

Press Releases



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Nelson Mullins' West Virginia Office Wins Statewide Pro Bono Service Award

The firm's West Virginia office is pleased to announce it has received the 2024 Distinguished Pro Bono Service Award from the West Virginia State Bar and Legal Aid of West Virginia (LAWV). The award was presented at the State Bar's Annual Meeting at the Greenbrier Resort on April 3.

Legal Aid of WV is a nonprofit organization that provides free legal services and advocacy across the state, focused on providing equal justice to West Virginia residents. The annual award recognizes a firm that has performed outstanding pro bono work. The presentation of this award highlights the firm's ongoing commitment to providing pro bono legal services that address unmet needs and extend critical services to underserved communities.

In nominating Nelson Mullins for the award, LAWV highlighted the firm's work mentoring law students from Vanderbilt Law School and West Virginia College of Law at an estate planning clinic in rural Wayne County. Led by partner Randy L. Saunders and associate Jonah Samples, a team of five attorneys and two paralegals assisted the community by providing simple wills.

"The West Virginia office is honored to receive this recognition from Legal Aid of WV," Marc Williams, West Virginia's office managing partner, said. "We recognize that as lawyers, we have an obligation to assist those who cannot afford to hire a lawyer. Fortunately, Nelson Mullins has a culture that encourages all lawyers to engage in pro bono work. At our firm, there is no distinction between paying clients and pro bono clients. Our responsibility is to work for all our clients to achieve justice."

Samples was recently reelected as a LAWV board member, further solidifying the firm's relationship with the organization.

“Our office has a major focus on pro bono work, and it’s a good feeling to have Legal Aid recognize that work,” Samples said. “We’re trying to help the people in West Virginia that need it.”

In addition to the LAWV clinic in Wayne County, the West Virginia office also spearheaded efforts on behalf of the public library and park systems in a lengthy dispute over an excess tax levy with the local board of education. Additionally, Nelson Mullins attorneys, led by Randy Saunders, provided over 1,000 hours of pro bono legal support to help convert Huntington’s historic Prichard Hotel into 108 units of affordable housing for low-income seniors. This \$50.8 million revitalization effort is the largest historic tax credit project in the history of the state.

The office also assisted with the nonprofit formation and governance to create the Central Appalachian Highway Development Authority and provides general counsel services for the statutorily created economic development engine to grow the King Coal Highway corridor in southern West Virginia.

Established in 1897, Nelson Mullins is a full-service Am Law 100 firm of more than 1,000 attorneys, policy advisors, and professionals with offices across the United States. The firm’s pro bono program focuses on addressing critical issues such as children’s rights, community revitalization, affordable housing, protection against discrimination and violence, environmental justice, and the advancement of civil and human rights. Through these initiatives, Nelson Mullins is dedicated to fostering a more equitable and just society. For more information, visit www.nelsonmullins.com.

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