



**2020**  
**PRO BONO**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

Despite the challenges of practicing law during a pandemic, Bradley's commitment to pro bono remained strong in 2020, and our investment in the communities where we live and practice did not waiver. Last year, Bradley attorneys and staff contributed more than 13,000 hours to our pro bono clients, with 59% of our attorneys performing 20 or more hours of pro bono service. Our pro bono work spanned many areas, and we endeavored to be as responsive as we could to the legal needs that emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic. As one example, in light of the increased instances of intimate partner violence last year, we ramped up our existing projects in Birmingham and Charlotte representing victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and began a new pro bono project in Nashville with the Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Jean Crowe Advocacy Center representing clients seeking protection orders. We are proud of our attorneys for assisting these clients and grateful to the organizations that refer their cases to our firm.

Our domestic violence work is just one area in which our pro bono program made an impact in 2020. We continued our pro bono representations in capital litigation, innocence and exoneration cases, immigration and child custody matters, and in our efforts to use the law to improve our communities. We successfully convinced a court to vacate a client's death sentence – marking the fourth time in the past 10 years that Bradley attorneys have overturned a death sentence. Our work also ensured that a Gambian immigrant will have the chance to present the merits of his case to stay in the United States after the Board of Immigration Appeals denied his claims and ordered his removal. We began an initiative assisting the Tennessee Innocence Project with the evaluation of the requests for assistance the organization receives from incarcerated individuals and the potential merits of their cases. Finally, we started a pro bono alliance with Advocates for Community Transformation and the legal department of our client CapitalOne to provide legal support to Dallas-area residents seeking to protect their neighborhoods from crime.

We are pleased to present Bradley's 2020 Pro Bono Annual Report. As it does every year, the report offers a brief glimpse into the pro bono legal services that our firm's attorneys and staff generously provided to nonprofit organizations and individuals in need in our local communities. We remain committed to honoring our professional responsibility to help those with limited means gain access to the legal system.

***Dylan Black, Pro Bono Committee Chair***

#### **THE PRO BONO COMMITTEE**

Timothy Andreu  
Marc Ayers  
Dylan Black

Jeffrey Blackwood  
George Cate  
Nathan Graham

Tiffany Graves  
Virginia Patterson  
Peter Sales

Rob Sayles  
Scott Smith

Chuck Stewart  
Erin Sullivan

# 2020 Pro Bono Highlights

## BRADLEY TEAM GETS CLIENT'S SENTENCE VACATED - BIRMINGHAM

For the last 12 years, the firm has been representing an incarcerated individual in Alabama in a federal habeas proceeding challenging his conviction and death sentence for a 2005 murder. The team of attorneys representing him challenged his conviction and sentence on a number of constitutional grounds. In October 2020, the United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama issued an opinion granting his habeas claim on the grounds of ineffective assistance of counsel at the penalty phase of his trial. The court directed the State of Alabama to vacate and set aside the death sentence of our client and re-sentence him to life without the possibility of parole or initiate proceedings to retry his sentence within 90 days.



"This case has taught me how important it is to keep pushing forward. In our case it took over a decade to get the result the client deserved. It will likely take many more years to protect that result on appeal. No matter what stage of a case you are in, keep pushing. Make sure at each step you present your best efforts. Pro bono work is deeply satisfying. Being able to give back to your community is so important. Pro bono work provides an opportunity to grow your skills as a lawyer with clients who are truly grateful."

*Tiffany deGruy, a partner in the Birmingham office, has worked on the case since her first year of practice*



"I have learned a significant amount about the external factors that influence the ability to provide truly effective counsel to those facing the death penalty. There is no one that deserves a diligent, thorough lawyer more than someone who is facing the death penalty. However, there are so many external factors working against a defendant to get a fair trial – including lack of family support, education (more specifically, lack thereof), and the failure of our justice system to be able to provide an attorney who has the time and resources to do the investigation that is necessary. Being able to conduct such an investigation is essential not just to proving someone's innocence, but also to influencing the sentence a defendant may receive."

