



Robert F. Redmond, Jr. to Receive 2012 Powell Pro Bono Award from the Virginia State Bar

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Robert F. Redmond, Jr. is this year's winner of the 2012 Lewis F. Powell Jr. Pro Bono Award for his years of service to one of the most under-served communities in the state or country - recent immigrants. It has been seven years since Mr. Redmond began a legal clinic for the Hispanic immigrant community on the third Monday night of each month for two hours. The clinic, staffed by Mr. Redmond with Williams Mullen attorneys and paralegals, provided translators and legal assistance where it could. It typically saw twenty-five to thirty clients each month as its reputation grew. In 2006 the attorney general's office appointed Williams Mullen, Mr. Redmond's firm, special counsel to handle unpaid wage claims by forty people who had worked to renovate homes and businesses in downtown Richmond but were not paid for their work. A Richmond jury returned a verdict in favor of the immigrants for \$350,000.

Though a product liability lawyer by trade with no formal training in immigration law, Mr. Redmond took on hundreds of immigration cases. He has successfully adjusted status of hundreds of clients. He has obtained prosecutorial discretion for many children brought to the United States illegally by their parents and has obtained visas for crime victims who have aided police. He also has arranged for the voluntary departure of hundreds of immigrants who were in the country illegally.

As the Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Clinic's reputation spread, more law firms took notice and offered to assist. University of Richmond law students joined the effort in 2008 and today Williams Mullen has allotted office space for the students working on clinic projects.

Mr. Redmond also has been active in the legislative area. He helped form the Virginia Employers for Sensible Immigration Policy which works to ensure that legislation aimed at illegal immigration does not harm the state's business reputation.

The clinic has expanded to two nights per month. Several other law firms in the Firms In Service consortium contribute lawyer time and talent. The clinic now typically sees about 360 clients per year and has dealt with an estimated 2,160 clients since it opened.

Mr. Redmond's nomination was offered by Richmond attorney Michael Hu Young who wrote that, "I believe it is safe to say that the total contribution of legal services from the clinic Bob founded in March 2005 is several million dollars. Likewise, the number of lives changed by the clinic is in the thousands."

The Powell award was established by the Special Committee on Access to Legal Services of the Virginia State Bar to honor attorneys and attorney groups that have made outstanding pro bono contributions.

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