



**THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL
13TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT PRO BONO SERVICE AWARDS
May 27, 2021**

Award Winner Bios

**Hillsborough County Bar Association's Jimmy Kynes Pro Bono Service Award:
KATHERINE EARLE YANES**

Ms. Yanes was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1999 and has spent her career representing defendants at the trial, appellate, and post-conviction phases of criminal litigation in federal and state courts, as well as in government investigations. Ms. Yanes is a partner at Kynes Markman & Felman. Over the course of her career, Ms. Yanes has distinguished herself as an extraordinary advocate for her clients and a dedicated contributor of pro bono legal services. Ms. Yanes works on multiple pro bono cases each year, contributing at least 100 pro bono hours per year and several hundred hours in some years. Ms. Yanes volunteers for Crossroads for Florida Kids, the Stetson Law Innocence Initiative Clinic, Clemency Project 2014 and the Compassionate Release Clearinghouse.

Ms. Yanes was one of the first attorneys to sign up as a volunteer for Crossroads for Florida Kids. Since 2012, Ms. Yanes has dedicated her time to Crossroads representing young people in dependency and delinquency cases. Among others, she assisted a teen girl who was a victim of human trafficking and was being held as a runaway in another state. Ms. Yanes took the case and was able to obtain the young girl's release.

Ms. Yanes has spent hundreds of hours over the years advocating for a group that is largely ignored — those convicted of a crime. Ms. Yanes spent years supervising Stetson Law School students in their Innocence Initiative Clinic, including supervising a case that resulted in exoneration for a client who was wrongfully convicted. Ms. Yanes was also heavily involved in the Clemency Project 2014, which had the goal of identifying and assisting federal prisoners who would qualify for clemency. Ms. Yanes, with the assistance of her law firm, reviewed the files of over 200 potential clemency applications and filed petitions for approximately 120 prisoners. 43 of those prisoners were granted clemency, forever changing their lives. Ms. Yanes followed up that impressive work by assisting with the Compassionate Release Project. Ms.

Yanes was able to receive grants of compassionate release for two clients. Ms. Yanes also represented a class of detainees at the Manatee County Jail challenging a mail policy that prohibited prisoners from receiving mail from family and friends.

In addition to her own impressive pro bono legal service, Ms. Yanes has also been an active member and leader in numerous bar organizations and has encouraged others, particularly law school students, to engage in pro bono services. In total, Ms. Yanes estimates that she has donated over 3,000 hours of pro bono time over the course of her career, but this estimate is likely far too low and does not reflect the hours that were donated by others as a result of Ms. Yanes' encouragement and example. According to Ms. Yanes she gives back to help those who "have the most at stake . . . have their voices heard."

Outstanding Pro Bono Service by a Lawyer:
ELLA ALIZA SHENHAV

Ella Shenhav is a partner in the Tampa office of Shutts & Bowen, where she practices commercial litigation. In addition to maintaining her own busy commercial practice, Ms. Shenhav has consistently dedicated her time and talents serving those in the community who lack access to legal representation. During her career, Ella has represented teens through Crossroads for Florida Kids, served as Executive Director of Project HELP, a legal clinic for the homeless and indigent, and taken on a variety of other pro bono cases involving all areas of the law. She has also served for many years as the Co-Chair of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee's Law Firm Subcommittee and is the Pro Bono Partner at her firm.

In 2020, Ms. Shenhav contributed 120 hours of pro bono legal services. During the Covid pandemic, Ms. Shenhav successfully transitioned the Project HELP legal clinic into a virtual clinic, personally handling over 30 telephone consultations with clients. She also co-counseled with an associate at her firm on two domestic violence restraining order cases for Are you Safe. In addition, she continued her representation of a cancer-stricken woman whose ancestral home was sold in a tax sale even though the taxes were paid before the sale. As a result of Ms. Shenhav's representation, the client got her home back. Also in 2020, Ms. Shenhav represented a single mother with young children with special needs who was facing foreclosure by her HOA for unpaid fees. Ms. Shenhav took on the case and helped the woman negotiate a favorable settlement and keep her home. Ms. Shenhav also spent a significant amount of time training and mentoring other pro bono lawyers at her firm and within the larger community. Ms. Shenhav has truly set herself apart as a leader and extraordinary advocate for pro bono.

Outstanding Pro Bono Service by a Young Lawyer:
LINDA D. ANDERSON STANLEY

Linda Stanley has been practicing law for nine years, serving her entire career in the area of public service. Ms. Stanley started her career at Bay Area Legal Services and currently

works for Equal Justice Works. Ms. Stanley specializes in housing and disaster law. In addition to dedicating her career to public service, Ms. Stanley also volunteers her own time to provide pro bono legal services, primarily in the area of disaster relief. Among other activities, Ms. Stanley volunteers through the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Disaster Legal Services program. The program sets up hotlines in disaster areas to allow disaster survivors to call and receive advice and legal services.