*Hillary Campbell, a partner in the Birmingham office, has been a member of the case team for several years*

## BRADLEY PARTNERS WITH CAPITAL ONE AND A LOCAL NONPROFIT TO HELP ELIMINATE NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME – DALLAS

Since 2009, Advocates for Community Transformation (Act), in collaboration with law firms, has equipped underserved Dallas residents to fight crime on their streets. Act's mission is to create safer neighborhoods, where crime is no longer tolerated and hope is restored. Last January, Bradley, Act, and firm client Capital One began a pro bono alliance to provide legal representation to local residents who want to free their neighborhoods from crime.



"We partner with Act to help bring safety and freedom to underserved families in the inner city of Dallas and help equip them to fight crime on their streets using the justice system. In the neighborhoods where Act is working, the number of drug houses and criminal properties has decreased and the quality of life for local families (including our clients) has improved."

*Rob Sayles, a partner in the Dallas office and member of the Pro Bono Committee, facilitated the alliance between Bradley, Act, and Capital One*

## BRADLEY ASSISTS TENNESSEE INNOCENCE PROJECT WITH NEW CASE REVIEW PROJECT - NASHVILLE

Last year, Bradley began a case review project with the Tennessee Innocence Project in Nashville. Working hand in hand with the Tennessee Innocence Project staff, teams of Bradley partners and associates work together to help the new nonprofit organization determine whether it should accept or reject an incarcerated individual's application for legal representation. Attorneys assist with these determinations by reviewing and analyzing incarcerated individuals' applications, court records, and other documents. The support the firm provides to the Tennessee Innocence Project allows it to make timely decisions about which innocence cases it will take.



"As an attorney, I feel an obligation to use my skills and influence to help people who may not be able to afford legal counsel. In particular, I think it's one of the highest callings for a lawyer to defend individuals involved in the criminal justice system. The Tennessee Innocence Project provides an excellent opportunity to help incarcerated individuals by taking a hands-on role in the process of determining actual innocence claims."

*Chris Friedman, an associate in the Nashville office, joined the first team of attorneys on the project*

# 2020 Pro Bono Highlights

## BRADLEY CREATES NEW LEGAL CLINIC TO SUPPORT BLACK BUSINESS OWNERS AND NONPROFIT LEADERS – NASHVILLE

Last year, following the initiative of Bradley associates Rachel Byrd and Judea Davis, the firm began laying the groundwork for a new program to offer pro bono legal services to Black-owned small businesses and nonprofits in the Nashville metro area through a monthly legal clinic. The aim of the clinic is to provide business-oriented legal counsel to Black business owners in order to afford them the opportunity to be both competitive and prosperous. The clinic is a collaboration between Bradley and the Arts & Business Council of Greater Nashville and its Volunteer Lawyers & Professionals for the Arts (VLPA) program. The clinic officially launched in January 2021.



“The legal clinic allows me to utilize my professional skill set as a corporate attorney to serve our local Black business community in a meaningful, direct way. Systemic racism has created numerous obstacles to success for Black-owned businesses, including access to legal services. The goal of the clinic is to provide those services in an accessible way.”

*Rachel Byrd, an associate in the Nashville office, helped to develop and launch the clinic*



“I wanted to find a way that the firm could take an active, hands-on role in serving Black people in the Nashville community. Providing legal services to Black-owned small businesses and nonprofits takes something the firm is very good at — being exceptional attorneys — and opens the door a bit wider for people who have had, and unfortunately continue to have, limited access to these types of services.”

