

center news

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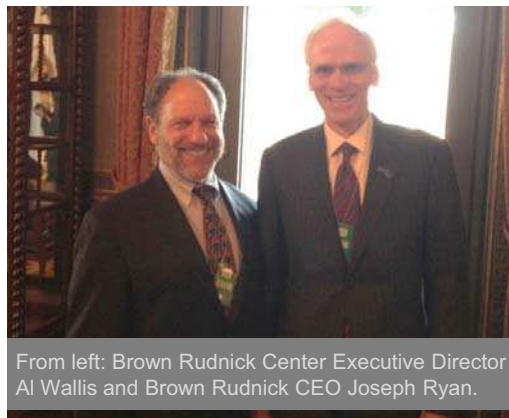
Photo: The Association of Pro Bono Counsel meeting in Washington, DC with Vice President Biden.

Brown Rudnick Goes to the White House

Brown Rudnick Among Law Firm Leaders that Participated in Meeting with Vice President Biden to Discuss Pro Bono Legal Services for the Poor

On Wednesday, September 19, 2012, the board of directors of the Association of Pro Bono Counsel (“APBCo”) and senior management from board members’ firms, met with Vice President Biden and White House staff in the Vice President’s Ceremonial Office in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building in Washington D.C. Joseph Ryan, CEO of Brown Rudnick LLP and Al Wallis, Brown Rudnick Center for the Public Interest Executive Director and the co-President of APBCO, helped to lead the meeting. The Vice President convened the meeting to focus on access to justice issues and the role that pro bono counsel at law firms play in the delivery of legal services to the poor. The meeting attendees discussed and celebrated collaborations between pro bono

counsel and other stakeholders, including legal services organizations, bar associations and the judiciary. The participants committed to a long-term project to improve law firm efforts to expand access to justice, and the Vice President commended their commitment to increasing pro bono services.



From left: Brown Rudnick Center Executive Director Al Wallis and Brown Rudnick CEO Joseph Ryan.

in this issue...

Cover Story	p1
Grants Awarded	p2
Website Announcement	p2
Grantee News	p3
Community Involvement	p5
Recent Pro Bono Representation	p6
Profiles in Pro Bono	p7

Who said that?
“The Center...reflects the values of the Firm Community: charity, compassion, and a commitment to finding solutions to the problems surrounding us”
 – Robert J. Stark, Brown Rudnick Partner

THE
 BROWN
 RUDNICK
 CHARITABLE
 FOUNDATION
 CORP.

Recent Community Grant Recipients

Hartford Students Are Nature Bound

The Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation awarded a Community Grant to the SPHERE Summer Program at the Watkinson School in Hartford, CT which provides academic enrichment to 70 Hartford children from low-income families, entering grades 1 - 5. Specifically, the grant was used for a field trip to Nature's Classroom, a non-profit environmental educational outdoor classroom with 15 sites in New England and New York.

"The SPHERE children went to Nature's Classroom in Colebrook, CT, which has over 500 acres of woodlands offering them a unique, hands-on environmental educational experience. Students learned about geodesic dome construction, meteorology, ecology, map & compass use, and much more. This trip afforded the students a rare opportunity to leave the city and experience an outdoor educational environment where they applied classroom concepts in the natural world."

- Liz Cameron, Program Director, SPHERE Summer Program, and grant applicant

There's an App for that!

The Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation awarded a Community Grant to New York's Sheridan Academy for Young Leaders for the purchase of four iPads that will be used as a technological learning tool for young immigrant students.

"The iPads will empower my students to take ownership of their learning. We will use apps for mathematics, science, social studies, reading, writing and more. Students will be able to play games that teach them new skills, and they will use the iPads in cooperative learning groups as well as independently."

- Stephanie Sekaz, Sheridan Academy for Young Leaders and grant applicant

Opera Anyone?

P.S. 193, an elementary school in Brooklyn, New York, received a Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation Community Grant. The grant will allow up to 150 of the school's students to participate in "Opera Is Elementary," a New York City opera program for elementary-school students. With the Foundation's support, the children will hear live, high-quality music performances that aim to inspire them to partake in more cultural offerings in New York City.

"Our school has participated in the New York City Opera program for students, Opera Is Elementary, for many years. However, because of budget constraints, we have had to drop this program. With support from the Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation, we can renew our participation and expose our students to a form of music they likely have never experienced. This particular opera relates to the literacy curriculum as well, and students will study the book Alice in Wonderland with their classroom teachers."

