

## Spotlight on...Maria Kutnick, Winston & Strawn Pro Bono Counsel

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In this Spotlight Q&A, Winston & Strawn Pro Bono Counsel Maria Kutnick shares insights on the firm's robust pro bono practice.

### **Why Winston? What attracted you to this role and to the firm?**

Prior to joining Winston, I was an immigration attorney working at two of the largest nonprofits in Chicago—the [National Immigrant Justice Center](#) and [LAF](#). Winston had an excellent reputation at both organizations and was a respected partner on their pro bono initiatives. Historically the firm has always been a champion for immigrants. When a position opened up in 2012 to join the Winston pro bono team, I jumped at the rare opportunity to continue ensuring access to justice for all while working at such a prestigious firm.

### **The Pro Bono team has expanded over the last few years. Tell us more about your role.**

When I was hired in 2012, I was the first addition to join [Greg McConnell](#) in over a decade. Since then, we have added some amazing talent to our department and grown to a team of four attorneys and one assistant. As Winston Pro Bono Counsel, I oversee pro bono efforts in our West Coast offices, Houston, and Chicago. I also manage our robust national Immigration Pro Bono Project and work closely with Immigration Pro Bono Supervisory Attorney [Nareeneh Sohbati](#) to oversee our vast docket of immigration pro bono matters.

### **What is the most interesting pro bono case you have worked on to date?**

There have been so many interesting and noteworthy matters throughout my career. Behind our incredible statistics there are so many passionate Winston advocates, immensely grateful clients, life changing results, and rewarding experiences. We have thrown a lifeline to hundreds of people with nowhere else to turn. I'm extremely proud of the work our firm does on a daily basis to make a difference, and am thankful to be part of these efforts.

### **Any tips to lawyers looking to get involved in rewarding pro bono cases?**

Do what you feel passionate about. Do something to further a cause that means something to you. If it hasn't been offered, we'll help you find it. The reward is so much greater when you feel personally connected to the work.

The best part of my job is connecting our volunteer attorneys to a pro bono matter and having them come back to tell me what a rewarding experience they had because of the connection forged with a client, the successful outcome they achieved, and/or the skills they developed.

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[Maria Kutnick](#)

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