



## **Ep. 41: Corporate-Law Firm Pro Bono Partnerships**

**December 28, 2020**

**Jose Garriga:**

Hello, and welcome to *OnAir with Akin Gump*. I'm your host, Jose Garriga.

Pro bono work is something that a number of in-house legal departments and outside counsel have undertaken in partnership for years. In fact, The Pro Bono Institute, in 2018, reported over 90 percent of in-house legal departments partner with law firms to do pro bono work.

We have with us today Akin Gump's pro bono partner Steven Schulman; Rick McMurtry, senior vice president and associate general counsel at WarnerMedia; and Jay Reidy, assistant vice president and senior legal counsel at AT&T. They'll be speaking about pro bono partnerships between law firms and in-house legal departments, the benefits to pro bono clients and to the lawyers who formed these partnerships, and how Akin Gump and AT&T have joined together to perform this vital work.

Welcome to the podcast.

Steve, Rick, Jay, thank you all for making time to appear on the show today. Let's kick this off by talking a bit about AT&T's pro bono practice. Jay, could you tell us how it developed and what its focus has been over the last several years?

**Jay Reidy:**

Thanks, Jose, and thanks to Steve and to Akin Gump, and I'm really happy to join in on this podcast and to tell you a little bit about what AT&T does in this area with Rick McMurtry. Let me start off by saying, AT&T is, as everybody knows, an extremely large company, and we're globally deployed, we're a national legal presence, a very large legal department, and it's only natural. I think, that that legal department has, as one of its core values, a very strong commitment to not only public service but pro bono service. That really is extended out through a number of different—it's something I could talk about far longer than this podcast—so many different areas.

The things I guess I'd first point out to the listeners is we operate both on a national and local level. So Rick and I are two of the co-chairs of our national pro bono practice, along with Mark Krause and Belinda Boling, I should mention; we operate at the national level, but, really, the key to our pro bono practice is local.

We have local programs in our many various offices, not only in Dallas, in our headquarters, where we engage so effectively with Akin Gump, but in other places, in Chicago, in Atlanta, in Los Angeles, in Washington, D.C., and in many different areas of the company. And the reason I mention that is because it is local interest of lawyers that really generate the activities.

So, what we think works best in our program at a pro bono level is where you have lawyer interests and professional interests starting the ball rolling. And that bears out: We see programs individualized in each of those locations that I just mentioned. In Chicago, where I operate, we have a very strong immigration asylum practice and a practice with the Equip for Equality organization representing individuals for disability rights. Rick will tell us a little bit about where it goes in Atlanta.

So, I'd point out that Rick comes to us from the AT&T acquisition, merger with Time Warner, now WarnerMedia, and that brought a huge and immensely effective and a history of pro bono practice that adds to it. And before I throw some of this back over to Rick, as I said, it's a local practice where we have local initiatives by lawyers and paraprofessionals in these offices and in our headquarters and even globally, but at the national level, we then join those interests into, hopefully, work and values across the stream of different types of activities. Veterans benefits, equal justice initiatives that we have ongoing both through Equal Justice Works and with entities like the Equal Justice Initiative, prisoner rights cases, and those national programs are, if you will, moderated and somewhat managed by the national team to support the locally driven pro bono efforts. We face the leadership of our department as pro bono coordinators and attempt to manage those programs through our leadership and with our leadership, and then linking them to the core values of the company at large, which, of course, are very broad and very diverse.

So, it works in many different ways that we're proud of. Rick and I have now been working together just over the last six or eight months as a result of merging of companies, and it's just an amazing thing to watch and see some of the things you've done as a company and also in Atlanta.

**Rick McMurtry:**

Thanks, Jay. And I too am so happy to get to talk on the topic of pro bono. The do-gooders of the world out there doing our pro bono work, and I can tell you prior to AT&T's merger with Time Warner, what's now WarnerMedia, Time Warner had three separate business units: Turner—which is headquartered in Atlanta, which is where I am, and operates various television networks all over the world, including CNN, Cartoon Network, PBS, TMT, TCM; Turner Classic Movies, it's my mom's favorite—and Warner Brothers, which you probably well know is a huge film and television studio, and then HBO. And those operated fairly independently as did our pro bono departments, and some of them were more developed than others were.

