In this issue we profile Columbia attorney, Douglas Rosinski. Mr. Rosinski is one of the nation’s leading practitioners of veteran’s benefits law, representing veterans and their families before the Department of Veterans Affairs and federal courts. He graduated from The University of South Carolina School of Law in 1997, cum laude. Mr. Rosinski completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Rochester, acquiring a B.S. degree with distinction in Physics and Astronomy.

**What kind of pro bono or volunteer work have you done?**
I primarily do veterans benefits and related litigation. There are over 25 million veterans and only a few hundred attorneys whose practice focuses in this area. I have also participated in various types of clinics and outreach efforts (i.e., bankruptcy, homeless issues).

**Has pro bono work contributed to your sense of career satisfaction?**
Certainly. My veterans' work has directly lead to more than a dozen federal appellate court arguments, participation in two US Supreme Court cases, and several media pieces, including an appearance on 60 Minutes. It is all "priceless" experience and exposure that simply would not have happened but for the pro bono cases.

**Quick Facts about Douglas**

**Birthplace:** Utica, NY

**Most Interesting Job Before Law School:**
Founded a company that developed robotic collision avoidance for NASA Space Shuttle program.

**Other Interests:** Douglas is also an accomplished photographer who has been juried into numerous exhibitions

**Can pro bono work have a practical effect on one’s legal career?**
The pro bono work I have done has provided me with professional opportunities that I would either not have had at all, or would not have had as soon after law school. For better or worse, I have a national profile in veterans law. That has provided me with additional opportunities to lecture and meet many people that I would not have otherwise met.

**What kind of perceptions, positive or negative, do you think that the bar as a whole has about attorneys who are actively involved in pro bono work?**
I believe that the Bar as an organization and each individual member appreciates and respects those who perform pro bono work. It is unfortunate that demands for "involuntary" pro bono work appear to be increasing. That will certainly change the overall view of such work.
Did you volunteer as a law student? If so, how did that impact your legal career?
I did volunteer while in law school and essentially made myself available whenever Pam Robinson needed something done that I could do. The impact was more subtle on my career than many other law students because I was an "older" student with experience dealing with people and their problems before law school. It was, however, still very rewarding to help solve a person's problem.

What are the main reasons why you would recommend that law students become involved in pro bono work?
If you want to be a lawyer you have to be able to identify and solve a person’s problems. It is a skill that you cannot learn in the classroom. Law students need to understand how to work with people to solve their problems.

Pro bono work can be time consuming, have you found that it is worth the effort?
It all becomes worth the effort when an elderly widow calls to tell you she won a claim 25 years after she promised her dying husband that she would never give up trying to do so.

This interview was conducted by Jonathan Perkins – Co-Vice President of the Pro Bono Board.

For the Good of the Order: Profiles in Pro Bono is a publication of the USC School of Law Pro Bono Program. The purpose is to highlight the activities of inspirational attorneys performing outstanding pro bono service.

Know someone who fits the bill? E-mail us at Robinspd@law.sc.edu.