanzanian Maternal Health Rights programme, and worked closely with Talent Beyond Boundaries to propose the creation of a 'Displaced Talent Visa'. The UK Director of Talent Beyond Boundaries described Sangeetha as one of their "strongest supporters" and they rely heavily on her "generous and valued pro bono assistance".

The Executive Director at FENIX commended her for always being on hand to answer questions and for "her commitment, guidance and unwavering support". A volunteer at Tunbridge Wells Welcomes Refugees also praised Sangeetha for the work they have done together. He described her as being "an excellent, patient listener", who was quickly trusted by clients.

Schona Jolly QC

Cloisters



Elected Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee in December 2018, Schona has committed extraordinary amounts of time and effort to the Committee and its work. She spends more than 20 hours a week (some weeks in excess of 30 hours) overseeing strategy and management, taking on legal work, securing funding, speaking at events, or meeting partners all while maintaining a fulltime busy practice.

During her time as Chair, the Committee has flourished.

Schona has led on and directed a number of cases in her role as Chair, including confronting the rule of law crisis in Hong Kong, monitoring freedom of expression in Turkey, challenging police brutality in Chile and providing international human rights training to lawyers in Kazakhstan.

In addition to her huge commitment to the Bar Human Rights Committee, Schona also takes on her own separate pro bono cases. For example, she was recently part of the team working for Cather Semanya, the South African Olympic athlete, in her challenge of the IAAF regulations requiring athletes to take testosterone-reducing medication to lower their naturally occurring levels.

All who work with her are impressed by her “exceptional and impactful pro bono work in international human rights” and her “immense and unwavering” commitment. She is described as a constant source of support, generous with her time and always keen to do more.



Pro Bono Chambers' Professional of the Year

Criteria

- This category recognises the crucial role played by chambers' staff in championing access to justice through pro bono, including practice managers, clerks, those involved in business development, marketing and client care, and those managing chambers.
- The winner of this category will be a member of chambers staff who has demonstrably championed pro bono work over the last year and effectively channels pro bono resources to help those who require legal help to receive assistance from legal professionals.



Nominees

There were three incredible nominees in the Pro Bono Chambers' Professional of the Year category this year.

Luke Carvalho, Brick Court Chambers

Nick Levett, Outer Temple Chambers

Sophie Floyd, Blackstone Chambers

Luke Carvalho

Brick Court Chambers



Since joining Brick Court in 2014, Luke has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to encouraging members of chambers to make pro bono work a key part of their practice, no matter their level of seniority.

He has revolutionised the way Brick Court approaches pro bono work, having “systematically introduced a different philosophy and a number of working practices which have benefitted both pro bono clients and members of chambers”. He has made pro bono part of the induction process for newly qualified pupils and lateral hires and has also established a running count of pro bono hours committed by members of Brick Court so they have real-time information.

Luke promotes the importance of pro bono work to barristers’ professional development and will take time to match specific members with cases that he thinks would be suited to their skills and interests. He monitors the Advocate weekly case email and has established an alert system to circulate these internally.

He is notably valued in chambers for his assistance in the practical aspects of pro bono instruction, particularly when there is no solicitor in place. He works hard to provide reassurance and assistance to individuals who do not have experience of the justice system. One member of chambers praised Luke for his support, stating that he “exemplified the values Advocate seeks to promote”.

He extends his support to the more junior members of the clerking team as well, ensuring they understand the importance of pro bono and that they are equipped to deal with the practicalities of clerking pro bono cases.



Nick Levett

Outer Temple Chambers



Highly regarded by chambers and the Advocate casework team, Nick is a true champion of pro bono. It should be noted that the casework team wanted to lend their support to this nomination, but Nick already had four supporting letters.

Nick supports all of his barristers to take on pro bono work, encouraging pupils and juniors to get involved by taking on challenging and interesting cases that will help them to develop professionally. He is praised for his ability to encourage everyone to undertake pro bono work, no matter their level of seniority.

He coordinates pro bono for five different pro bono schemes and organisations, but tackles everything with a personalised and careful approach. Many of these organisations note that Nick is “one of the most effective clerks” and “the ideal example of how every practice director should be”.

In addition to these schemes, Nick is the first point of contact for a member of chambers who presents a national radio show providing free legal advice. He manages the large number of phone calls and emails, filtering out the most appropriate to be featured and directing people to other sources of free legal advice. He treats every single one of these individuals with compassion and empathy, never forgetting that each of them has their own story.

His barristers consider themselves “lucky to have him” and highlight that he “has been an outstanding clerk for 13 years”.

Sophie Floyd

Blackstone Chambers



A proactive and enthusiastic advocate for pro bono, Sophie is the go-to clerk at Blackstone Chambers for pro bono cases. She is consistently praised for selling pro bono cases to barristers with the same level of professionalism she would with any paid piece of work.

She frequently helps junior members of Chambers to take on pro bono cases, setting out the professional benefits of doing so whenever she can. Her active support for pro bono has seen her build a strong relationship with the casework team at Advocate. A caseworker described Sophie as always happy to help, despite being exceptionally busy, and noted that she has been crucial in ensuring a strong relationship between Advocate and Blackstone Chambers.

