



Making a Difference Through Pro Bono

2024 Highlights



**Tucker
Ellis | LLP**



At Tucker Ellis, we are deeply committed to giving back to our communities through meaningful pro bono work. In 2024, attorneys from all 10 of our offices contributed pro bono service to clients in need, addressing critical legal issues including Section 1983 cases, immigration matters, landlord/tenant disputes, and more. Here are some of our 2024 pro bono highlights.

Types of pro bono legal services we provide:

-  1983 Actions
-  Adoption
-  Birth Certificate Corrections
-  Death Penalty Appeals
-  General Advice
-  Housing: Landlord/Tenant
-  Immigration

“Pro bono work allows attorneys to hone their legal skills in real-world scenarios while contributing to a fairer and more accessible legal system. You encounter diverse legal issues and clients that expand your expertise, and most importantly you help individuals who lack access to legal services get justice.”

—**Justin Eddy**, *Tucker Ellis Pro Bono Partner-in-Charge*



Advocating for Inmates' Rights Under Section 1983

Appointed pro bono counsel by the District of New Jersey, **Diana Gerstel** and **Cheska Tolentino** are representing a detainee in custody since July 2020 who has brought 1983 claims against Hudson County Correctional Facility and the jail's health care provider for failing to implement reasonable measures to mitigate risks of contracting COVID-19. **Tom Fawkes** has provided critical bankruptcy support.

In Ohio, **Jennifer Mesko**, **Nathan Nasrallah**, and **Izaak Horstemeier-Zrnich**, with assistance from **Zach Kaplan** and **Jessica Toncler**, represented a prison inmate in a 1983 lawsuit against Ohio prison personnel for failing to provide medical care during his suicide attempts, in violation of his Eighth Amendment rights. The team secured a favorable settlement for the inmate.



Diana Gerstel



Cheska Tolentino



Jennifer Mesko



Nathan Nasrallah



Izaak Horstemeier-Zrnich



Securing Justice for a Tenant Denied Due Process

Through the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association's pro bono appeals program, **Danielle Easton** and **Spencer Krebs** uncovered a critical error in a landlord-tenant dispute, where our client faced a \$15,000 judgment without having been provided notice of the motion for summary judgment in the first place. After successfully obtaining relief, the team is now defending our client's rights in municipal court.



Danielle Easton



Spencer Krebs

Fighting for Asylum and a New Beginning

Through the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation, law clerk **Benjamin Crawford** worked with attorney oversight to argue asylum for a migrant who fled Honduras after severe persecution for her political affiliation. The team crafted a compelling brief highlighting her past and ongoing fears of persecution, advocating to protect our client from deportation.



Benjamin Crawford

Protecting Veterans' Rights to Care

Scott Wilkov has been providing pro bono representation to a disabled U.S. Navy veteran, working to build a strong claim for benefits after an initial denial by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. With support from law clerk **Bobby Ohly** over the summer, Scott has leveraged his VA accreditation to navigate the complex claims process, ensuring that our client receives the advocacy he deserves.



Scott Wilkov

Recognized for Pro Bono Service

In 2024, 24 Tucker Ellis attorneys were inducted into The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland's Pro Bono Honor Societies, recognizing their commitment to providing vital pro bono legal services. This achievement underscores the firm's ongoing dedication to supporting access to justice and making a meaningful impact in the community.

Legal Aid also highlighted **Tucker Ellis Day** in the Fall 2024 edition of its newsletter *Poetic Justice*. Legal Aid spoke with **Chris Caryl** to describe the importance of the firm's special day designated for attorneys and staff to give back to the community, including through pro bono work:



Chris Caryl

"Tucker Ellis Day is a day when we commemorate the founding of our law firm. One of the pillars of Tucker Ellis is our commitment to our community. On that day we close our offices and volunteer in the community. One of the activities that we've done as part of Tucker Ellis Day is working with Legal Aid."

"We're honored that each year they think of us as an organization to partner with to do something for the community," said **Lauren Gilbride**, Managing Attorney for Legal Aid's Intake Group and Volunteer Lawyers Program. "Throughout the years, Tucker Ellis has participated in pro bono work in a variety of ways. It's a firm-wide commitment that includes everyone from partners to newer associates to paralegals to their summer law clerks. We're always so appreciative of working with them on Tucker Ellis Day."



The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland's Time Well Spent Honor Society honors private attorneys as they reach milestones of cumulative hourly work as pro bono colleagues, while its Community Commitment Honor Society honors private attorneys as they reach milestones of Brief Advice Clinics attended.



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