

RECOGNITIONS

Winston Garners Federal Pro Bono Project Award from N.D. Cal.

JANUARY 21, 2014

Winston was recognized at the annual Federal Pro Bono Project awards ceremony hosted by the United States District Court for the Northern District of California and the BASF Justice & Diversity Center. The firm was recognized for its efforts in what may be the first pro bono representation ever undertaken by a law firm of a case filed under the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). Winston & Strawn attorneys secured the dismissal through settlement of an indigent, ailing 88-year-old woman who was named as a defendant (along with her late husband) in the CERCLA action filed in the Northern District of California.

Winston's pro bono client and her husband had operated a dry-cleaning business in Alameda County, California throughout the 1980's. In 2001, the Alameda water district discovered contamination in the soils and groundwater beneath the dry-cleaning facility and the current property owner sought \$500,000 for the clean-up. As it became clear that the client had no exposure nor any means to pay damages, and that no insurance policy protected the property during the relevant period of ownership, the team fought hard to secure a settlement that would relieve the burden of litigation from the dying client who entered hospice in the final weeks of the case. The team successfully completed a global settlement by which the client was dismissed with prejudice and released from all present and future claims in the action by all parties. The estate of the client's husband was also dismissed with prejudice by all parties and fully released. For the client and her family, this settlement includes no cash payment or indemnity of any kind.

The Winston team included Amanda Groves.

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