At Turner, I joined an organization called Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta, which AT&T is also on the board of. And that organization really helped to rejuvenate pro bono's spirit in our legal department. I had to give them a lot of credit. When I was at a law firm, there were built-in pro bono opportunities and those didn't exist when I first got to Turner. If you wanted to do some pro bono work, great, but the company didn't necessarily facilitate that. And having partner organizations like Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta, Georgia Lawyers for the Arts, Kids in Need of Defense, Georgia Asylum and Immigration Network and various others that we've partnered with all over the years has allowed us to formalize that program a little bit more and make those opportunities more readily available to our department members.

And, as a result, we've had over 80 attorneys and other legal professionals volunteer for more than 300 matters in the last 10 to 12 years. And, so, we're rightfully proud of our pro bono culture within WarnerMedia. And the same is true at Warner Brothers and HBO, although I know far less about how their pro bono programs evolved. And what's been exciting since AT&T has acquired us is that we've been able to work more closely with our AT&T colleagues and have started to do some broader initiatives that we couldn't have accomplished on our own as a single organization and also look at some of the programs where we do overlap and see if we can have more powerful impact on those organizations like Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta and some of the immigration projects. And Jay's right, that most of our projects are from the ground up. If you have an individual interest, then that is something that we're going to support, hopefully, as it aligns with our corporate ideals.

A few years ago, we had many attorneys interested in helping with immigration projects, and that's when we really evolved our relationship with some of those organizations. And, so, attorneys get the opportunity to pick and choose their pro bono projects based upon their interests and their skillsets.

**Jose Garriga:** Thank you both. Steve, let me turn to you now, please. Can you tell us about how Akin Gump has partnered with clients on pro bono and, specifically, how the firm's relationship with AT&T began?

**Steven Schulman:** Sure. Jose, let me take even a step back. And what Jay and Rick were talking about a bit is the evolution of pro bono on the in-house side. As you know, I've been with Akin Gump since 2006 and have had the great pleasure of focusing full-time on building and developing our pro bono practice. And, in that time, I've seen in-house counsel really start to develop pro bono. In a lot of ways, it mirrors the growth, during my career, in pro bono, I graduated law school in 1994 when pro bono really was catch-as-catch-can—there wasn't a lot going on then at law firms or in-house counsel. There were some going on, I don't want to dismiss that at all.

But back then in the mid '90s, the Pro Bono Institute started to focus on law firms and started this Law Firm Pro Bono Challenge and said to firms, we want you to commit to doing at least 60 hours per lawyer, even 100 hours per lawyer. And the lawyers that joined in on that, and many, many did, eventually many of them went in-house. And so, the Pro Bono Institute then started the Corporate Pro Bono project several years after and was encouraging in-house counsel to do pro bono work. And many of those counsel again had come from law firms and had done pro bono at law firms and then decided they wanted to continue it in-house. So, it's a trend that we have seen across the industry.

Here at Akin Gump, we've worked with a number of clients over the years, and the way that I view it as our pro bono partner is that, with our commercial clients, I really want to be able to offer them our expertise in developing and managing pro bono programs.

As you heard from Jay and Rick, there's certainly a lot of expertise they have in-house, but neither Jay nor Rick are able to spend full time working on pro bono. And, so, they rely on us as outside counsel to come to them with ideas, to help them with best practices and management. In terms of some of the organizations we've worked with, they have ranged from the very large. We, years ago, helped Walmart, which has hundreds of lawyers mainly located in Arkansas, develop their pro bono practice. We started, really, from the ground up—they had done a little bit of pro bono, but we helped

them develop their internal pro bono policies. We helped them set up their signature project, which is a medical-legal partnership with Arkansas Children's Hospital, the first-ever corporate-sponsored medical-legal partnership. We drafted all the partnership agreements for that between the hospital, the legal aid organizations we identified to partner on that, and then Walmart.

