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# FOCUS

## President's Message

**Lori Shapiro**

We are working hard to fulfill our mission to: *"add value to a diverse community of in-house counsel through educational programs, public service and professional relationships."*

I am very excited about the ambitious agenda of projects and initiatives that are being worked on by your board of directors this year! We met on Friday, April 18, 2008, and I wanted to share some of our discussions and the upcoming events on which we are focusing (and about which you can read more in this edition).

We welcome your input and participation in the activities of our chapter. **WE NEED YOUR HELP AND ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT TO SUCCEED IN OUR GOALS FOR 2008 AND TO CARRY THESE INITIATIVES FORWARD TO 2009!**

- Goals for 2008
  - Membership and Communications
    - In the areas of membership and communication, we strive to reach out to the in-house law departments of existing members and to local bar association contacts to increase interest and participation in our chapter
  - Community Outreach
    - In the area of community outreach, we strive to strengthen the link between our minority law student internship program and our generous law firm sponsors, and to identify a new hands-on community service initiative for ACC-GA to be implemented in 2009.

- Programs
  - In the area of programs, we strive to ensure that our existing programming is interesting and innovative, meeting the needs and desires of our members and to increase the opportunities for networking and social interaction among our membership.
- Upcoming Events
  - We are very excited to offer our members the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of events and programs, and we need your help to ensure that these programs are a great success for you and for our chapter.
    - We continue to provide monthly lunch meetings and CLE events, as well as our annual Braves/CLE program in July, our annual Golf, Tennis and Spa event scheduled for August 18, 2008, and our annual Community Day of Service, which will be scheduled around September of this year.

*A BIG Thank You to our board members and committee members who are working hard to plan these events, and to the Ledlie Group, which is assisting us in communicating about them to our members and the community at large.*

- New Ideas and Initiatives
  - In-house Counsel Law School Tournament: an opportunity for you to participate with local law school



students, who will compete in an event that helps them understand what it is like to be in-house counsel. Please see the article about this tournament in this edition of the newsletter, and contact Matt Schwartz if you are interested in participating in the planning of this new and innovative initiative.

- Georgia Mini-MBA Program: a program that will be offered in cooperation with a respected business school and will provide an opportunity for in-house counsel to learn about the non-legal side of operating a business. If you are interested in assisting with the planning for this important program, please contact Tom Schroeder.
- Development of our Newest Pro Bono Initiative: We are looking for a committee to assist in the development of a new pro bono/community service initiative for the chapter in accordance with our community outreach goals. If you are interested in being involved in this exciting event, please contact me at [shapiro1@graphicpkg.com](mailto:shapiro1@graphicpkg.com), or John Tanner at [jtanner@mcgriff.com](mailto:jtanner@mcgriff.com).

We have a great year planned for ACC-Georgia! Please provide us with your feedback and suggestions about what you would like to see as we go forward in 2008, and ways that we can better serve you.

Happy Spring! Best Regards,  
Lori Shapiro

# (R)evolution in the Law Firm Service Market

Susan Hackett

Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC)

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**THESIS:** Traditional law firm business models for providing legal services and law school training for lawyers are not necessarily aligned with what corporate clients want: value-driven, high-quality legal services that deliver performance for a reasonable cost and develop lawyers as both savvy counselors and efficient business partners.

**THE PROBLEM:** Sometimes I feel like the “old lady of the in-house bar” (even at 47) ... I’ve been at ACC for close to 20 years. If one thing has remained a constant, it’s that members are less than satisfied with their outside counsel relationships. They may like their outside lawyers (or at least some of them), and they may agree that there’s incredible expertise out there—there is no shortage of smarts or talent. They may even tell you about the 4,017 different metrics and mechanisms that they employ to assure themselves that they’ve got a handle on their outside spend. But still ...

... Even in the best relationships, in-house counsel often don’t feel their outside costs are predictable or value-driven. Somehow or another, for all that they like in their outside lawyers, they have a lot of concerns regarding the firms they employ. Somehow or another, more time often is spent arguing over the bill after the fact than in setting expectations and goals upfront that everyone can manage to meet. Somehow, they feel that more precious time is spent on process than on counseling.