Sophie goes above and beyond both when helping Advocate to place a case within Chambers and when pro bono clients have been taken on. A barrister at Blackstone Chambers described how Sophie is a friendly face for clients when they come into chambers and is always calm and reassuring.

She patiently explains the court process to clients who need it and often helps with the additional challenges that come with pro bono work when solicitors are not in place, such as creating bundles and making special arrangements to obtain documents. Many pro bono clients are on first name terms with Sophie, and she is described as “incredibly invaluable for someone who may otherwise feel overawed by the judicial process”.



Pro Bono Chambers of the Year



Criteria

- This award celebrate the outstanding achievement and commitment to pro bono work demonstrated by a particular set of chambers.
- This achievement could be related to the amount or variety of pro bono work undertaken, or the number of practising barristers actively accepting pro bono cases within the chambers.
- Nominees must have gone above and beyond for access to justice, promoting and encouraging others to engage in pro bono work.



Nominees

There were four nominees in the
Pro Bono Chambers of the Year category.

Cloisters

Goldsmith Chambers

Old Square Chambers

Spire Barristers

Cloisters

Having made an outstanding contribution to the Employment Legal Advice Network (ELAN), Cloisters has been providing much needed pro bono support, in particular throughout lockdown and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Barristers at Cloisters produced a 'Back to Work Toolkit', which provides expert, detailed and highly practical guidance on topical and complicated issues arising from COVID-19, including health and safety, redundancy, and discrimination, to name but a few. Maintaining the toolkit takes an enormous amount of time and effort as guidance and regulations are constantly changing, and the toolkit is already in its eighth edition. It is freely available and has proved to be a hugely valuable resource for the advice sector.

A team of barristers have given up significant amounts of time to support ELAN with interactive workshops on the rules surrounding the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the subsequent government schemes and policies. Each workshop lasted for approximately one and a half hours, well over the scheduled time, and took a very large amount of time to prepare for. Sally Robertson, Yvette Glenn, Declan O'Dempsey and Adam Ohringer deserve a particular mention for their extensive work producing and delivering these workshops.

A number of members of chambers have also given up their time to take on cases. The Independent Workers Union of Great Britain (IWGB) stated that Cloisters' barristers go above and beyond and regularly provide support. Over the past few years, members have assisted IWGB caseworkers with regular legal clinics. The Vice-President of the IWGB was also keen to praise the clerking team at Cloisters, describing them as always willing to assist and facilitating their needs.



Goldsmith Chambers

Members of Goldsmith Chambers are involved in a wide range of pro bono work. Over 50% are registered to take cases with Advocate and many are involved with the British Red Cross, the Windrush Legal Angels and Somers Town Legal Advice Corner, among others. Many members act regularly for Bail for Immigration Detainees, with barristers having an impressive 91% success rate since the onset of the pandemic.

Chambers itself also partners with a number of organisations including the Cassandra Centre, which supports victims of domestic abuse, Fenix Humanitarian Legal Aid, which supports refugees in Greece, and Amour Destine, which mentors and advocates for female victims of domestic or gender-based violence and trafficking.

The partnership with Amour Destine involves a bespoke training programme, aiming to increase staff's awareness of immigration issues. The Founder/Director of Amour Destine is incredibly grateful for Goldsmith Chambers' support, noting that barristers are having a hugely positive impact.

Delivering training, seminars and webinars is a key part of Goldsmith Chambers' pro bono, with many individual members frequently presenting to both UK and overseas audiences. Goldsmith Chambers is committed to sharing its knowledge and expertise to further legal developments and enable trainers and trainees to learn from each other.

Additionally, a large city firm is currently instructing a multi-disciplinary team, consisting of two QCs, six juniors, a pupil, and an intern. The team has committed hundreds of pro bono hours to advise on the use and extension of international sanctions regimes to finance restorative justice for victims of sexual violence in conflict.

Old Square Chambers

Long standing supporters of Advocate and the Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain, Old Square Chambers is committed to providing high quality advice and representation to those who are otherwise unable to access legal assistance.

A remarkable 41 barristers currently volunteer to take cases with Advocate and they have collectively dedicated more than 300 pro bono hours to helping those in need. Members of Old Square Chambers have stepped up particularly well during the COVID-19 pandemic and the "clerking team have shown great solidarity with the casework team ensuring that each case emailed to them has been circulated to all members of chambers".

The Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain relies on pro bono work from barristers to support its members, many of whom are low paid workers, including a high proportion of migrant workers and workers of colour. In the past year, a great number of these barristers have been from Old Square Chambers.

As many as 12 barristers, ranging from some of the most senior to some of the most junior, have assisted with cases this year. Barristers have also been on call to provide informal and ad-hoc advice, and the clerks have also "gone above and beyond in facilitating the provision of pro bono support". Barristers from Old Square Chambers have assisted on some extremely important cases, including a whistleblowing claim and advice on challenging the legality of the redundancy consultation regime.



