



## **Open Letter to the 2023 Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll Registrants**

**from Chief Judge Anna Blackburne-Rigsby and Chief Judge Anita Josey-Herring**

**April 29, 2024**

On behalf of the D.C. Courts, in partnership with the D.C. Access to Justice Commission and the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center, we want to express our deep gratitude to each of you who qualified for recognition on the 2023 Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll. As you may know, since 2011 the D.C. Courts have recognized attorneys who have contributed 50 hours or more of pro bono service in the calendar year. As chief judges, we are acutely aware of the significant obstacles faced by individuals with limited resources who all too frequently must represent themselves in proceedings, often against represented parties. We salute you for using your time, talents, and expertise to ensure that those who cannot afford an attorney have meaningful access to justice.

Each year we are encouraged by the incredible number of registrants for the Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll, and this year surpassed expectations. For 2023, 5,032 attorneys registered for the Honor Roll, with 2,823 (56%) providing 100 hours or more of pro bono service, thus qualifying for the High Honor Roll. This represents at least 392,750 hours of pro bono service. It also is deeply gratifying to see that our legal community's pro bono commitment spans across all types of practice. The 2023 Honor Roll members hail from 166 firms, solo practices, federal and local government agencies, corporations, associations, and public interest organizations.

We are exceedingly proud of the robust tradition of pro bono service in the District of Columbia's legal community. We applaud those attorneys who embrace their ethical obligation, as contained in Rule 6.1 of the D.C. Rules of Professional Conduct, to perform at least 50 hours of pro bono work annually. The District of Columbia is fortunate to have a truly exemplary cadre of legal services organizations whose attorneys work every day to make access to justice a reality. Yet there remains a significant gap between those who need legal services and those who the legal services community with their limited resources can help. The continued participation of pro bono counsel is simply indispensable to our civil justice system. It will take all of us, working together, to make the equal access to justice a reality in the District.

Thank you for answering – and in many cases exceeding – the call to service embodied by Rule 6.1. We know that your actions stem not only from a commitment to your ethical obligations, but also from your principled belief in equal access to justice. We are pleased to recognize your dedication by including your name on this year's Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'A. Blackburne-Rigsby'.

Hon. Anna Blackburne-Rigsby  
Chief Judge  
District of Columbia Court of Appeals

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Anita Josey-Herring'.

Hon. Anita Josey-Herring  
Chief Judge  
Superior Court of the District of Columbia