In 2020, Ms. Stanley responded to 20 natural disasters around the country, including in Florida after Hurricane Sally. In addition to responding to calls, Ms. Stanley lead the charge in implementing a new data collection method that allowed volunteers to respond to the legal needs of over 900 disaster survivors. Ms. Stanley also set up the nationwide ABA Disaster Pro Bono Portal, which connects volunteer attorneys with disaster-related pro bono opportunities. In addition to these important efforts, Ms. Stanley offers her services to the Florida Attorneys Counseling on Evictions (FACE) Project. Ms. Stanley also devotes a significant amount of time training and mentoring attorneys on providing disaster-related legal services. Overall, Ms. Stanley provided over 200 hours of pro bono legal services in 2020. Ms. Stanley’s dedication of her career to public service and her time to pro bono has had a significant impact on disaster survivors in Florida and the rest of the country.

Outstanding Pro Bono Service by a Paralegal:
CHRISTY A. ROWELL

Christy Rowell obtained her paralegal certificate from Kennesaw University in Georgia in 1965. She moved to Tampa in 2012 and began working at Foley & Lardner in 2014. While at Foley, Ms. Rowell has assisted attorney Mark Wolfson on numerous pro bono matters for Bay Area Legal Services. Ms. Rowell typically works on guardian advocacy cases, which involve a parent seeking to become guardian advocate for their disabled child who has now become an adult. Ms. Rowell assists with all aspects of the case, including working closely with clients to prepare and file the required annual plans. In 2020 alone, Ms. Rowell worked on 13 guardian advocacy cases. Attorney Wolfson commended Ms. Rowell for utilizing her paralegal skills and her excellent communication skills to help clients in tough situations as she “appreciates the importance of helping out others in our community that are less fortunate.” Ms. Rowell herself reports that she is happy to be able to relieve some stress for these families so they can focus on more important issues.

Outstanding Pro Bono Service by a Law Firm:
SHOOK, HARDY & BACON, LLP

Shook Hardy & Bacon is a national law firm with approximately 20 attorneys practicing in Tampa. The firm has long been a significant contributor of pro bono legal services in the community, with a focus on representing disadvantaged children in Hillsborough County. Shook Hardy & Bacon attorneys represent children in foster care as Attorneys ad Litem through Crossroads for Florida Kids and serve as Guardians ad Litem. In 2020, despite the Covid-19

pandemic, the Tampa office of Shook Hardy & Bacon contributed 484 pro bono hours representing kids in foster care and serving as Guardians ad Litem.

The legal services provided by Shook Hardy & Bacon can have a huge impact on their clients' lives. For example, in one case, attorneys represented two brothers under the age of 5 who had been living in a foster home since birth. When there was a push to move the brothers out of state to live with an uncle, the attorneys advocated against the move and helped the boys stay in the home they knew and loved. Another Shook Hardy & Bacon attorney represented a 17-year-old sex trafficking survivor. The attorney was able to help the client get the medical attention, emotional counseling, and funds to replace her personal belongings that she needed to become a productive adult. In addition, Shook Hardy & Bacon attorneys regularly volunteer to serve as on-call attorneys to represent children in delinquency hearings who show up without a parent or guardian. Even this short representation helps make children feel less alone in a scary situation. Through pro bono, Shook Hardy & Bacon plays an important role improving the lives of underserved children in the community.

Outstanding Pro Bono Service by an Organization:
CROSSROADS FOR FLORIDA KIDS

Crossroads for Florida Kids was created in the summer of 2012 by attorneys Rosemary Armstrong, Allison Singer, and Sandy Weinberg. Crossroads is a nonprofit with a mission to train and mentor pro bono attorneys to represent underserved children in Hillsborough County. Since its inception, Crossroads has represented 309 children and young adults in their dependency, delinquency and criminal proceedings. Since 2013, Crossroads attorneys have contributed over 38,000 pro bono hours to our community's youth.

In 2020 alone, 76 Crossroads attorneys contributed 3,828 pro bono hours despite having to accommodate new virtual procedures during the pandemic. This includes representing several children who were trafficking victims, many children with mental health issues, and a large number of children with delinquency charges. The common thread running through all of these children's cases is trauma. Crossroads attorneys help young clients navigate the legal system and help them obtain services, clothing, and better placements. They also serve as mentors and role models for their clients. Crossroads attorneys include attorneys from big firms, sole practitioners, retired attorneys and new lawyers. But all of them are dedicated to improving the lives of underprivileged children in our community.

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee commends the extraordinary service of the 2021 award recipients and is appreciative of their selfless efforts.