February 7, 2017

Day Pitney Honors Three Attorneys With Pro Bono Award

PARSIPPANY, NJ., February 7, 2017 – Day Pitney announced attorneys Jeffrey Clopeck, Kevin Duffy and Daniel Wenner as the 2017 Coleman Award Winners in recognition of their exceptional commitment to pro bono work. This year's Coleman Award winners dedicated a total of more than 700 hours of their time to pro bono service.

The Coleman Awards are given by Day Pitney annually to lawyers at the firm whose commitment to pro bono and public service exemplify the best ideals of the legal profession and the legacy of Cyril Coleman, a former Day Pitney partner who served many public institutions and causes and was known for his dignity, common sense and integrity.

Jeffrey Clopeck, a partner in the firm's Boston office, worked with a team of attorneys on a complex pro bono project involving the merger of two nonprofit conservation organizations. The project was particularly complicated because it involved reinstating a lost tax-exempt status for one of the parties, addressing tax and real estate issues in two states and petitioning the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for approval of the merger. Clopeck also provided pro bono assistance to Saha Global, a non-profit that provides access to safe drinking water for rural communities in Northern Ghana, and to Hearts & Noses Hospital Clown Troupe, a nonprofit whose clowns visit more than 2,500 hospitalized children each year in the greater Boston area.

Kevin Duffy, an associate in the Parsippany office, dedicated many pro bono hours to argue before the Supreme Court of New Jersey in the *Williams v. American Auto Logistics* matter on behalf of Lamar Williams, a previously *pro se* litigant whose case was dismissed from the Special Civil Part of the NJ Superior Court. Duffy prevailed in his argument that Williams was unconstitutionally denied his right to a jury trial. Duffy also worked on a guardianship matter in which he appeared as Court-appointed attorney for an allegedly incapacitated individual, represented a former inmate of Northern State Prison in the prosecution of assault claims against various corrections officers, and represented an inmate of New Jersey State Prison in the prosecution of his claims against prison guards and medical providers.

Daniel Wenner, a partner in the Hartford office, assisted a *pro se* litigant in a complex Second Circuit appeal of a removal order issued pursuant to the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). The individual Wenner represented had immigrated to the United States many years ago when he was 13-months old and was convicted of several offenses as an adult. The government brought a removal action against him under the INA, which provides that a lawful permanent resident can be removed upon conviction for an aggravated felony or two or more crimes involving moral turpitude. The government obtained a removal order and the individual filed a *pro se* appeal to the Second Circuit. Recognizing the complexities involved in determining whether his prior convictions constitute aggravated felonies or crimes involving moral turpitude, the Second Circuit asked Wenner to represent the *pro se* litigant. Wenner drafted the appellate brief and argued on his behalf before the Second Circuit last fall. The Court has not yet rendered a decision.

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