- Grant applicant and P.S. 193 teacher, Laura Miriam Strasberg

Accepting Applications for Community Grants

Each month the Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation accepts applications for educational grants to support inner-city educators through its Community Grant Program. Created to support front-line educators who often do not have a voice in funding decisions, the Community Grants subsidize small, concrete projects, which will improve inner-city education within Boston, Hartford, Providence, New York, Washington DC, or London within the coming year. The grant applications and an explanation of the program can be found at

<http://www.brownrudnickcenter.com/foundation/community-grant-application>

Sneak Peak... New Center Website!

This November, the Center will be launching a newly designed website. The new site will continue to share the mission, goals and initiatives of our pro bono, charitable giving and community service. Stay tuned!



Recent Relationship Grant Check Presentations



Alliance for Inclusion and Prevention Relationship Grant check presentation.



The Science Club for Girls Relationship Grant check presentation.

In Boston

The Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation recently presented Relationship Grant checks to two of this year's Boston grantees, the Science Club for Girls and Alliance for Inclusion and Prevention. The Science Club for Girls will use grant dollars to support a program providing girls with the opportunity to attend weekly science clubs and engage in hands-on topical science and engineering explorations. Alliance Inclusion Prevention will use the grant to support afterschool/summer programs serving students with mental illnesses at high risk of academic failure.



Brown Rudnick CEO Joe Ryan, U.S. Capitol Historical Society Vice President Rebecca Evans, and Brown Rudnick Executive Director Al Wallis at the U.S. Capitol Historical Society Relationship Grant Check Presentation.

In Washington, DC

For the fourth consecutive year, the Foundation has provided a Relationship Grant to the United States Capitol Historical Society for historical and educational programming in Washington, D.C. middle schools, which connects in-class teaching about the Constitution with the student "We the People Constitution Tour" of our nation's Capitol. Additionally, the grant funds the "Constitutional Challenge," an essay contest created by Brown Rudnick for students who took the tour.

Foundation Grantee, Ready2Learn's New Website Features Our Support



READY TO
LEARN
PROVIDENCE

The Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation helps support the work of Ready2Learn's (R2LP) 35 AmeriCorps members at libraries, early-care settings, pediatric clinics and the R2LP offices. The law firm also provides valuable pro bono legal support to R2LP and its parent organization, The Providence Plan. Learn more here <http://r2lp.org/about-us/funders/>.

To learn more about the 2012-13 Brown Rudnick Foundation Relationship Grant Recipients please visit <http://www.brownrudnickcenter.com/foundation/relationship-grants>

Brown Rudnick Summer Associates Support Thompson Island

In August, Brown Rudnick's Boston Summer Associates along with Center Executive Director Al Wallis and Center Coordinator Kellie Cahill participated in what has become an annual summer event: the Thompson Island/Outward Bound Brown Rudnick Volunteer day. Thompson Island receives a Relationship Grant from the Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation to support the *Connections Program*. This program allows thousands of Boston middle school students to visit Thompson Island and participate in academic achievement and character building programming. Our team this year met with students on the island and also volunteered to remove carefully selected trees which were turned into wood chips and then used to pave a road.



Brown Rudnick Summer Associates and Charitable Foundation Directors Dan Brown, Angelo Thalassinou and Ben Welch went rowing with Relationship Grantee The Hull Lifesaving Museum. Brown Rudnick Center Executive Director Al Wallis, Center Coordinator Kellie Cahill, and Brown Rudnick's Recruiting Coordinator Pam Bolotin also participated in this activity.



The Village for Families & Children in Hartford

Brown Rudnick Hartford paralegal, Carlene Mercier, is volunteering her time to be on The Girl Within Luncheon Committee which is a fundraising effort in support of the Village of Families and Children. The Brown Rudnick Hartford Partners are donating \$1,500 to be a Corporate Friend Sponsor. The Village for Families and Children are a current Relationship Grant recipient.

The annual Girl Within Luncheon celebrates the commitment the community has to improving the well-being of at-risk young women and girls in the greater Hartford area. Proceeds from the event will enable the Village to deliver transformative programs to young women and girls who need guidance and inspiration to develop into independent, healthy adults, able to give back to their communities.

