

IDAHO LAW FOUNDATION



Helping the profession serve the public

IN THE 6.1 CHALLENGE, WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING

Mary Hobson
Legal Director, Idaho Volunteer
Lawyers Program

The Fourth District Bar's "6.1 Challenge," is billed as a "friendly competition" between law offices. The true purpose of the Challenge, however, is to encourage and formally recognize the pro bono and public service activities of Bar members. This year, there were 13 entries, accounting for the contribution of literally thousands of hours of pro bono and public service work by over 200 Boise area lawyers. "Viewed in the context of its goal, this year's 6.1 Challenge was an amazing success and all of its entrants deserve our respect and thanks," says Fourth District Bar President, Paula Kluksdal.

Early in the history of the Challenge, its judges determined that not all law offices could fairly be compared against each other, so they created the "large firm," "small firm" and "government law office" categories. This year's winner in the government office category was the **Clerks of the U.S. District Court** whose

14 participating members contributed over 3,000 hours of pro bono and public service to the community. **Kira Phisterer** helped that law office compile their impressive submission. But that team was not the only winning government law office. On the **Clerks of the Idaho Supreme Court and Court of Appeals** team, law clerks contributed hundreds of hours to projects like Citizenship Day, the Boise Rescue Mission and the Idaho Immigration Law Pro Bono Network. **Mikela French**, a Supreme Court law clerk received special recognition for



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Soundstart, a project of the Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program, received the Honorable Mention Award "for innovation and effectiveness in providing access to justice for those in poverty through pro bono" in the Pro Bono Best Practices Spotlight Contest. Pictured above are Larry Hunter, Soundstart contact of Moffatt, Thomas, Barrett, Rock & Fields, Chtd. and Carol Craighill, IVLP Program Director. The award is sponsored by the National Association of Pro Bono Professionals (NAPBPro, Inc.) The national competition is held each year to highlight examples of outstanding pro bono projects throughout the country.

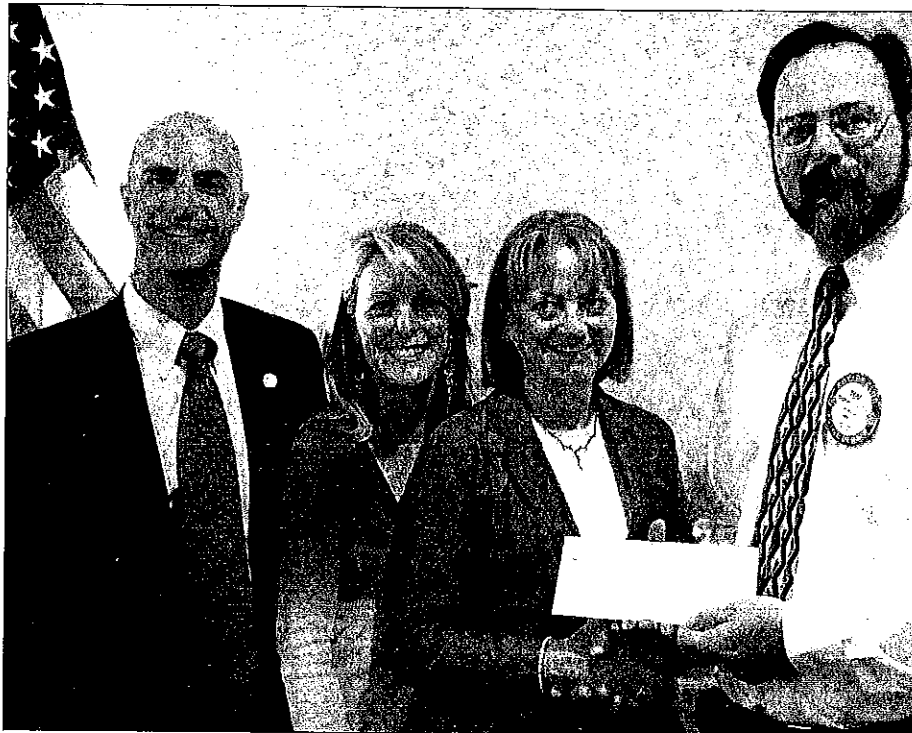
her nearly 500 hundred hours of work on the Immigration Network project at the Fourth District Law Day reception. The **Ada County Prosecuting Attorney's Office** submitted a collective application with almost 2,400 hours of service. "The biggest hurdle that this large governmental office had was encouraging the attorneys to actually write down all of their great work that they have done over the past year" said **Heather McCarthy**, who spearheaded that effort. McCarthy reported "a committee was formed to develop a pro-bono office guideline, distribute it to every attorney, and then

