

Firm News

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Seven Neal Gerber Eisenberg Attorneys Recognized for Excellence in Pro Bono Service

Neal Gerber Eisenberg (NGE) is pleased to announce that seven of its attorneys have received the 2023 Award for Excellence in Pro Bono Service from the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

Jason Kim, Steven Pflaum and Kathleen Okon have been recognized for their work in *Travon Howard v. Thomas Dart, et al.* In this matter, their client alleged deliberate indifference of a guard at Cook County Jail and failure to take reasonable measures to provide medical treatment after he was attacked while in custody. The NGE attorneys worked diligently for three years, dedicating 471 hours to this matter. The case was ultimately settled on terms favorable to their client.

Antony McShane and Charles Shih received this award for their representation of the plaintiff in *Malcom Thomas, a.k.a. Mack Warren v. R. Ryan, et al.* Their client alleged that correctional officers in Cook County Jail violated his constitutional rights during a strip search. In this matter, McShane and Shih provided their client with experienced and diligent representation that would otherwise have been unavailable to him. After devoting nearly 500 hours to this matter, the NGE attorneys obtained a reasonable settlement for Mr. Thomas.

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Jason C. Kim
Antony J. McShane
Steven F. Pflaum
Charles K. Shih



Kyle Rettberg received the award for his work on behalf of a minor injured while under her school's care in *Tyanne Fonza, as next friend of T.G., a minor v. Chicago Public Schools, et al.* Rettberg pursued federal and state claims on behalf of Ms. Fonza, engaged in discovery, and obtained a favorable settlement. Rettberg then worked for a year after the agreed-to settlement to ensure the settlement funds were properly allocated in a manner that would help provide for the minor client's future.

Collette Woghiren received recognition for her work on behalf of her client in *Lust v. Hayes, et al.* Woghiren volunteered to represent her client in settlement negotiations related to claims that administrators and a lieutenant at the Cook County Jail failed to protect her client from an attack while in custody and failed to provide needed medical care afterwards. The case was ultimately settled on favorable terms. This is the fifth time the United States District Court and Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association have honored Woghiren for her pro bono efforts; she was recognized in 2017, 2018 and twice in 2019.

Since 2011, eighteen different NGE attorneys have received the Award for Excellence in Pro Bono Service.

The awards were presented at the Court's 23rd Annual Excellence in Pro Bono and Public Interest Service Award Ceremony on May 1, 2023.

Starting with a focus on basic human needs – health care, housing, education, employment and a safe living environment – NGE's pro bono activities broadly extend to representations bearing on other essential attributes of a just and humane society. As a gold-level member of the Chicago Bar Foundation Law Firm Leadership Circle, NGE has established goals that the firm's attorneys will each devote at least 50 hours per year to pro bono, and that the firm averages at least 50 hours of pro bono



service per year per attorney. More than 5,600 hours of pro bono time were worked in 2022 with 100 percent of practice groups participating in these efforts.