Capital Punishment

Attorneys in Baker Donelson's Alabama and Tennessee offices have joined the fight for justice in their states' capital punishment systems. In 2010, a Nashville based team won an order for a new sentencing hearing for inmate Christopher Davis because Davis' death sentence had been wrongly based on an invalid aggravating circumstance. Our team continues to represent Davis in the appeal process. In 2011, our Birmingham office won a new trial for James Allen Harrison when, after a lengthy round of appeals and remands, the trial court ruled that Harrison had established extensive misconduct by one of his jurors. Our Pro Bono Shareholder, Lisa W. Borden, also frequently represents amici in support of death row inmates' post-conviction appeals in the Alabama courts and in the U.S. Supreme Court.



courtesy of Sherry Dolan Ormond

Homeless Court

Sherry Dolan, Of Counsel in our New Orleans office, coordinates and manages the operations of the New Orleans Homeless Court. This innovative program brings together the efforts of judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys and homeless service providers to help resolve the cases that may keep individuals mired in homelessness. The Court also addresses charges that have arisen out of an individual's homeless condition. such as obstructing the sidewalk or public intoxication. At the request of U.S. District Judge Jay Zainey, Sherry took the helm of the program and keeps it running smoothly so that when the court convenes each month. the homeless individuals can put their legal matters behind them and move on with rebuilding their lives.



For More Information, Contact:

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Pro Bono

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The Rules of Professional Conduct of the various states where our offices are located require the following language: THIS IS AN ADVERTISEMENT. IF YOU HAVE ALREADY HIRED OR RETAINED A LAWYER IN THIS MATTER, PLEASE DISREGARD THIS MESSAGE. No representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers. © 2013, BAKER DONELSON, All Rights Reserved.

BAKER DONELSON

EXPAND YOUR EXPECTATIONS"

Baker Donelson Pro Bono

At Baker Donelson, we're expanding our expectations when it comes to pro bono service. Since 2008, we've more than doubled the yearly number of hours our attorneys devote to pro bono work, and we're aiming even higher. With more than 14,000 hours during 2012 and over 200 new pro bono matters each year, Baker Donelson's attorneys are making invaluable contributions to the cause of access to justice.

Highlighted below are just a few examples of our pro bono projects.



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Rabon

Homeless Experience Legal Protection (HELP) Program

Attorneys in our Atlanta, Birmingham, Jackson, Memphis, Nashville and New Orleans offices are proud to be active volunteers for the HELP program, which operates regularly recurring legal clinics at homeless shelters in more than 16 cities nationwide. We've worked with the program's founder, U.S. District Judge Jay C. Zainey (Eastern District of Louisiana) to start several of the clinics from scratch and we continue to act as coordinators as well as volunteers for HELP's Birmingham, Memphis and Nashville locations. HELP is unique because it brings legal services directly to the homeless individuals in the shelter, providing more comfortable and secure access to legal services and avoiding the practical problems, such as transportation, that often keep homeless individuals from getting the help they need. For more information about the HELP program, visit www.homelesslegalprotection.com.

Baker Donelson Non Profit Institute (BDNI)

Our communities are home to thousands of nonprofit organizations that address a wide range of health, arts, education, charitable and community needs. All are faced with complicated and constantly changing compliance issues and legal requirements. Most have voluntary boards of directors who need to be knowledgeable about a variety of laws and regulations affecting them, but also have shoestring budgets and therefore lack the legal counsel they need to avoid well-intentioned but risky guesses on important issues. To help our community nonprofits to meet these important needs, we formed the Baker Donelson Nonprofit Institute - a program in which our attorneys provide these basic legal services on a pro bono basis, allowing nonprofit organizations to conserve valuable resources and apply them to meeting their goals.



Photo of Tony courtesy of Big Cat Rescue

Team Helps Free Tony the Truck Stop Tiger

A team of attorneys in our New Orleans office provided pro bono assistance to the Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) in its fight to secure the release of a Siberian-Bengal tiger that has been confined as a roadside exhibit at a Louisiana truck stop for more than ten years. The attorneys worked with ALDF's legal counsel in successful litigation seeking to terminate and prevent reissuance of an annual permit that allows the owner of Grosse Tete's Tiger Truck Stop to display the Tony the Truck Stop Tiger, paving the way for him to be released to a new home in a wildlife rescue preserve. ALDF retained Baker Donelson because they wanted a legal team with experience and proven success in the areas of administrative and statutory construction and, of course, with a big heart and a willingness to go all in for Tony. To learn more about the work of ALDF, visit www.aldf.org.



Photo courtesy of Caldwell Collins

HAAVEN

Helping Advocate Against Violent Environments Now - "HAAVEN" - is an initiative that combines two Baker Donelson priorities, the Women's Initiative and the Pro Bono Program, by providing legal services to victims of domestic violence at the YWCA Weaver Domestic Violence Center. Weaver is the largest domestic violence shelter in the state of Tennessee. Through the HAAVEN program, Baker Donelson has partnered with Weaver to provide legal clinics and legal services to victims of domestic violence. The Nashville Women's Initiative has been actively involved in HAAVEN, holding several legal clinics and taking on countless clients since the program's founding in the Spring of 2010.