<http://www.brownrudnickcenter.com/foundation/recipient.asp>

The Mark Twain House in Hartford

The Firm's Hartford office donated to the first-ever pizza promotion in support of the organization's programs to preserve and share the invaluable legacy of Mark Twain. The Mark Twain House also received a relationship grant from the Foundation this year.

<http://www.brownrudnickcenter.com/foundation/recipient.asp>

**September 11th Remembrance:
We Have Not Forgotten**

In honor of September 11th, the Brown Rudnick Center for the Public Interest coordinated remembrance activities in the Boston, New York and Hartford Offices. Brown Rudnick's Boston Office and New York Office visited their local firehouses to give thanks to some of the many Firefighters that help keep their communities safe, and the Hartford Office cheered on participants in the Ride to Recovery Race in which proceeds support injured veterans.

“We appreciate the generous acts of remembrance that people like yourselves did to mark the eleventh anniversary of September 11, 2001.”

- Thomas Bryne, Lieutenant Engine Company 65, NYC



Baking for Breast Cancer Awareness

Once again the Brown Rudnick Boston Library staff and Brown Rudnick's Making Strides Walking team (Julia Forbes, Linda Charron & Diana Pierce) had a successful bake sale, raising \$739.00 for the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer 2012 campaign. Brown Rudnick attorneys and staff are also participating in the Walking for Wellness Campaign.



Brown Rudnick Summer Associates and Brown Rudnick's Kellie Cahill helped prepare, serve and clean up lunch at Rosie's Place, a woman's shelter in Boston.



Brown Rudnick Answers a Call to Protect

For many years, through the Brown Rudnick Center for the Public Interest, Brown Rudnick has been supporting the national Call to Protect program. Call to Protect distributes new and recycled pre-programmed emergency wireless phones free of charge to domestic violence victims. The Firm routinely donates phones and accessories (including chargers and extra batteries) every 2 - 3 months. Brown Rudnick attorney Dan Brown coordinates this effort.

**Hartford Brown Rudnick Attorney
Phil Small Joins Hartford Legal Aid Board**

pro bono: recent legal representation

Urging SCOTUS to Affirm Race Conscious Admissions at University of Texas

Brown Rudnick joined with a coalition of Boston law firms and other organizations in becoming a signatory to the Boston Bar Association's (BBA) amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Fisher v. University of Texas, et. al.* At issue is whether the Court's prior decisions interpreting the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, including *Grutter v. Bollinger*, permits the University of Texas at Austin's consideration of race when making undergraduate admissions decisions. The Brief, supporting the University's position, was filed in the Supreme Court.

This landmark case will have far-reaching implications for all law firms committed to advancing diversity in the legal profession. As the Amicus Brief asserts, upholding the lower court's decision will go a long way towards "ensuring that undergraduate institutions as well as law schools have the tools they need to admit racially and ethnically diverse classes of students is critically important in terms of our goal of achieving greater diversity and inclusion within the legal profession."

A String of Victories in Unemployment Benefit Appeals

The Firm continues a multi-year tradition in partnership with the Volunteer Lawyers Project in Boston and with Legal Services of Manhattan. Each summer associate in our Boston and New York offices provide direct representation to at least one client in an appeal of the denial of his/her unemployment benefits. Many of these clients are in crisis, and the unemployment check may be their only financial lifeline for the moment. Brown Rudnick attorneys May Orenstein and Aaron Lauchheimer coordinate the unemployment benefit work in New York, while Ben Welch has coordinated in Boston.

"Congratulations to you and the team Aaron; this is Brown Rudnick's fourth win on difficult cases. Each of your clients separated due to illness and desperately needed UI in their time of need – great work!"

– Julia Rosner of Manhattan Legal Services



In photo from left: Brown Rudnick's Marek Krzyzowski, Matthew Hyner, Sigmund Wissner-Gross, Elnaz Zarrini and Laura Johnson.

Applewhite v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Our legal team submitted an Amicus Brief to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in a challenge to newly enacted "voter ID" laws. The brief proved influential in the court's remand of the case, and subsequent issuance of a preliminary injunction prohibiting the law from taking effect until adequate measures are in place to insure that eligible voters and those who want to register are not denied the opportunity to vote. Sig Wissner-Gross, Matt Hyner, Laura Johnson, Marek Krzyzowski, Ben Welch and Elnaz Zarrini were presented with a Brown Rudnick Center for the Public Interest Pro Bono Accolade for their extraordinary work on this Impact Project.



