

June 20, 2007

Contact: John M. Byrne  
215-988-2597  
[John.Byrne@dbr.com](mailto:John.Byrne@dbr.com)

## **Pennsylvania Bar Foundation Honors Drinker Biddle's Alicia Hickok With Top Pro Bono Award**

PHILADELPHIA –The Pennsylvania Bar Foundation today recognizes Drinker Biddle & Reath lawyer D. Alicia Hickok for her significant efforts in providing pro bono legal services by presenting her with its prestigious Louis J. Goffman Award.

The annual award, established in 1989, is given to professionals or organizations whose dedication to serving Pennsylvania's poor and disadvantaged citizens serves as a model to everyone in the legal industry. Hickok is one of three recipients of this year's Goffman Awards. Sharon Browning, the executive director of Philadelphia Volunteers for the Indigent Program, and the Exelon Corporation Legal Department are also being honored.

"Many big firm lawyers 'talk the talk' when it comes to pro bono. Alicia 'walks the walk,'" said David F. Abernethy, Drinker Biddle partner and chair of the firm's Pro Bono Committee. "And she walks farther, longer and more consistently than any lawyer I have met in more than 20 years of private practice."

In the past several years, Hickok has spent thousands of hours working for pro bono clients, from death row inmates and community organizations involved in First Amendment litigation to indigent and disabled individuals seeking Supplemental Security Income benefits.

"Alicia is a remarkable example of our firm's dedication to community service and we are proud of her accomplishments," said Drinker Biddle Chairman Alfred W. Putnam, Jr. "Alicia contributes significantly to our efforts in meeting the firm's long-standing commitment to pro bono representation, both as an experienced litigator handling her own pro bono work and as a mentor to our younger lawyers who are

(more)

## **DRINKER BIDDLE LAWYER RECEIVES TOP PRO BONO HONOR**

June 20, 2007 -- Add One

---

following her example.” With hundreds of lawyers volunteering their time and talents last year, Drinker Biddle spent more than 21,000 hours serving pro bono clients.

An example of Hickok’s passion for pro bono is *Waldrip v. Georgia*. Drinker Biddle became involved in the case in 1998 after Tommy Lee Waldrip was convicted of murder. Waldrip, currently an inmate on Georgia’s death row, alleges that police obtained a false confession of murder from him after they denied his request for counsel. To date, Hickok has spent more than 1,400 hours on the case.

“Everyone deserves representation,” Hickok said. “I have seen individuals and firms wrongly accused. I have watched people driven into the ground by others’ abuse of the legal system.

“We can’t stand by and let this happen in our society simply because people are without means to hire counsel,” Hickok added. “There needs to be someone dedicated to their representation, someone fighting for them.”

Hickok’s dedication to community service traces back to when she was in middle school. “A nearby park had become unsafe,” she said. “I worked on a campaign to get the city to clean up the park and provide supervised activities for the kids.”

Hickok also has done other pro bono work during her five years at Drinker Biddle. She wrote an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court seeking to establish that a lawyer who has represented the murder victim may not ethically represent the accused murderer. “Procedurally, the law surrounding death penalty litigation is such a tangled web,” said Hickok. “It is important to me to navigate these waters.”

Hickok also played a key role in drafting an amicus brief that supported the prevailing side in *Van Orden v. Perry*, a case in which the U.S. Supreme Court held that Texas authorities were not obligated to remove a monument placed near the Texas Capitol decades ago, containing the text of the Ten Commandments, because the decision by government officials to keep the monument was a historic preservation effort, not an endorsement of a particular religion. “I believe freedom of religion is about allowing people to have their own religious views, not excising the role of religion in history,” she said.

(more)

[www.drinkerbiddle.com](http://www.drinkerbiddle.com)

## **DRINKER BIDDLE LAWYER RECEIVES TOP PRO BONO HONOR**

June 20, 2007 -- Add Two

---

Hickok instills this devotion to community service in her three children. Attending today's luncheon will be her two sons, Samuel and Bennet. Samuel, a senior at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn., wants to start a music and tutoring after-school program for inner-city kids. Bennet, who enters high school in the fall, recently accompanied a group to Chester, Pa., to help individuals with household repairs that they couldn't do themselves. Hickok's daughter, Elonnai, however, will be unable to attend the luncheon because she will still be in France working with an organic farm in preparation for her trip to Senegal early next year. "Elonnai wants to work with agricultural communities in third-world countries that are facing the pressures of globalization," said Hickok. "Her hope is to help these communities move toward a sustainable economy while protecting their cultural values."

Hickok graduated from University of Pennsylvania Law School *cum laude*. Before joining Drinker Biddle in 2002, Hickok was a law clerk for the Hon. Marjorie O. Rendell.

---

Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP, a full-service national law firm established in 1849, recently combined with the more than 170 lawyers at Chicago-based Gardner Carton & Douglas. The merger, effective in January 2007, created a firm of more than 630 lawyers and legal professionals in 12 offices nationwide. For more information, please visit [www.drinkerbiddle.com](http://www.drinkerbiddle.com).

# # #