

Winston Pro Bono Team Secures Felony Dismissal for Young Man Striving for a Better Life

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Winston & Strawn attorney Gordon Dobie defended a young man charged with felony possession of a firearm, after he had been pulled over in a questionable traffic stop and a weapon was found in the vehicle.

At the time of his arrest, our client had a valid FOID card with no prior record. He had been interning as a project manager at a Fortune 500 company as part of his participation in Year Up Chicago, a one-year, intensive training program that provides under-served young adults with a combination of hands-on skills development, college credit, corporate internships, and wraparound support. Winston alumnus Jack Crowe is Executive Director of Year Up Chicago and asked Winston to assist on this case.

Prior to the arrest, our client had been ready to apply for a full-time salaried position with this company. He had a long-term goal to use his experiences with Year Up and a full-time job to return to the Englewood community where he grew up, and either work for or start a non-profit.

Because this was a felony charge, our client faced 1-3 years in prison and up to \$25,000 in fines. With a required background check to obtain a full-time job, our client's dreams and plans for the future were no longer tenable.

This is where Winston stepped in to defend our client and ultimately negotiated the dismissal of the charges against our client. In lauding Winston's defense, Crowe noted that this result "should allow this talented young man to get a great job offer as he graduates in January and make changes in his life to be successful going forward. This is change work at its best."

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