In photo from left: Brown Rudnick's Ben Welch and Al Wallis.

"I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the pro bono services your firm provided for my unemployment hearing today. The Associates were fantastic to work with!!! They made me feel completely comfortable, confident and prepared to present my case. It is so comforting to know that in my time of need there are highly intelligent, competent and sympathetic professionals willing to generously donate their time and legal expertise. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!"

- Brown Rudnick Client referred by the Volunteer Lawyers Project



ADDRESSING THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN SUDAN

Imagine that you and your family were forced to live in a cave to hide from government bombs. Imagine that you were on the brink of starvation with nowhere to go and no one to help.

This is not the premise of a new Hollywood movie, but the actual living conditions of thousands of Sudanese citizens. These individuals are fighting for survival and are unable to bring their grievance against the government of Sudan before domestic, regional, or international judicial or political institutions.

How can major law firms like Brown Rudnick help?

In the spring of 2012, Brown Rudnick began providing pro bono legal representation to the Center for American Progress' Enough Project, a nonprofit organization that fights to end genocide and crimes against humanity, in its campaign to stop the highly publicized atrocities taking place in Sudan. On April 19th, on behalf of the Enough Project, Brown Rudnick filed a complaint against the Republic of Sudan, alleging violations of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights with respect to Sudanese Civilians in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States. This was accompanied by a two-volume appendix of evidence and other supporting materials, the filing of which was timed to coincide with the Commission's Ordinary Session, which ran from April 18 to May 2, 2012.

Brown Rudnick Washington D.C. partner, Paul Enzinna, and associates James Bair and Lauren Curry, are serving as lead counsel. We asked them for their insights into this humanitarian crisis and for an update on the case.

How did you get involved with the Enough Project?

Jamie Bair has had a relationship with the Enough Project for several years, now. Primarily, this was limited to occasional blog posts regarding the legal implications of Sudan's actions under international law. In early 2012, when the attacks on civilians in South Kordofan and Blue Nile began, he was working on another piece regarding the ways in which these atrocities violated the Geneva Conventions. But as the assaults on civilians continued, and as the Government of Sudan began driving people from their homes and trying to deliberately starve them to death, it became clear that a blog about how these actions were illegal would not be sufficient.

Working with Jennifer Christian, Enough's Sudan analyst, Jamie proposed using litigation as a way of drawing further attention to the atrocities being committed by the Sudanese Government. When he brought the idea to Paul Enzinna and Lauren Curry, they reacted with the passion and enthusiasm that have always characterized Brown Rudnick's commitment to *pro bono* representation. With the help and support of Brown Rudnick Partner Mark Tuohey and the members of the Pro Bono Committee, Brown Rudnick committed to jump into this representation "with both feet," seeing an opportunity to make a difference in a truly terrible situation. *Story continued on page 8...*

Why did Brown Rudnick file this petition?

The short answer is because we could, and because someone had to. The conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile is only the latest chapter in a long history of oppression and atrocities committed by the Government of Sudan. Sudan's president, Omar al-Bashir, is wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide – the only time in history that this has happened with a sitting head of state. But these latest attacks in South Kordofan and Blue Nile have triggered remarkably little action on the part of the international community. In the nearly one and a half years since the Government began attacking civilians in these two states, more than 870,000 people have been either severely affected by the fighting, become internally displaced within Sudan, or been forced to flee the country entirely and become refugees. The number of casualties is nearly impossible to verify, because the Government of Sudan refuses to allow international aid organizations into the affected areas. And now, the Government is using starvation as a weapon against its own people, by refusing to allow even basic humanitarian aid to reach the civilians who have been impacted by the fighting. The Enough Project is at the forefront of the fight to end these crimes, and it advocates in every arena where it can raise awareness and create change, from college campuses to the highest levels of the U.S. Government and the United Nations. But up until this point, they had not used pure litigation as part of their strategy.