track down the attorneys to encourage them to submit their time." Sixty of the 66 attorneys in the office submitted time sheets—a huge response from a government law office. The teamwork in this office was also fostered by the committee's purchase of a bulletin board to post pro-bono opportunities and a countdown to the 6.1 Challenge deadline. The effort and ingenuity displayed by the three government law offices demonstrates every office can make a major contribution if they commit themselves.

Five small firms entered the Challenge this year. **Dean Arnold**, a solo practi-

tioner contributed his expertise assisting persons charged with criminal offenses as well as participating in activities aimed at improving the legal system and profession. Meanwhile, **Pickens Law, P.A.**, a two-lawyer firm, donated over 200 hours to Idaho Legal Aid and served in eight CASA cases. **C.K. Quade Law, PLLC**, has three lawyers who averaged nearly 70 hours each in pro bono representation of persons with Medicaid, Social Security, elder abuse, guardianship and education issues. **Victoria Loegering** from the **Huntley Law Firm, PLLC** was singled out for recognition by the 6.1 Challenge judges for her pro bono service, which included spending 232 hours representing a refugee mother seeking return of her children from Department of Health and Welfare. As outstanding as these four submissions are, the actual small firm 6.1.Challenge award went to Boise solo practitioner **J. Kahle Becker**, who clocked close to 300 hours representing two Idaho nonprofits as well otherwise promoting the profession through his work with the Young Lawyers Section and local educational organizations.

The five firms competing in the “large firm” category (i.e., those firms with more than 10 lawyers in the Fourth District) were **Zarian Midgley & Johnson PLLC**, **Hawley Troxell Ennis & Hawley LLP**, **Stoel Rives LLP**, **Perkins Coie LLP** and **Holland & Hart, LLP**. Together these firms contain 127 lawyers, the vast majority of whom participated in providing pro bono service in this Challenge year. Each firm’s submission depicted a wide range of pro bono services including representing inmates in civil rights cases, immigrants in matters coming under the Violence Against Women Act, obtaining civil protection orders for persons subject to domestic violence, and assisting a whole host of other low-income people in need of critical legal representation. In addition, lawyers from these firms generously donated their legal services to a long list of non-profit organizations in the Boise area. While space does not allow recounting the outstanding individuals or the full array of projects covered by these dedicated firms, Justice Roger Burdick, speaking for the panel of 6.1 Challenge judges, emphasized how impressed the judges were with the quality and quantity of the pro bono work completed this year by the participating offices. Perhaps nothing speaks as well of the commitment to service of these firms as the fact that



Thomas K. Rosenthal, President, Boise Sunrise Rotary Club presents a check to IVLP on May 18 for \$1,000 to the Soundstart program. It will help provide legal assistance to low-income families using volunteer attorneys. Pictured above, left to right, are David Penny, Cosho Humphrey, LLP; Molly Tomlinson, Soundstart Coordinator; Carol Craighill, IVLP Program Director; and Thomas Rosenthal.

the large firm competition ended in a tie between **Perkins Coie LLP** and **Holland & Hart, LLP**—with each firm reporting a per-attorney average of more than 50 hours of service—thereby exceeding the “aspirational” pro bono goal set out in Idaho Rule of Professional Conduct 6.1.

When it comes to the 6.1 Challenge, winning isn’t everything and partici-

pation brings its own reward. **J. Kahle Becker** put it well when he said, “There have been many late nights and weekends spent working on some of these cases but at the end of the day, I’ve found that my *pro bono* cases are the reason I decided to practice law in the first place.” The Fourth District is fortunate to have so many “winners” in its midst.

Soundstart provides opportunities for volunteer attorneys to help young, low-income families establish secure legal foundations. The goal of the program is to educate parents about the need for obtaining court orders for custody, paternity, child support, guardianships and other family-related matters and motivate them to act before domestic problems arise. Larry Hunter serves as a liaison, recruiting members of his firm to make the Soundstart presentations and interact with the parents in the proactive program that helps prevent domestic violence.