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Attorneys, Law Students and Paralegals Are Recognized at Circuit's Second Annual Pro Bono Ceremony

CLEARWATER - One represented an abused six-year-old girl as a Guardian ad Litem, persuading a judge to place the child in the home of her maternal grandparents, where she is now thriving.

Another stopped a landlord from evicting 30 to 35 families from an extended-stay hotel.

Others worked hundreds of hours helping immigrants, victims of domestic violence, or the elderly.

What they all have in common is that, at the time, they were performing such duties without being paid to do so, or, as it's known in legal circles, they were performing pro bono work.

Lawyers, law students, law firms and paralegals were recognized and awarded for such work on Friday, April 15, at the Sixth Judicial Circuit's second annual pro bono ceremony. The event was established for the first time last year by Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Kimberly Todd in her capacity as the chair of the circuit's Pro Bono Committee.

"I thought the event was successful as the committee received numerous nominations from various individuals and organizations across Pinellas and Pasco counties," Judge Todd said. "The event really brings the circuit together as demonstrated by the nominations and (award) recipients from both counties within the circuit."

"The numerous judges and community leaders in attendance understand and appreciate the importance of recognizing those individuals who essentially donate a large amount of work by assisting those less fortunate who cannot afford legal representation," Judge Todd said.



Dana Carmack, an honorable mention in the paralegal category, poses with her award, flanked on the left by Circuit Judge Kimberly Todd and on the right by Chief Judge Anthony Rondolino

The winner of the award for Outstanding Pro Bono Service By An Attorney was Lynn Hanshaw, who ensured the families in the hotel were allowed to remain. Receiving honorable mentions were Bruce Kirkpatrick Eason, Adriana Dinis, Wanda Davis, Lyndy Jennings, Regina Kardash, and Daniel Perry.

The award for Outstanding Pro Bono Service by a Law Firm was given to Immigration Law Group of Florida, whose two principal attorneys, Adrianna Dinis and Kathlyn M. Mackovjak, have held free legal clinics every other month at the Hispanic Outreach Center in Clearwater since 2014.

The law firms of Carol Johnson, P.A., and Smith Hopen, P.A., received honorable mentions in this category.

Regina Melore was the recipient of the Most Outstanding Paralegal award. Ms. Melore donated roughly 180 hours with the Guardian ad Litem program this past year. Dana Carmack won an honorable mention.

The award for Outstanding Pro Bono Service By A Law Student went to Tomoko Ransen, who, while attending Stetson University College of Law, volunteered hundreds of hours at Gulfcoast Legal Services, working with both victims of domestic violence and the elderly. Students receiving honorable mentions were Nathan Bruemmer, Donovan Moore, Cheryl Hansen, Michelle Goodman, Rachael Curran, Phyllis Jean Nowlan, Haley Knapp, Alexandra C. Nocodemi, Kaitlyn Macomber and Adam Campbell.

Attorney Bill Bostick, who represented the six-year-old girl, won the committee's Chair Award. For this particular recognition, the circuit's judges nominate and later vote for the eventual winner. Receiving honorable mentions were attorneys Michelle D'Angelone, Wanda Davis, Lawrence Markel, Jim Moss, Jeremy Simons, and Jeannie S. Williams.