Quick facts on Lee Ann:

- J.D., U.S.C. School of Law
- B.A., Wellesley College
- Special Counsel, Sullivan & Cromwell LLP in Washington, D.C.
- Clerked for The Honorable H. Emory Widener, Jr., United States Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit

For the Good of the Order: Profiles in Pro Bono

In this issue we feature Lee Ann Anderson McCall, special counsel in the Washington D.C. office of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, a firm with 12 offices and over 800 attorneys worldwide. Lee Ann’s primary practice areas include public and private securities offerings, structured finance transactions, derivatives and mergers and acquisitions, and her recent experiences include advising investment banks and issues on equity-linked security programs, fixed income products, and other structured finance and derivatives transactions. Additionally, she is the coordinator of pro bono activities for Sullivan & Cromwell’s Washington office. In this role, Lee Ann is charged with finding and supervising pro bono opportunities for attorneys in the office. Sullivan & Cromwell attorneys participate in varied pro bono activities and the goal of the pro bono program is to allow attorneys to pursue projects in which they are interested.

Lee Ann’s Pro Bono and Volunteer Work

Lee Ann has been actively involved in pro bono work and community service since the beginning of her career. While clerking for the Honorable H. Emory Widener, she volunteered with a local rape crisis center and crisis hotline. While practicing for Sullivan & Cromwell in New York City, Lee Ann undertook her first death penalty case through the Virginia Capital Resource Center. She worked on that case exclusively, looking for habeas corpus relief and clemency, from December 1994 until her client was executed in December 1997. While working in Greenville, Lee Ann was appointed by the Fourth Circuit to represent a prisoner in the process of an appeal to challenge his sentence, and in that case, she was successful at getting him relief. Lee Ann also took a case referred to her by Legal Counsel for the Elderly in a case against a landlord in small claims court.

In 1999, Lee Ann began her involvement with the Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project. She helped with fundraising, reviewing cases, and legislative research. She then worked on the screening committee for cases in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia, where she participated in reviewing cases and deciding whether they required further investigation, should be rejected, or referred to a firm. She is currently the chair of the screening committee for the organization. Lee Ann has also been involved in Guantanamo detainee cases and in the representation of a Mexican national who was accused of violating the Vienna Convention by the government of Mexico. Furthermore, Lee Ann is a part of the Fourth Circuit Criminal Justice Panel. She has also written an amicus brief for the American Association of Individuals with Disabilities.
Lee Ann believes that pro bono is just one part of service for the public good. To her, volunteering for community organizations is just as important. For example, Lee Ann and her husband enjoy volunteering with the children’s school. Attorneys have a power and learning that should be used for the greater good and that when they do not make pro bono work part of their practice, attorneys lose the sense of helping others as well as the sense of law as a profession.

The Many Benefits of Pro Bono Work . . .
- Lee Ann believes that pro bono work offers good skills development.
- Pro bono is a good way to still be able to go to court and have an individual client.
- It is also a great way to have variation in your workload.

Lee Ann’s mission is to get everyone in her office to do something for the public good. One of her successful pro bono recruiting stories is about a colleague who never wanted to do pro bono work because he thought he would not like it, but when an opportunity to coach a local high school’s moot court team, he took it and found himself enjoying it immensely. As she told him, Lee Ann believes there is some pro bono activity that works for everyone.

Lee Ann’s Advice for New Graduates and Practitioners of Law
- Find an issue you are interested in and know that the interest may change over time. For example, Lee Ann became interested in death penalty cases during her clerkship, so she found her calling there after the clerkship ended. But as her career has progressed, other interests have also pulled her in different pro bono directions.
- Once you find an interest, know there is probably a way to make a pro bono project out of it.
- Lastly, be realistic about your workload.

When asked whether she thinks her pro bono service has changed the way she practices daily as an attorney, Lee Ann replied that it has really helped her learn how to break her explanations into language that everyone can understand. She feels that because of her pro bono work, she can look at and explain complex transactions in a way that makes sense. She also noted that her clients, who are usually focused on the bottom-lines of their companies, have also commented on the value of her pro bono work.

Additionally, when asked about the types of perceptions, positive or negative, that the bars to which she belongs have about attorneys who are actively involved in pro bono work, Lee Ann answered that the bars of different cities and states consider the importance of pro bono differently. The D.C. Bar has a voluntary pledge requiring a minimum number of hours of pro bono work or financial commitment. Some people sign the pledge and some do not, but regardless of whether they sign, many lawyers do some form of pro bono service. For members of the bar of the Fourth Circuit, the court created the CJA panel to have attorneys to appoint attorneys in criminal cases on appeal. Most courts value people who are willing.

For more information on the Pro Bono Program and the For the Good of the Order newsletters got to www.law.sc.edu/pro_bono.