

PRESS RELEASE

Baker Donelson Recognized as "Champion of Justice" by Memphis Bar Association

October 30, 2019

Baker Donelson has been named a "Champion of Justice" by the Memphis Bar Association's (MBA) Access to Justice Committee.

Baker Donelson was among law firms, legal departments, judges, attorneys, and law students who were recognized for their demonstrated commitment to pro bono service at the MBA Access to Justice Committee's Annual Pro Bono Awards luncheon on October 28.

During 2018, Baker Donelson's Memphis attorneys performed more than 3,400 hours of pro bono service. Their pro bono work included matters such as:

- the representation of a Honduran woman and her young son, who had fled the country to escape gang violence, in seeking relief under the Hague Convention Against Torture. The U.S. Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review granted relief, allowing the family to live in the United States permanently.
- participation in a class action lawsuit pursued on behalf of two men who live in severe poverty and had their licenses revoked over unpaid court debts. The matter resulted in a significant ruling that a Tennessee law allowing the revocation of driver's licenses for nonpayment of court debt violates the due process and equal protection clauses of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. The ruling, which was featured in the New York Times, could impact tens of thousands of Tennesseans whose licenses were revoked solely because they were unable to pay court debts such as court costs, fines and fees.

Through its commitment to [pro bono representation](#), Baker Donelson provides legal services to groups and individuals whose resources are limited. For decades, the Firm's attorneys have provided a variety of counsel to many underserved populations that have had no options for legal representation. Baker Donelson's efforts include work on a wide range of matters, such as advocating for the homeless and organizations that serve the homeless, providing corporate legal services to non-profit organizations, collaborating with our clients to address particular community needs, and much more. The Firm has been instrumental in efforts such as expanding the Homeless Experience Legal Protection (HELP) program across the Southeast; creating courts dedicated to handling minor legal matters common among the homeless; assisting persons of limited means with obtaining driver's licenses, an essential need in helping these individuals reintegrate into society; and spearheading and organizing volunteer lawyer programs across Baker Donelson's footprint.

Baker Donelson has led the way in the legal industry by being one of the first law firms in the Southeast to create a Pro Bono Committee and designate a Pro Bono Shareholder. To further its commitment to pro bono, Baker Donelson also designates Pro Bono Committee Office Chairs in most of its 21 offices. These chairs are best suited to address local needs while coordinating with the Firm's Pro Bono Shareholder for global pro bono initiatives. This structure ensures Baker Donelson is well-suited to further its goal of addressing broad spectrum needs across the Firm's footprint and beyond.