And that's been going on now for more than a decade, Jose. So, then, it goes to even the smaller in-house counsel departments, like at SunPower, a solar energy company that came to us in 2018 during the separated families crisis at the border. We quickly went to them, did training on immigration law, and then they joined us at the border to represent separated families. And we successfully united several parents and children who had been separated. So, we really view this as an opportunity to work with our commercial clients on pro bono matters and to offer forth our expertise.

In terms of our relationship with AT&T, it's a little bit different from either of those examples I used, Walmart or SunPower, because AT&T, from at least the time that I started working with them in 2012, has always had a very robust pro bono program. They have had a lot of mergers over the years, which we have helped them with on the commercial side, and then added lawyers and added lawyers. But, as you've heard from Rick, even when they've added lawyers, they've often added lawyers who not just add to the commercial expertise, but add to the pro bono expertise of the organization.

So, around 2013, when the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA program, started, we started a partnership with AT&T in Dallas, which is, at that time, where the majority of their lawyers were located and went out to a high school on a Saturday and did DACA applications for hours with our AT&T lawyers. Many of those folks we represented are still here in the United States because of that.

And then the relationship has developed over the years and really has been a nice partnership where we've brought issues to each other. And I'll talk in a little bit about our Equal Justice Works Fellows, but that has been really a boon to the relationship. We have had, so far, two Equal Justice Works Fellows that we have sponsored. One, Danica Gonzalves at Veterans Consortium, working on veterans discharge upgrades, the other, Emily Heger, working at Human Rights Initiative in Dallas, working on gender-based asylum issues. So, we've been able to partner with both of them.

**Jose Garriga:**

Thank you, Steve. So, let's put those two together, those two halves. So, what benefits would you all say accrue to a company from having a pro bono partnership with a law firm? In some ways, we've described how it works; we'll take it to the next step. What are the benefits to the company from doing that? And, then, what makes for a successful in-house law firm pro bono partnership? Rick, if I could ask you to take the lead on this one.

**Rick McMurtry:**

I'm thinking about three different benefits that spring to my mind immediately, some to the client, some to the company and some to the firm. The first is just sharing the load. There are certain projects that one or two attorneys may not have enough time on their plates, really, to be able to handle and being able to work closely with a law firm that might have more resources to assist with those projects is helpful because then we don't necessarily have all of the resources that we need in-house. I don't even have a Westlaw password anymore. I couldn't tell you how to research anything on Westlaw these days. I need to lean on my law firm every now and again for some of those types of projects, just from a time management standpoint.

The second would be just exposure, exposure to one another. This is an opportunity for the law firm to introduce maybe a younger associate or partner who I haven't worked with in the past, for them to showcase some of their talents. It's also a chance for me to get to know some other skillsets that the attorneys that I work with might have that I just might not be aware of because the project is different than what I might do in my day-to-day opportunity.

And then the last benefit I think about is the ability to expand your practice. I participated in a program with the payment protection plan, something that I knew nothing about and would have felt relatively uncomfortable volunteering for on my own, but I partnered with a law firm that did have expertise in the area, and I really grew my knowledge of that program as a result. I've done leases for charities and nonprofits. I've done some employment work—a lot of work that isn't in my normal day-to-day responsibility. And it gives me an opportunity to broaden my skillsets through the pro bono work, but doing that in a responsible way where I'm partnering with a law firm attorney who actually is an expert in the subject matter and can help guide me on some of the issues that I may be less familiar with.

And then, as for what makes a successful partnership, I think you have to have the right project. It doesn't take two attorneys to do a form agreement that you've done 5,000 times in your career. So, it has to be the right type of project, and I think both parties coming in with a shared understanding of who's doing what, what the responsibilities are—you don't want to be stepping on each other's toes, and you want to be sure that you're taking on your fair share of the responsibility. This isn't a situation where the law firm does all the work, and the in-house attorney takes all the credit, certainly not the way we look at it. It's really sharing that work in a way that is fairly divided among the attorneys who are participating in that or other legal professionals.

