



## **HEWLETT-PACKARD COMPANY BEST PRACTICES IN PRO BONO**

*December 2011*

### **Program Background**

Before 2007, few Hewlett Packard Company (HP) lawyers participated in pro bono work. Those who did had to go outside the company, usually through the pro bono efforts of the local chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC), to find pro bono opportunities. However, on the arrival of a new general counsel, Michael Holston, with a passion for pro bono, HP committed to the Corporate Pro Bono Challenge<sup>SM</sup> in March 2007, and started the process of creating a pro bono program.

To develop a formal program, HP created a pro bono committee consisting of a team leader from each major HP site in the U.S., as well as representatives of those working at remote sites. Team members were surveyed for their areas of interest, and lawyers and non-lawyers were provided opportunities based on the surveys at each site.

Through October 2009, the pro bono program saw considerable success in several cities, with 155 legal team members contributing over 2,200 hours of pro bono work. The California Bay Area team launched their pro bono effort by participating in a one-day homeless legal aid clinic with Project Homeless Connect, an organization created to rally the City of San Francisco to support and create lasting solutions for the homeless community. Thinking that they needed to start small, HP only committed a minimum of five employees to staff the clinic. Nevertheless, the program was so successful that they nearly quadrupled their estimate, with 19 HP employees participating in the clinic.

The Houston team began their program with 20 staff members participating in neighborhood legal aid clinics. In San Diego, legal team members worked with legal service organizations to respond to catastrophic wildfires that had ravaged the local community. Their work to assist fire victims earned them the San Diego Legal Aid Society's Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year Award.

Interest also began growing to expand HP's pro bono program globally. HP lawyers in Ireland participated in pro bono projects in and around Dublin. The U.K. team partnered with a London firm in support of the Prince's Trust and the Asia Pacific-Japan team explored ways to launch a pro bono program in the coming year. To help expand the offerings available to their international attorneys, HP became a patron sponsor of the World Justice Project, an organization focused on a global, multidisciplinary effort to strengthen the rule of law in developing communities. Through this organization, an HP attorney led a working group on improving governmental and corporate adherence to environmental laws in West Africa. Overall, HP set a target to have 10% of non-U.S. based legal employees participate in pro bono activities in the 2010 fiscal year.

## **Recent U.S. Pro Bono Projects**

In 2011, the U.S. team set a lofty goal to have 300 people participate in pro bono projects and dedicate 4,000 hours to giving back. Due to the incredible outpouring of employees this goal was not only met, but exceeded with 331 U.S. employees contributing 4,963 volunteer hours. Their hard work positively impacted the lives of hundreds of people by giving those who could not afford an attorney and in desperate need of legal services a last clear chance of understanding and/or receiving the compensation and/or benefits to which they are legally entitled.

This also marked the first full year of work on the American Legion Project. With over 670 pro bono hours contributed by about 50 lawyer and non-lawyer volunteers, this project was a major contributor to HP's overall pro bono efforts. The American Legion project was designed in conjunction with National Veterans Legal Services Program and the American Legion to help American Legion service officers review case files to prepare appeals to be heard by the Board of Veterans' Appeals at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

## **Recent Non-U.S. Pro Bono Projects**

In 2011, HP legal team members outside the U.S. set an aggressive goal of 30% pro bono participation from employees in Europe, Middle East and Africa, and 20% participation in the Latin American region, Canada and Asia Pacific Japan. The commitment and effort was outstanding. By mid-year, non-U.S. employees exceeded this goal and by year end set an astonishing record with 50% of non-U.S. staff participating in a range of worthy projects from a variety of locations such as India, Italy, England, Canada, Mexico, Chile, and Japan

One of this year's noteworthy projects involved a partnership between the India Legal team and J Sagar Associates, one of India's leading law firms, to assist mDiagnostic with legal services. As a result of this effort, the India Legal team was awarded the Pro bono Innovation Award from TrustLaw (Thomson Reuters Foundation) for their work with mDiagnostic in facilitating remote medical diagnoses in rural India.

The non-U.S. legal team members exhibited enormous dedication to pro bono efforts and HP anticipates their participation will continue to grow in the coming years.

## **Diversity Pipeline Project**

U.S. employees also participate in the Street Law Corporate Legal Diversity Pipeline Program (Street Law), which exposes high school students from diverse, underprivileged communities to various legal topics and encourages them to consider careers in the legal profession through in-class teaching sessions and workshops conducted during HP site visits. This year, over 90 volunteers from five HP sites (Berkley Heights, NJ; Palo Alto, CA; Herndon, VA; Houston, TX; Plano, TX) dedicated nearly 900 hours to Street Law.

## Increasing Awareness

HP is working to increase awareness and opportunities for pro bono work throughout the in-house legal world. HP is an active sponsor of the Pro Bono Institute (PBI) and Corporate Pro Bono. Senior HP leaders participate as trainers and presenters at PBI annual conferences and HP co-hosted a half-day forum for leading Bay Area companies to explore ways to collaborate on pro bono with PBI's President and CEO Esther Lardent attending as a special guest presenter.

HP has a rich history of giving back to the communities in which HP employees live and work. Through the HP Legal Pro Bono program, the HP legal department has found a way for team members to give back using their legal training in keeping with the best traditions of HP and of the legal department.

## Lessons Learned

As HP's pro bono program progresses, the team has learned several lessons in establishing a successful program:

- Think globally and act locally. Having committed local leaders on the ground at core sites is essential in building a sustainable pro bono program. With the support of leaders, it is worthwhile to start small and expand.
- Pro bono is for everyone. A good program has opportunities for lawyers and non-lawyers alike to make a contribution. Incorporating non-attorneys into the pro bono program is a great way to team build and create a sense of unity within the department.
- Lean on your friends. Strong partnerships with legal service providers and law firms can make pro bono efforts much more successful than trying to go it alone. Use the expertise of legal service providers and law firms to increase impact.
- Do not reinvent the wheel. Thanks to CPBO there is a wealth of information on how to launch a great pro bono program – leverage their knowledge and their expertise.
- Team efforts make for more participants and more fun. Finding opportunities where groups of volunteers can work together makes it easier to recruit people. It's a great way to build team morale and create sustainable avenues for continued involvement.

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