John Paul Stevens Guiding Hand of Counsel Award for Death Penalty Representation

2019 Nomination Information (Full-time Defender*)

Full-time capital defenders and pro bono lawyers in the private sector have made remarkable contributions to the improvement and provision of indigent capital defense. In an effort to recognize attorneys from both of these deserving groups, the Project has chosen to honor volunteer attorneys & full-time defenders in alternating years. In 2018, the Project was pleased to present the Guiding Hand of Counsel Award to Gwendolyn Payton, a pro bono attorney who volunteered massive amounts of her time and energy towards capital representation. *Accordingly, in 2019, the Project will present the award to a full-time capital defender. Next year, in 2020, the award will again be presented to an individual attorney who has worked on capital cases on a pro bono basis and whose primary practice involves something other than indigent defense. Please contact the Project if you are uncertain about a nominee’s eligibility.

About the Award

The Death Penalty Representation Project and its thousands of volunteer attorneys have been inspired and sustained by Justice John Paul Stevens throughout his distinguished tenure at the Court. We are indebted to Justice Stevens for his support of pro bono service, which he has long championed, and his commitment to the right to counsel. Writing in his dissent in Murray v. Giarratano in 1989, he said, “[I]t is fundamentally unfair to require an indigent death row inmate to initiate collateral review without counsel’s guiding hand.”

Since his retirement from the Court, Justice Stevens has continued to be an influential voice for the most vulnerable members of our society and for changes that will give meaning to our constitutional protections. The John Paul Stevens Guiding Hand of Counsel Award was created in 2011 to recognize an individual lawyer who has demonstrated the kind of courage and commitment associated with Justice Stevens. To be considered for the award, we must receive a completed (1) Application Form, (2) a Letter of Nomination, and (3) at least two Letters of Support for each nominee no later than Friday, May 24, 2019.
A Letter of Nomination for the John Paul Stevens Guiding Hand of Counsel Award should include the following:

1. Commitment and achievements on behalf of death-sentenced person(s) and specifically how he or she became involved in death penalty representation;
2. Contributions toward developing innovative approaches to death penalty representation;
3. Litigation of death penalty cases that favorably affected the provision of counsel or services to indigent death row prisoners;
4. Achievement of legislation that contributed substantially to the provision of counsel to death-sentenced prisoners; AND/OR
5. Impact of the nominee’s achievements on the client, the community, or the development of law in the jurisdiction(s).

Please provide specific, concrete examples wherever possible, and include what involvement (if any) the individual has had with the Death Penalty Representation Project in his or her work. The nomination materials may include relevant documentation including media publicity or other recognition received by the nominee, but please limit these materials to no more than 10 pages total. Individuals may self-nominate. Honorees will be selected by an Awards Committee that does not include Project staff.

The winner will be honored at the 2019 Volunteer Recognition & Awards Event on September 19th at the Decatur House in Washington, DC.

NOMINATION CHECKLIST FOR JOHN PAUL STEVENS GUIDING HAND OF COUNSEL AWARD

- Application Form
- Letter of Nomination
- At Least Two (2) Letters of Support
- Additional Relevant Documentation
  (no more than 10 pages total)

Please submit all materials electronically (PDF documents) including the Letter of Nomination, Application Form, Letters of Support, and any additional documentation to the Project by Friday, May 24, 2019 at deathpenaltyproject@americanbar.org.

Contact information:
Phone: (202) 662-1738
Fax: (202) 662-8649
Email: deathpenaltyproject@americanbar.org
Websites: http://www.americanbar.org/deathpenalty
http://www.probono.net/deathpenalty
About the Project

The Death Penalty Representation Project is the American Bar Association's expert on issues related to the defense effort in death penalty cases. Since 1986 its singular focus has been to improve the quality and availability of legal representation for persons facing possible death sentences. As one of its primary goals, the Project seeks to expand the pool of lawyers willing to serve as pro bono counsel for death row inmates in post-conviction proceedings by recruiting volunteer attorneys to handle capital cases. The Project also focuses its efforts on domestic and international training and technical assistance to capital defenders, judges, and volunteer lawyers; systemic reform of capital counsel systems through litigation and other means; and education of the public and bar about the urgent need for reform of the death penalty system. For more information about the Project, please visit:

www.americanbar.org/groups/committees/death_penalty_representation/about_us.html.
2019 John Paul Stevens Guiding Hand of Counsel Award
Nomination Form

A. NOMINEE INFORMATION

Name: _____________________________________________

Firm/Organization: _____________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip: _________________________________________________________________

Phone: (____) ________________________ Fax: (____) _______________________________

E-mail: _______________________________________________________________________

B. NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Name of Nominator: ____________________________________________________________

Program/Office: ________________________________________________________________

Title: ________________________________________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip: _________________________________________________________________

Phone: (____) ________________________ Fax: (____) _______________________________

E-mail: _______________________________________________________________________

Relationship to Nominee: ___________________________________________________

C. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PRO BONO DEATH PENALTY WORK

Brief description (2-3 sentences) of work that is recognized and discussed in your letter of nomination:

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