That is why Brown Rudnick decided to file this petition: because we had the skills, we had the resources, and the need was there. It's not every day that attorneys – or anyone else for that matter – have an opportunity to do something concrete to combat mass atrocities. The Firm had recently concluded a project with the American Bar Association's Center for Human Rights in which Brown Rudnick attorneys created a litigation handbook that is designed to be used by lawyers around the world to bring claims for violations of international human rights law. The skills and experiences gained in that project, combined with the Enough Project's unparalleled experience working on the ground in Sudan and South Sudan, meant that the Firm was perfectly positioned to put theory into practice by bringing this case.

What are the key legal issues involved in this matter?

The case has been brought at the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Banjul, The Gambia. For a number of reasons, this was the only venue available to our clients, but it presents fantastic opportunities for creative advocacy and for putting on record all of the evidence against the Sudanese government.

There are multiple issues in this case, but they mainly center around Article 4 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which protects the Right to Life. In interpreting exactly what this means, the Commission looks to other sources of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, such as the Geneva Conventions. Although these international protections have existed for more than half a century, it is actually very difficult to find a forum in which an NGO like the Enough Project can enforce them. The structure of the African Commission gives The Enough Project standing to bring suit on behalf of the victims in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, who cannot physically make it to a courthouse themselves for fear of being killed. It also allows Brown Rudnick, in arguing that Sudan has violated Article 4, to fully articulate the ways in which the Government has violated, not only the African Charter, but also a number of other provisions of international law.



What impact can a major firm like Brown Rudnick have on this human rights injustice?

Having a major international law firm behind this case has already lent it some additional *gravitas* at the Commission, and this has helped us to move it along more quickly than matters usually progress there. Moreover, having Brown Rudnick as *pro bono* counsel has allowed the Enough Project to build a sophisticated, exhaustive case by having the firm do what we do best: combine precise, persuasive legal reasoning with the most compelling evidence available. *Story continued on page 9...*

...Story continued from page 8

The case has also benefitted from the weight of Brown Rudnick's existing reputation. Mark Tuohey, a partner in the White Collar Defense group in Washington, D.C., co-authored an op-ed with John Bradshaw, the Enough Project's Executive Director. The piece ran just before the Commission first considered our case, and it received positive attention both in the West and on the African continent. The benefit of simply raising the case's profile like that cannot be underestimated. In a challenging forum like the African Commission, which receives hundreds of complaints but has chronic resource problems, you have to be able to use many different types of advocacy to serve your client's needs and get them the attention they deserve. That is precisely what Brown Rudnick is doing here.

Any victory that we are able to achieve at the Commission will be one more tool in the Enough Project's toolbox for bringing a halt to these atrocities. Because, when you are talking to world leaders and other decision-makers and trying to convince them to act, it is one thing to point out that the Government of Sudan's actions are immoral and despicable. It is something else to be able to say with authority that they are illegal under international law and that the world has a legal, in addition to a moral obligation to intervene. Providing that distinction is something that Brown Rudnick is uniquely suited, and quite happy to do.

Why is pro bono work important to you?

We are all remarkably fortunate to lead the lives that we do. As trained attorneys working for a major law firm, we are afforded privileges and opportunities that most people around the world can only dream of. And much of our good fortune is directly connected back to our law degrees. When the practice of law has given you so much, you have a moral obligation to give back, not just with money, but with the skills that you have learned and which so many people around the world need. Pro bono representation is an opportunity, not just to tackle exciting and innovative legal issues such as the ones in this case, but to fulfill that obligation.

Who Said That?

"Pro bono cases are not only a chance to help people who might otherwise not have legal representation; they can be among the most satisfying work you will do as a lawyer. [Pro bono] cases have been among the most rewarding work not only of my career, but of my life."

- Paul F. Enzinna, Brown Rudnick Partner and Charitable Foundation Director, Washington, DC



New York

Seven Times Square
New York, NY 10036
+1.212.209.4800
+1.212.209.4801 [fax]

Boston

One Financial Center
Boston, MA 02111
+1.617.856.8200
+1.617.856.8201 [fax]

Washington, DC

601 Thirteenth Street NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
+1.202.536.1700
+1.202.536.1701 [fax]

Hartford

185 Asylum Street
Hartford, CT 06103
+1.860.509.6500
+1.860.509.6501 [fax]

Providence

10 Memorial Boulevard
Providence, RI 02903
+1.401.276.2600
+1.401.276.2601 [fax]

London

8 Clifford Street
London, W1S 2LQ
United Kingdom
+44.20.7851.6000
+44.20.7851.6100 [fax]