I should say that's another opportunity that I didn't mention: we really encourage our non-attorney legal professionals to participate in pro bono work, and that gives them a lot of opportunity to do things that they might not otherwise have the opportunity to do both from a skillset standpoint and from a relationship standpoint within the department. I work with paralegals who are on my team, and, as I learn more about them, maybe as I have an opportunity down the road, that's somebody that I'm going to bear in mind that I wouldn't have otherwise had exposure to. So, I really find a lot of selfish benefits in doing pro bono work and pairing with law firms to do that work in addition to the obviously unselfish benefit of providing pro bono legal services to charities, nonprofits and individuals that need them.

**Jay Reidy:**

Let me add a little bit to what Rick said. By the way, I think that last point too is unquestionably important. There is no doubt in my mind that the partnership we have with firms like Akin Gump and others have led to direct representation of clients who need access to the legal services they have and would not have had it, but for the partnership between the AT&T lawyer and the law firm lawyer. And because that's what generated the representation, and we could spend this entire podcast talking about individual representations that occurred that brought justice in some fashion to the client, or at least attempted to do so, and the AT&T lawyer would not have had the opportunity to work on that without the partnership with the firm, and people received outstanding legal services as a result, which is what really drives us all, I think.

**Jose Garriga:**

Thank you, Jay and Rick. A reminder, listeners, you're listening to Akin Gump pro bono partner Steven Schulman; Rick McMurtry, senior vice president and associate general

counsel at WarnerMedia; and Jay Reidy, assistant vice president and senior legal counsel AT&T talking about law firm/in-house legal department pro bono partnerships.

So, we've spoken generally about these partnerships and their benefits. Let's look at one example, Steve previewed it in his comments earlier, of the AT&T-Akin Gump partnership specifically. Jay, could you tell us about Equal Justice Works and the Fellows you've selected and your thoughts on the direction of that program?

**Jay Reidy:**

So, this is something to highlight, and it comes directly as a result of our partnership with Akin Gump. So, Equal Justice Works obviously is a fairly well-known organization that takes recent graduates of law school—these are talented, extraordinary individuals who have committed to design and implement programs that bring about some form of legal service and social justice in a manner in some way that is directly linked to a pro bono program—and, in our case, we partner and fund financially these Fellows for a two-year fellowship. They're linked to an organization that is part of their program design. And then the next benefit that comes with that is they then not only get the chance to do these things, and to be paid for them, and to be supported in them, but they're introduced to lawyers of extraordinary experience and qualities, people like Steve and the lawyers at Akin Gump who can mentor them and also participate in the programs.

So, in the case of our two Fellows that we've sponsored thus far, Danica had a passion in the areas of veteran benefit adjudication, and designed a program, and there were lawyers at AT&T that immediately migrated to those programs themselves, perhaps part of a family or social structure that resonated with those veteran benefits requirements or not, but would not have had the opportunity to work with veterans to obtain benefit results but for Danica's work there, and it continues ongoing.

We got a case result a week ago that was through a partnership where Akin Gump and an AT&T lawyer. And that AT&T lawyer has since retired, the benefits continue to come about. I'll turn it back to Steve, but Emily Heger is our current Fellow, and her program is just the paradigm of what the program's intended to result in. Without going too deeply into it, as she says, she designs programs that bring benefits to individuals facing gender-based violence, gender-based challenges and/or domestic-based violence or challenges and are fleeing that and attempting to obtain asylum here in the United States.

