

PRESS RELEASE

Baker Donelson Announces Expanded National Pro Bono Initiative

March 13, 2008

Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, ranked by *The National Law Journal* as one of the 100 largest law firms in the country, has announced the launch of an expanded firm-wide pro bono initiative that will establish a comprehensive, structured and institutionalized pro bono program within the Firm, dedicated to overseeing and expanding pro bono services to meet the legal needs of the disadvantaged.

Birmingham attorney Lisa W. Borden has been named to lead the program as the Firm's Pro Bono Shareholder, a new position for Baker Donelson. In her new role, Ms. Borden will serve as national coordinator of the Firm's pro bono efforts, developing, implementing and overseeing pro bono programs and initiatives for all lawyers in Baker Donelson's 17 offices across the southeastern U.S. and in Washington, D.C. Pro bono projects at Baker Donelson have traditionally been overseen by a Pro Bono Committee, whose members include both shareholders and associates, and who represent all of Baker Donelson's geographic locations. That Committee, which is led by Jonathan Cole of the Firm's Nashville office, will continue to oversee Baker Donelson's pro bono initiative as Ms. Borden takes on her new responsibilities.

"I'm very proud and grateful that Baker Donelson is taking this step in expanding its commitment to pro bono work across the Firm. This move represents the Firm's strong commitment to giving back to our communities and giving voice to those who would not otherwise be heard," said Ms. Borden, who has led Baker Donelson's Birmingham pro bono efforts since 2005. "My new role as Pro Bono Shareholder will allow me to devote my efforts to implementing a formal pro bono program that will more effectively marshal the Firm's national resources to provide legal representation to those who can't afford it. I'm very fortunate to have the opportunity to do this, and to be working with some of the most talented attorneys in the country to make it happen."

"Baker Donelson is stepping out and taking a leadership position in the Southeast in an extremely critical and important way," said Esther F. Lardent, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Pro Bono Institute at Georgetown University Law Center, a global public interest organization that provides research, analysis and technical assistance to law firms all over the world. "Pro Bono managers are the trend for top 100 law firms in the Northeast and other parts of the country – still only 20 of those top 100 have a devoted pro bono manager and office. The Southeast has lagged behind this trend until now. Baker Donelson's pro bono commitment and services will not only have a powerful impact on the people and communities they serve, it also raises the bar for other law firms in the Southeast to ramp up their programs as well."

Ms. Borden says that one of Baker Donelson's goals is to encourage every Baker Donelson attorney, from first year associate to prominent shareholder, to perform 20 to 50 hours or more of pro bono work every year. Baker Donelson currently has more than 530 attorneys firm-wide, making that commitment a substantial contribution of the Firm's resources.

Ben C. Adams Jr., Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Baker Donelson, said, "Our commitment has always included pro bono representation, which allows us to speak for even the most marginalized voices, as well as to make contributions that benefit the public good. Lisa's new role as Baker Donelson's Pro Bono Shareholder furthers our commitment to pro bono service. Together with Jonathan Cole, our Pro Bono Committee Chair, Lisa has been a driving force in developing and establishing the Firm's Pro Bono Policy. She

shares the Firm's vision for its pro bono contributions, which have strengthened and will continue to strengthen our communities, and ultimately, our Firm itself."

Baker Donelson's firm-wide pro bono efforts include work on a wide variety of issues, from death penalty litigation and representing victims of Hurricane Katrina to providing corporate legal services to minority business start-ups and non-profit organizations. While Baker Donelson attorneys have always engaged in pro bono work, says Ms. Borden, the Firm's expanded program will create a more intentional focus on working together across the Firm to maximize the impact of those efforts.

"Through the years, Baker Donelson has supported me and many other attorneys in doing pro bono work, and it has given me the opportunity to help our attorneys become involved in legal projects that give back to the community," said Ms. Borden. "Now, the Firm has given me the opportunity, and the challenge, to take our firm-wide commitment to justice to the next level."