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## Champions For Justice 2017

Roger Williams University School of Law

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December 21, 2016

# ***Champions for Justice***

Please join us for a special evening  
to celebrate and support the students, alumni, partners  
and friends whose exceptional devotion to social justice  
increases access to justice for all.

**Friday, January 27, 2017**

**Omni Providence Hotel**

**One West Exchange Street**

**Champions for Justice Reception**

**6:00 p.m.**

**Dinner, Awards & Auction**

**6:45 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

This year's Public Interest Auction will feature opportunities to connect with the RWU Law community of champions. Each of the items auctioned this evening will focus on strengthening professional connections and building new relationships. Tonight is not about auctioning "stuff." Instead, most of the auction items are "experience packages" featuring individuals who share our mission of public service, access to justice and the value of experiential education.

***Registration is required for this event.*** Tickets will not be available at the door. Online registration closes on Friday, January 20, 2017.

**To purchase tickets visit:**

**<http://lawalumni.rwu.edu/champions2017>**

For event registration questions, please call Special Events at (401) 254-3166.

Champions for Justice is quickly becoming a hallmark of the Rhode Island legal landscape, and we are proud to count so many as friends and supporters of the Law School. Proceeds from the evening will benefit the many social justice programs within RWU Law:

Alternative Spring Break

Pro Bono Collaborative

Public Interest Clinical Externships

Public Interest Summer Stipends

RWU Law Clinics

### **Connect With Us**

For event and package details, visit [law.rwu.edu/go/cfj](http://law.rwu.edu/go/cfj) or search **#RWULawChampions** on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

We look forward to an exciting evening!

#### **Presenting Sponsor**



#### **Dinner Sponsor**



#### **Reception Sponsor**



### **Committee & Board**

#### **Honors the 2017 Champions...**

#### **2017 Champion for Justice**



**STEPHEN M. PRIGNANO, ESQ.**

Steve has practiced law in Rhode Island for 30 years, first as a partner at the former Edwards & Angell LLP, and more recently as a partner at McIntyre Tate LLP. Throughout his career he has shown a deep and abiding commitment to the lawyer's professional responsibility to serve the community and those unable to afford legal help. Steve has participated in, supported, championed, and provided invaluable advice and counsel to the Pro Bono Collaborative (PBC) since its creation in 2006. As a founding member of the PBC's Advisory Board, Steve was instrumental in developing strategies to make the PBC sustainable and provided a thoughtful and critical voice to the Board's programmatic discussions. Steve brought his firm into the PBC as a leading pro bono partner, one of the PBC's most enduring and active partners for over 10 years. In two recent PBC projects, Steve expended innumerable hours providing pro bono legal service to the H.O.P.E. Federal Re-Entry Court and its participants. He also represented the PBC Advisory Board in drafting and submitting an amicus brief and official comments to the RI Supreme Court on limited scope representation, an issue critically important to access to justice. Steve has also been an active and award-winning participant in the RI Bar Association's pro bono program.

**2017 Community Partner Champion**



### **RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP**

The RI Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP) was established to combat the legal issues interfering with the health and safety of children and families. Housed at Hasbro Children's Hospital and Memorial Hospital's Family Care Center, the MLP works in collaboration with the Rhode Island Center for Law and Public Policy, Brown Medical School, hospital staff, and RWU Law students to provide holistic legal representation to families where social conditions (e.g., unsafe housing with lead or mold) impact children's health. The Partnership's Program Director, Jeannine Casselman, has advocated on behalf of thousands of children and their families during her tenure. Despite an enormous caseload of clients and limited funding, the MLP not only provides high quality legal services, but also takes the time to train and engage RWU Law students through externships, summer internships, and pro bono projects. Through Jeannine's mentorship and passion, our law students have learned how to be compassionate, creative, and zealous advocates. Additionally, in partnership with RWU Law's Pro Bono Collaborative, the MLP has engaged law firms and individual attorneys in pro bono special education law and guardianship matters. The MLP has been an extraordinary community partner to RWU Law and we are honored to be a part of the important work that they do.

### **2017 Alumni Public Interest Champion**



**SWAPNA YELURI, ESQ. L'07**

Swapna has devoted her career to serving low-income clients, children, and veterans. She is currently the Director of Pro Bono Programs for the Homeless Persons Representation Project (HPRP) in Baltimore where she represents veterans seeking benefits and discharge upgrades; assists low-income clients with criminal records expungement; and recruits, trains, and supervises volunteer attorneys representing homeless veterans. Prior to joining HPRP, Swapna spent eight years at Maryland Legal Aid representing children in child welfare and special education proceedings. She also created and worked in the Joining Forces Veterans Project. Swapna is active in the community serving as a mentor through Community Law in Action, an organization that empowers young people to promote change in their communities. As treasurer for the Veterans' Affairs and Military Law Section of the Maryland State Bar Association, Swapna continues to develop programs to assist veterans. While at RWU Law, Swapna was the president of the Multicultural Law Students Association, participated in the Criminal Defense Clinic, and won the New England Regional Best Brief Award for the National Moot Court Competition. Prior to law school, Swapna was the Program Coordinator and Summer Program Director for Bridge to Success, a mentoring program between Roger Williams University and high school students in under-resourced communities.

**2017 Pro Bono Collaborative Champion**



**PATRICK T. JONES, ESQ.**

RWU Law and the Pro Bono Collaborative (PBC) are very proud to honor Patrick T. Jones, Esq. as the 2017 Pro Bono Collaborative Champion. Founding partner of Jones Kelleher LLP and of Cooley Manion Jones LLP, Pat is renowned for his outstanding philanthropy, wise counsel, and inspirational support.

Through his many years of meaningful and personal dedication, Pat has helped to propel the PBC into the robust program that it is today – facilitating legal assistance to those most in need and providing a strong voice for access to justice in Rhode Island. RWU Law and the PBC are forever grateful to Pat for his exceptional contributions in support of pro bono legal service.