In the case where Emily designed a program, they were prevented from crossing the border by the current policies in place, and they're in refugee camps in Mexico at the moment. Emily designed a program that allowed AT&T and WarnerMedia lawyers to partner with Akin Gump lawyers to remotely and virtually—part of our basic DNA at AT&T, by the way—contact and advise and guide them, these clients, as they file their applications for relief. They would not have had this legal resource available to them, but for Emily, and, to be honest, but for the work we did partnering with Akin Gump in order to be able to do that. And more than, I believe, the number is 15 lawyers on our side have participated in this program. That's 15 separate representations in the last six, eight months, which is an amazing outcome for somebody who graduated law school a year ago. And, well, maybe it's not, she's capable of that and so many more things, I'm sure.

**Steven Schulman:**

Let me pick up on something that Rick said before about the benefits of working with outside counsel on pro bono. And I would say one of the great benefits we've had with both Emily and Danica, our Equal Justice Works Fellows, has not been just the work we've done, but actually the selection process. So, Equal Justice Works for those who aren't familiar with it, is a program where they recruit and find young lawyers or about to

be law school graduates who propose projects in certain areas, partnering with legal aid organizations. These are new projects meant to expand services.

In fact, Jay and I are meeting a little later today to pick our next one. They give us something like a dozen different applications that we get to review, and then, from there, we'll interview about half a dozen people. And so, this is a chance for us to work together on something that isn't directly a pro bono project, it indirectly becomes one, but one of the most memorable instances was selecting Danica. We were sitting there in AT&T's headquarters in Dallas. We had had several people come in to interviews, very talented lawyers, and the last law student to come in was Danica Gonzalves, and, in fact, she didn't come in, she was by video.

Now, this was 2016, I believe, that this happened or maybe even 2016 or '17 that she came in. Doing the interview by video seemed somewhat exotic then compared to now, where they'll all be by video. So, she was the last one to come. We were a little bit worried that she would be disadvantaged by being the one person not in the room and by video.

And Danica told this story about representing a woman who had been deployed to Afghanistan in one of our armed services, and Danica had actually been working with Veterans Consortium while in law school and represented this soldier who had been deployed in Afghanistan, was driving a Humvee and an IED went off underneath the Humvee, and she was gravely injured, mainly injuries to her leg, was medevaced out of Afghanistan, eventually made her way to Bethesda Naval Hospital here just outside of Washington, D.C. Miraculously recovered enough that she was redeployed to Afghanistan.

Not surprisingly, when she was redeployed, she started to exhibit symptoms of PTSD and was eventually engaged in conduct that led to her being charged with a court martial to be separated. And she was separated from the military on what's called an other than honorable discharge, meaning that she could not even call herself a veteran at that point, much less access benefits, including—and this is what outraged just all in that room that day in Dallas—including medical benefits.

So, in other words, she had been injured in Afghanistan, gravely, and had engaged in conduct a direct result of mental health issues she had as a result of that, and our government was going to say that she was not going to get the medical care that she needed. Danica told us how she had undertaken that case in what's called a veterans discharge upgrade, which is what her program was about. And I'll never forget being there with the AT&T lawyers and hearing Danica talk about that. And that is really the essence of what this partnership is. And as Jay said, we could talk for hours about the work that Danica and Emily have done and the people that they have helped.

But in terms of our relationship, I know that that Belinda Boling at AT&T and I, who were in that room together that day, neither of us will forget that moment. And, frankly, it is a really modest investment for us to make. I think together we co-sponsor a Fellow, it costs us \$65,000 a year. And when you're talking about a law firm the size of Akin Gump and a corporation the size of AT&T, that really is a small investment, and we get so much back from that.

And, so, one thing I want to say to those listening is if you want to make a huge impact, and if you're an in-house counsel and want to partner with a law firm on an Equal Justice Works Fellow, I can't imagine something you could do better that would have a bigger

impact. And AT&T has been great about working with us with these Fellows. There are some Fellows that get sponsored and then they go off and do great work, but they don't involve the sponsors necessarily. It's not a requirement of the program. But AT&T has jumped in with Emily and with Danica, and our lawyers have been thrilled to be able to work with their in-house counsel colleagues, who they work with on multibillion-dollar transactions, and then they get to work on something a little more close to home. And, so, I think that's been a tremendous benefit for the AT&T and Akin Gump relationship, but I'll just say it's been a tremendous benefit for all of us who have been able to be exposed to both Emily and Danica.

