

Pro Bono

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I just began my second year here at Patterson and Patterson Belknap's commitment to pro bono work is a draw to many of the attorneys that come here and shortly after arriving you learn how committed the Firm really is.

My assignment was given to me through the Firm's partnership with the Urban Justice Center's veteran advocacy project which provides the Firm with clients who served in the military but received less than an honorable discharge.

Oftentimes, negative discharges are at least in part a result of PTSD or traumatic family events. My client suffered from both.

As his advocate, I am gathering evidence and drafting an application for review of discharge through the Army Discharge Review Board.

Through this process, I've come to learn much about my client and what he and other veterans have gone through as a result of their negative discharges.

As to my client, he's merely trying to receive the educational benefits the G.I. bill provides veterans who are honorably discharged in order to go back to school.

It's been an extremely instructive and rewarding experience and I look forward to submitting his application shortly.

Patterson is also very receptive to Associates taking on pro bono projects of their own choosing. At one of the luncheon presentations Patterson hosts, IRAP – short for International Refugee Assistance Project – presented on its mission. IRAP is a legal advocacy organization for refugees worldwide and helps resettle its clients.

Due to the scale of the refugee crisis, it partners with firms like Patterson to help in its mission. After their luncheon presentation here, I knew I had to get involved and expressed my interest to the partner who brought in IRAP to speak.

This led to me becoming one of the associate contacts between the firm and IRAP and it involves me helping getting cases placed.

I also took on two cases myself where with each, I worked with one associate and, as with all pro bono cases, a partner who oversees the case.

While I enjoy and find the work on the billable side challenging and interesting, Patterson truly allows you to explore other opportunities through its pro bono program and get involved in areas you have a passion in.

Listening to my pro bono clients' stories and developing those into legal arguments that provide them with a chance at finding relief has been some of the most rewarding work of my life.

I'm grateful that Patterson not only allows me to do this, but actively encourages it.

<https://www.pbwt.com/pro-bono/>

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