*Judea Davis, an associate in the Nashville office, joined Rachel in developing and launching the clinic*

## BRADLEY ATTORNEYS HELP CLIENT AVOID REMOVAL FROM U.S. - BIRMINGHAM

In July 2020, the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals appointed Bradley to represent a Gambian immigrant in appealing his removal. After arriving a few minutes late to a master calendar hearing, our client was ordered removed in absentia. His trial attorney assured him that his case would be heard on the merits, and she agreed to immediately file a motion to reopen. But she did not; she filed it two years after the deadline. Our client filed an appeal pro se with the Board of Immigration Affairs (BIA) on the basis that his attorney provided him with ineffective assistance of counsel. The BIA denied his claims and upheld his removal. Bradley’s work secured a reversal of the BIA’s order, allowing our client to remain in the U.S. and giving him the opportunity to present the merits of his case to the immigration court.



“I agreed to handle this matter because my client needed immediate help. I knew I could make a tangible difference in his case, while gaining experience arguing before the Eleventh Circuit. This case has highlighted the absolute necessity of access to legal representation in immigration cases. Because of the intricacies of the immigration process, far too many people get shuffled through removal proceedings without having a real chance to prove that they have a right to adjust their residency status.”

*Riley McDaniel, an associate in the Birmingham office, was the lead attorney on the appeal*

## ORDERS OF PROTECTION PROJECT – NASHVILLE

In light of the increased instances of intimate partner violence during the global pandemic, the firm focused on representing victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Last January, the Nashville office began a unique initiative with the Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland and Jean Crowe Advocacy Center to represent clients seeking orders of protection. Bradley attorneys provided over 300 hours of pro bono service to domestic violence and sexual assault victims as part of this new project.



“I am very proud of the work the Bradley team has done with the newly formed Orders of Protection project. We have handled several cases during the pandemic and have assisted clients during this particularly challenging season.”

*Alex Dugan, a partner in the Nashville office, helped three clients obtain protection orders last year*

# 2020 Pro Bono Highlights

## BRADLEY ATTORNEYS ADVOCATE TO PROTECT ABANDONED CHILD - TAMPA

In July 2020, Tampa associates helped the Florida Guardian Ad Litem Office's Defending Best Interest Project respond to an appeal regarding termination of parental rights of the father of a 2-year-old child. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) initiated proceedings to terminate the father's parental rights on the ground that he had abandoned the child. The trial court agreed with DCF and terminated the father's rights. The father appealed the decision to the Fifth District Circuit of Appeals (DCA). Tampa associates Soma Nwokolo and Giovanni Giarratana drafted arguments and delivered a brief seeking to uphold the trial court's opinion on the ground that terminating the father's parental rights was the least restrictive means possible to protect the child. The DCA affirmed the trial court's findings in a perfunctory and definitive per curiam opinion.



"I could think of few worthier causes than helping protect vulnerable children in the foster care system and participating in a process that helps them achieve permanency in their home life. Taking on the project with another Bradley attorney also made it less daunting to tackle an appellate brief in a subject matter that was new to me."

*Soma Nwokolo, an associate in the Tampa office, assisted with the project*



"Prior to my involvement with this matter, I had no experience with dependency issues, nor had I ever run the lead on a state appeal. It was a learning experience from start to finish."

*Gio Giarratana, an associate in the Tampa office, assisted with the project*

## BRADLEY PROVIDES LEGAL SUPPORT TO MEN AND WOMEN IN RECOVERY – WASHINGTON, D.C.

For the last several years, Bradley lawyers have been volunteering at Helping Up Mission, an organization that provides hope to men and women experiencing homelessness, poverty, and addiction. The organization serves local residents by providing them with food, clothing, and shelter, along with the mental health, medical, educational, and vocational resources necessary to meet their physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs.



"Our team of lawyers and assistants offer pro bono legal counseling and representation to help the Mission's residents re-socialize during their recovery. Our clients are among the most vulnerable of society. Many of them face life-shattering legal consequences without the benefit of counsel. Every effort we extend can make a crucial difference in someone's recovery."