**Jose Garriga:** Thank you, Steve. Rick, let me just follow up a question for you on this that had already been mentioned, which was the Feeding America's voter engagement initiative. I know that you all have partnered with a firm to do that. Can you tell us a little bit about that project?

**Rick McMurtry:** Sure, I would love to. As Jay mentioned early on, and I mentioned, most of our ideas come from the ground up. And, so, there were a number of attorneys at a division of the company called Otter Media who said, "Hey, we really want to support voter engagement. We want to do something about helping to get out the vote." So, I took that to our pro bono committee, and we looked around at different projects that we could potentially work on and settled on Feeding America. Feeding America operates food banks across the United States. And we partnered with a firm to do two aspects of the project, but one I like to focus on is the FAQ section for each one of these food banks to answer questions from their constituents about voting. We needed to look at the state law in 26 different states, and we had about two weeks to do it, because the election was coming, and we had to get these FAQs out.

And, so, we had 30 volunteers across AT&T WarnerMedia volunteer on the project and help to put together these FAQs with questions like, "I've been evicted. Where do I go vote once I've been evicted since I no longer have that residence?" Or "I have maybe a criminal record of some kind, and can I still vote?" "Can I vote by mail in my state and where do I vote?" All of those questions differ state by state, and it took an army of people to get together quickly and get those answers in the hands of the Feeding America volunteers to answer the questions for their constituents.

And I think it's a resounding success and certainly fulfilling to every member of the team who participated in that at both the firm and that AT&T WarnerMedia. And from that, again, it's an area of law that I know nothing about. Well, that's not true, I know a little bit about it. I didn't know as much as I knew after participating in the project. And, so, it was a truly fulfilling project from feeling patriotic and helping people get out and vote and just enhancing my knowledge around better access laws and things like that, as well as that of every other volunteer that we had.

**Jose Garriga:** Thank you Rick. Alright, so just to close, and I think that this question has been answered obliquely and implicitly in much of what you've said, but I just want to see if maybe we can boil it down a bit for takeaways for listeners. Basically, what has pro bono work meant for individual lawyers at AT&T? What really is the benefit? We've talked about the benefit in general. For you personally and for people you've known, what has the pro bono work meant to you all?

**Jay Reidy:** I think I'd like to answer that question in two different ways. First of all, what is pro bono work? How's it impacted individual lawyers at AT&T? The first way to answer that question is we can do that pro bono work. Rick mentioned, and Steve mentioned, when



you're in a law firm, these pro bono structures are somewhat more available. When you go in-house in a corporate legal department, it becomes less structured and less visible. And, so, having these programs available to be able to do pro bono, just the fact that we can do it is exciting, it brings a level of work benefits that goes beyond our day-to-day work, bringing value to the company, but also bringing value to society and honoring our commitments as lawyers, as professionals, it allows us to demonstrate that.

There's individual benefits too. I'll tell one very brief story. We have a lawyer in our office whose son had several profound physical disabilities, but still goes to school. And the lawyer was explained to me the many difficulties in access and technologies that he faced as his parents tried to gain him the benefits that he is legally entitled to. That conversation sprouted about a year later into a program in our office in Chicago, at least, where we man a helpline for parents seeking legal support, legal advice for the same types of issues, where their children are meeting with gaps in their educational plans, physical access, limitations, the many things that are encountered by families that are in that position.

The fact that we are able to do that work, and also that a colleague sees us doing that work and bringing about the benefits that happen for families and individuals of similar circumstances has a profoundly positive, enriching, collegial benefit that just makes you feel good to be able to work on those types of things and to be able to think that you're helping not only the individuals in need, but somebody you know and work with day in and day out.

