Jones Day is truly grateful and honored to receive the American Bar Association’s 2015 Pro Bono Publico Award. The firm has had an extraordinary year providing training around the world on litigation skills and contributing to the development of the Rule of Law in many countries. We are also very proud to have launched the Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships Guide website that is designed to assist same-sex couples when traveling to any country around the world. The website, www.samesexrelationshipguide.com, comprehensively surveys and tracks changes in laws governing the legal recognition of same-sex relationships around the world. The site summarizes the status of the legal recognition of same-sex relationships in all U.N. recognized countries worldwide, including relevant sub-jurisdictions, such as each of the United States. A total of 292 jurisdictional reports are included on the site. The work on the site was coordinated as a pro bono effort by a multi-national team of Jones Day attorneys and staff.

While Jones Day does many different pro bono projects across many disciplines, it is a true honor to be receiving this award for our leadership role in the last year on the immigration front dealing with both unaccompanied immigrant children and women with children immigrating from Central America. The explosion of violence in Central America and the chaos overwhelming the region is among the greatest humanitarian disasters of our time. Four of the five highest murder rates in the world are in Central American nations. In an effort to flee extreme violence in Central America, thousands of unaccompanied children and women and children refugees have flooded the U.S. borders. In response to the refugee influx, immigrant family detention centers were setup in Texas to house refugees.

Early on it was evident that the demand for representation in these facilities was going to far exceed the number of volunteers willing to provide pro bono legal services to the detainees. Jones Day knew it needed to delve into the immigration crisis and quickly sent teams of lawyers to the detention facilities in Texas, becoming one of the first law firms to respond to the refugee crisis. Jones Day immediately started playing a leading role in developing legal strategy on bond issues, obtained bond for numerous clients, assisted the many lawyers there in devising a strategy for the legal representation of the women and children, and became an advocate on behalf of the refugees before the Department of Homeland Security and the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

Since becoming involved, Jones Day has taken on over 100 cases across the country representing children and women with children who arrived during the surge. Almost every U.S. office is engaged in this effort and some of the international offices have provided various types of support. The enthusiasm within the Firm for the work being done in Texas has been extraordinary. It has sparked involvement throughout the Firm from first year associates to partners who have come out of retirement in order to make a difference and provide representation to the refugees. The firm has devoted a tremendous amount of resources to assisting with the crisis and is committed to continuing this work and the humanitarian spirit behind these services.

We would be remiss in accepting this Award if we did not acknowledge the non-profit organizations that have worked closely with Jones Day in these efforts. They have helped to mentor our lawyers when visiting the facilities and in managing the cases. We would especially like to thank the American Immigration Lawyers Association ("AILA"), Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services ("Raices"), and Capital Area Immigrants’ Rights Coalition ("CAIR") for nominating us for this award. These organizations have been instrumental in helping us to meet the need for providing pro bono representation to this very vulnerable population. Together we have successfully assisted numerous immigrant children and women with children to remain safely in the United States with lawful status.

Jones Day has a long history of commitment and dedication to pro bono legal services, public service, and community involvement around the world. The ABA Pro Bono Publico Award serves as a reminder to us all that the demands for pro bono service are continuously changing because of the increasingly integrated world in which we live. As such Jones Day’s pro bono mission has always been a simple one—as our global reach extends further and deeper, we will continue to look for new and creative ways to serve and improve all of the communities that have been instrumental to our success.