Spire Barristers

From the Joint Heads of Chambers all the way through to pupils and the clerking team, many people at Spire Barristers play an active role in pro bono and supporting access to justice.

An impressive 32 members of chambers are currently signed up to Advocate's volunteer panel and regularly take cases across a range of areas of law. The Joint Head of Chambers at Spire Barristers, Sarah Blackmore (nominated), is a reviewer and actively takes cases, setting a great example for others within chambers.

Spire Barristers is actively involved in the Justice First Fellowship and has had two fellows complete their seat at Advocate, with one now a tenant and the other a first six pupil. One of the fellows, Aaqib Javed, set up a scheme to provide emergency advice to family cases, which chambers will be supporting him with throughout his pupillage. Both fellows are committee members for the Young Legal Aid Lawyers Group.

The Senior Clerk at Spire Barristers, Leigh Royall, acts as chambers' Pro Bono Champion, actively encouraging all members to sign up to volunteer with Advocate. According to an Advocate caseworker, Leigh is always on hand to circulate cases and "truly understands the wellbeing benefits of pro bono work". Leigh has also recently been appointed as the Institute of Barristers Clerks' representative on the Bar Council's Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee.

Spire Barristers also set up the Spire Foundation two years ago to support vulnerable adults and care leavers, providing them with sponsorship grants to cover educational costs. Many members give their time to the Foundation.

“It has been quite emotional to be honest, in suddenly realising that I was no longer alone in this situation and that someone would at least be making sure that I had a fair and lawful opportunity.

I think that the service you provide is so essential, especially to those that cannot afford costly litigation and defence.”



**Lifetime
Achievement
in Pro Bono,
the Sydney Elland Goldsmith
Award**

Criteria

- The Lifetime Achievement Award commends an individual's exceptional achievement in terms of pro bono work.
- It recognises the long-term contribution made over the course of a career in addition to their work on specific pro bono cases.
- Nominees for this award will have demonstrated strong commitment to the pro bono ethic and through their work been a champion for access to justice for many years.



Nominees

There were two outstanding nominees for the Lifetime Achievement in Pro Bono, the Sydney Elland Goldsmith Award this year.

John Collins, Park Square Barristers

Philip Evans QC, QEB Hollis Whiteman



John Collins

Park Square Barristers



Called to the Bar in 1956 and still practising up until the day before he died, John Collins will be fondly remembered as an inspiration, a champion of access to justice, and a legal legend who spent his 74-year long career helping others. In short, “a truly great man whose life was a blessing.”

There is a long list of cases that John worked on in a pro bono capacity. He represented those who needed it, often giving huge amounts of his time, sometimes committing years to cases. He was a reviewer for Advocate for six years and was an “ever-present feature” of the Leeds Legal Walk.

He brought junior barristers into some of his pro bono cases, giving them an opportunity to experience interesting work beyond what they would usually see. John was a role model to younger barristers, championing access to justice and directly influencing many of them to take on pro bono work. There are a number of barristers in the North Eastern Circuit who undertake pro bono because of him; a member of Park Square Barristers stated that he began volunteering with Advocate because of John’s influence. He described John as “someone who not only embodied the values of the Bar but encouraged and inspired others to do likewise”.

He offered assistance to anyone who needed it. Supporters of his nomination note that he does not seem to have ever turned away a case because someone could not afford to pay. One of them remarked that John had said “the point of a justice system was to remedy injustice.” John took on pro bono cases simply because he appeared to have “a deep-seated feeling that it’s right to do so”. He believed that justice is a right to which everyone is entitled, and this drove his behaviour and his practice right up to the end.



Philip Evans QC

QEB Hollis Whiteman



Offering invaluable assistance to Cardiff Law School's Innocence Project since its inception in 2005, Philip has been committed to providing pro bono assistance throughout his career. He has trained hundreds of students over the years and has acted as a mentor to Cardiff Law School students, supporting them since the late 1990s.

Philip has played a key role in the success of the Innocence Project, not only in Cardiff but in many other universities and law schools around the country. He offered his assistance to the Innocence Network UK, which grew to 36 projects, and became a core part of their national training programme. A Professor of Law at Manchester University praised Philip's commitment to Innocence Projects, emphasising that he was "an important support for academic lawyers".

Although the Network disbanded in 2015, Cardiff Law School has continued its Innocence Project, with it now being the largest and most successful of all UK universities. This is, in no small part, thanks to Philip's commitment.

Philip, along with Tim Naylor (also nominated), worked closely with staff and students on one case for three years. They communicated with experts and visited Cardiff on several occasions to assist the students. After their appeal was rejected by a single judge at the Court of Appeal in 2016, they successfully resubmitted it to the full court in 2017. At the end of 2018, the client's conviction was overturned.

The academic leads for the Cardiff Innocence Project praised Philip's dedication, stating that "to have such long-standing expert advice and support from such experienced barristers is a rare thing in the criminal appeals world".

**“The mere fact that I could
directly contact your
organisation for assistance and
receive free legal advice took a
huge weight off my shoulders. My
gratitude to your organisation
assisting during a difficult period
is totally endless.”**



advocate



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