**Rick McMurtry:**

I'll echo that. I think it just feeds the soul, doesn't it? I feel like you're doing some good in the world. And I think one of the brilliant things about the pro bono programs that we participated in is the variety of client groups that we've been able to service. And I know for me personally, I have two adopted sons. My legal assistant adopted her children out of the foster care program. We often partner together to help foster children or organizations that benefit foster children. It's something that's personal to both of us, and it feels like we're giving back because we've gotten so much out of that system. And I relish the opportunities, frankly, to give back in that way, because that system gave so much to me and that it gave me my children.

So, I think pro bono is the least I can do, and it makes me feel like I'm making a difference. And, frankly, everybody else who's engaged in is making a difference, whether it's as simple as making sure that organization gets their trademark cleared, or it's as important to the organization as getting that payment protection plan loan forgiveness that enabled it to continue on throughout 2020. Seeing the impact of what you do just really feeds you.

**Jay Reidy:**

If you wouldn't mind one more story, and that is in our Dallas office, we have a strong set of lawyers practicing in areas of immigration and asylum cases. But, at one point, one of the lawyers decided that they wanted to work to bring literally direct benefits to individuals in need. We joined with one of our internal resource groups, HACEMOS, to collect food, clothing items, all the different things that are necessary for families to live, to survive. And this spread out, not just in the legal department, but beyond to an entire population within the Dallas-based workforce, collecting those things and then transporting them into the neighborhoods and even across the border to those in need. This pro bono activity joined us together with other employees across the company in a common purpose for a common good and to bring benefits to the individuals that needed well beyond what even the legal services that we were already volunteering to provide.

**Jose Garriga:** Thank you, Jay. Steve, I'll give you the last word here. Obviously, by dint of your work, the value of pro bono is something very near and dear to you. If you could just boil it down in terms of the typical Akin Gump lawyer—Jay and Rick have spoken eloquently about what it is that both they and lawyers at their firms have benefited from, and what they've gotten out of doing this type of work—what would you say is the typical Akin Gump lawyer's pro bono experiences in brief?

**Steven Schulman:** So, I think it's not just Akin Gump lawyers, and I'm very proud of our profession that we have, in the quarter century that I've been practicing law, have really come a very long way to making pro bono something that we all expect to do. And I think it is in the very essence of what it is to be a lawyer, and whether you're working on a billion-dollar merger or working to save someone who's fleeing gender-based violence, what you are responsible for as a lawyer is helping somebody else with a problem. And, again, sometimes those problems are incredibly complex issues of tax law, sometimes they are just more-direct issues of how do we get somebody across the border here in the United States?

And I think our lawyers, and I know the AT&T lawyers I've worked with, all see that as really just a continuum of who they are as lawyers, not as something that is separate from what they're doing. And I've got to say, I've got a lot of hope for the coming generations of lawyers, not just because of the Equal Justice Works Fellows that we've sponsored and not just because of the partnerships between law firms and in-house counsel. There's a new organization called The Association of Corporate Pro Bono that has come online, that has hundreds of organizations have joined in to have in-house counsel coordinating their pro bono activities much like we do on the law firm side through the Association of Pro Bono Counsel of which I am currently co-president. And, so, I think there is an incredible amount of activity and expectation out there that we will continue this work, not just in our own silos, but, really, as a broader legal community, to make sure that we honor the best of the legal profession.

**Jose Garriga:** Thank you. Listeners, you've been listening to Akin Gump pro bono partner Steven Schulman; Rick McMurtry, senior vice president and associate general counsel at WarnerMedia; and Jay Reidy, assistant vice president and senior legal counsel at AT&T. Thank you all for making the time to appear on the show today and share with our audience insights into the workings of in-house pro bono partnerships with outside counsel. As I think has been said more than once, this episode could have been easily twice as long because the stories are fantastic, and similarly the work that you all are doing.

And thank you, listeners, as always, for your time and attention. Please make sure to subscribe to *OnAir with Akin Gump* at your favorite podcast provider to ensure you do not miss an episode. We're on, among others, iTunes, YouTube and Spotify.

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Until next time.

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