*John Parker Sweeney, a partner in the D.C. office, leads Bradley's volunteer efforts at Helping Up Mission*

## BRADLEY ATTORNEY ASSISTS NONPROFIT IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL ARTISTS - NASHVILLE

Bradley attorneys often help local organizations secure their nonprofit status so they can fulfill their missions and assist members of the community. Last year, attorney Savannah Kolodziej represented a new Nashville nonprofit dedicated to supporting local artists. The Arts and Business Council of Greater Nashville's Volunteer Lawyers & Professionals for the Arts program referred the organization to the firm for assistance with the formation process.



"My clients' nonprofit mission resonated with me deeply, and I knew their nonprofit would be of great service to the Nashville community and beyond. I believe being a lawyer is a privilege, and we, as lawyers, have a duty to serve those in need of our capabilities. Legal services can be cost prohibitive, so lawyers should perform pro bono work to ameliorate that burden."

*Savannah Kolodziej, an attorney in the Nashville office, represented the new nonprofit*

# 2020 Pro Bono Honors



## FIVE ATTORNEYS NAMED TO NORTH CAROLINA PRO BONO HONOR SOCIETY

In June 2020, five attorneys in the Charlotte office were named to the 2019 class of the North Carolina Pro Bono Honor Society: Matthew S. DeAntonio, Dexter C. Hobbs Jr., Erin Jane Illman, Dana C. Lumsden, and Steven T. Snyder. Each provided 50 or more hours of pro bono legal services in 2019 to North Carolinians who are unable to pay. The North Carolina Pro Bono Honor Society is administered by the North Carolina Pro Bono Resource Center, which was launched in 2016 as a program of the North Carolina Equal Access to Justice Commission. Matthew S. DeAntonio and Erin Jane Illman were also named to the Honor Society in May 2021, along with Corby C. Anderson and Jonathan E. Schulz.



## THREE ATTORNEYS RECOGNIZED FOR HELPING SECURE U.S. SUPREME COURT HEARING IN FEDERAL BANKRUPTCY LAW CASE

Bradley partners Scott Burnett Smith and Alex Dugan and associate Stephen C. Parsley received the Amicus Service Award from the International Municipal Lawyers Association (IMLA) for the amicus curiae brief they wrote on behalf of IMLA in support of the City of Chicago's petition for certiorari in the case of *Chicago v. Fulton* that the U.S. Supreme Court granted on December 18, 2019. Through the Amicus Service Award, IMLA recognizes lawyers who have been actively involved in legal advocacy for and on behalf of local government and IMLA, and who have done exemplary work to protect and advance local government interests.



## JAY BENDER RECEIVES ALABAMA COMMENDATION MEDAL FOR HIS WORK ON THE HAVEN ACT

Jay Bender, a partner in the Birmingham office, received an Alabama Commendation Medal at the 2020 Alabama Military Law Symposium from the Alabama Army National Guard for his work on drafting and helping to secure passage of the "Honoring American Veterans in Extreme Need Act of 2019" (HAVEN Act; H.R. 2938). The HAVEN Act, which passed Congress and was signed into law in 2018, changed U.S. bankruptcy laws to better protect the economic security of disabled veterans experiencing financial hardship.



Number of Pro Bono Hours Volunteered by Attorneys and Staff

**13,038**



Total Number of Bradley Attorneys Who Performed Pro Bono Work

**346**



Percentage of Bradley Partners Who Performed Pro Bono Work



Total Value of Pro Bono Hours

**OVER \$5 Million**



Percentage of Attorneys Who Performed 20 or More Hours of Pro Bono Work

**59%**



Number of Bradley Attorneys Who Worked on Behalf of Individuals on Death Row in 2020

**35**



Percentage of Bradley Associates Who Performed Pro Bono Work

**82%**



Total # of New Pro Bono Clients in 2020

**141**

Tiffany Graves oversees the development and administration of the firm's pro bono programs.

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For more information, visit [bradley.com/our-story/pro-bono](https://bradley.com/our-story/pro-bono)