

Greg McConnell Reflects on Career and Winston's Successful Pro Bono Program

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Senior Pro Bono Counsel Greg McConnell was interviewed by the Pro Bono Institute in an informative two-part podcast that aired on September 7 and 14, 2017.

In [part one](#), Greg recounts how his passion for history and politics led him to Washington, D.C. for law school after attending the University of Illinois as an undergraduate. He began his career practicing labor and employment law, but his involvement on a pro bono matter made him realize he wanted to practice law in a way that had the most benefit to society.

After accepting a position at the ABA Center for Pro Bono, a year later he became its director. Five years later, Greg met with senior leadership at Winston & Strawn in 2002 regarding a firm wide pro bono role. Greg accepted the position and is now celebrating 15 years at the firm.

During his first 10 years at Winston, Greg oversaw the pro bono department by himself, identifying opportunities, creating a pipeline for each office, and establishing relationships with nonprofits. Now with two additional Pro Bono Counsel, Maria Kutnick and Tara Moss, Greg has taken on more of a management role. The team is tremendously busy meeting with potential clients, matching lawyers with cases, and developing strategies to optimize process and outcomes. Last year saw 92% of the firm's U.S. lawyers reach the Am Law 20 hour metric mark.

Greg discusses Julie Goodman in Winston's newly created role of Chief Corporate Social Responsibility Officer, which expands upon the firm's charitable giving, overall volunteerism, and pro bono.

In [part two](#) of the interview, Greg highlights Winston Chairman Tom Fitzgerald's unwavering commitment to pro bono as a critical component of what makes a firm "excellent." He also echoes Pro Bono Committee Chair Amanda Groves' powerful statement in the firm's 2016 Pro Bono Report—that taking on such matters is about "more than winning."

Greg proudly describes the development and expansion of Winston's Fellowship Program, which was created in 2011. The fellowships provide greatly needed resources to overwhelmed nonprofits and enable recent law school graduates joining the firm to establish relationships with legal aid groups and gain introduction to various practice areas.

The interviews close with Greg discussing his pro bono role models, including partner Kimball Anderson, who established the firm's pro bono practice, and former client and current senior paralegal Ken Berry, whom the firm successfully represented after he was wrongly convicted.

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