



Pro Bono Partner Views: Claire Hall

Pro Bono Update

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Claire Hall (Los Angeles) is a partner in DLA Piper's Finance practice focusing in derivatives and structured finance transactions.

Claire's pro bono work focuses on improving the lives of undocumented immigrant children in Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) and guardianship proceedings. SIJS proceedings give children the opportunity to seek lawful permanent residence in the United States when there is evidence of neglect, abuse, abandonment, or similar circumstances. Claire has collaborated with organizations that assist immigrant children, such as Kids in Need of Defense and the Alliance for Children's Rights.

Q: What pro bono experience has been most meaningful to you and why?

A: For me it's been helping undocumented immigrant children. The work we do at DLA Piper really does have an impact on their lives and their families. Many of these children are young; for them, obtaining the stability that comes from having a legal guardian is a step in the right direction. The children rely on this guardian to make important decisions for them, from choosing a school to selecting a doctor.

Q: What skills have you learned from your pro bono work that have been invaluable in your professional development?

A: The pro bono work has definitely challenged me; I'm a transactional lawyer and I don't usually go to court. Now I have had experience of standing in front of a judge - it has definitely pushed me outside of my comfort zone. The transactional work I do tends to be collaborative and more of a fluid process; whereas the pro bono advocacy I've done is much more deadline-oriented (with a lot of form filling)!

Now that I have experienced several cases I am working with associates. They are running the cases and I act as more of a resource to them.

Q: How is pro bono important to our firm's culture and values?

A: It's important since lawyers are in a privileged position. It is vital that we give back in any way that we can. We have a moral obligation to help the community around us. The people I've met through pro bono at the firm are really invested and genuinely believe in it. These people have inspired me to stay involved.