Another thing that hasn’t changed is that clients aren’t happy about their in-house lawyers’ inability to get a handle on their ever-increasing legal spend. The “inelasticity” of the price increases in the law firm business is, frankly, mind-boggling. In every other marketplace of services, prices go up and down with the economy or as new efficiencies or ideas surface and talent moves about. At firms, especially bigger firms, prices go up 6 percent per year, and we all have a sneaking suspicion that even if we negotiate a 10 percent price reduc-

tion on our matter, they’ll simply bill us for 15 percent more “service.” And all this happens at the same time that in-house departments, across the board, have decreased their own expenses, while at the same time increasing efficiencies and productivity.

Accordingly, a lot of very unhappy corporate counsel tell me that their corporate procurement departments are closely scrutinizing the legal department and their spend. And increasingly pressured managing in-house managers counsel look for the fix: they host beauty contests, develop convergence strategies, apply collars and cuffs and whatever’s new in fee management, they set up dashboards and compare costs by firm and regions and matter type and turnaround time, and they spend lots of time training their lawyers to engage in early case assessment. While some have some success (and while none of these are “bad” ideas), at best, all this tinkering does little more than rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic.

Some blame the ubiquitous billable hour and its perverse drivers toward inefficient and terribly expensive results. Some blame the morph of law firms (professional entities) to a business model (profit driven). Others point to the almighty “profit per partner” ratings, highly leveraged pools of stunningly inexperienced and overpriced associates, and an increasingly de-equalized middle class of partners. Indeed, one of the most disturbing trends in all of this mess and despite the tall stacks of money paid out by clients is the incredible number of lawyers who are either pushed out of the profession, or run screaming from the building, often before they’ve enjoyed any semblance of the career and professional fulfillment we all envisioned we’d have when we were in law school.

In-house counsel from large departments, small departments, and every kind of company in every kind of industry are very powerful people and we can choose to hire

whom we want—everyone says so, right? And yet, we just can’t seem to get outside counsel and their costs “under control.”

**THE SOLUTION:** So I say: Time to roll our sleeves up and talk about what we *can* do if we work together to create long-term institutional change, rather than railing that everything we try on our own doesn’t return results consistent with our expectations—nothing changes on the larger scale.

**Revolution + Evolution = (R)evolution?**

**SETTING EXPECTATIONS:** I recognize that nothing anyone can do will change everything overnight, and lots of different folks want lots of different things, so there’s not even consensus around what success might look like even if we could envision it. So here’s what we ask and what we think is a reasonable expectation: join ACC in thinking like a revolutionary change agent (that is, thinking big picture and out of the box), but also help us implement real reform by working on evolutionary advances over time (that is, focus on practical solutions).

**The Proposition: ACC’s Value Challenge—Re-connecting value to the cost of legal services.**

**What ACC’s Value Challenge is and isn’t:** The value challenge is not an answer, but a movement. It’s not about laying blame; it’s about creating responsibility for change.

So let’s all agree that firms need to be responsible for addressing client dissatisfaction. And let’s recognize that no one’s saying that firms shouldn’t profit; on the contrary, firms must be sustainable entities. Let’s also get it straight: a focus on connecting cost to value does not mean that everything should be cheap or that we’ll lose our commitment to quality. There are lots of expensive lawyers out there who are worth every penny (the problem is the expensive lawyers who aren’t), and there are many high quality

lawyers who don't cost what some of their peers in big firm practices charge for the same services.

On the corporate counsel side, if firms are providing services we aren't happy with, why do we keep buying those services, thereby enabling inefficiency, inflated cost structures and poor practices? It's in-house counsel's responsibility to better manage their spend, help firms understand what we and our clients want, and reward outside counsel who deliver the outcomes we've asked for. If we're to convince corporate management that we know what we're doing, we better start recognizing that in 2008, no one gets hired or promoted just for retaining the expensive firms with big reputations. Regardless of their ranking status, in-house counsel will be evaluated for managing firms that provide value and results.

Accordingly, ACC will:

- promote intelligent and facilitated dialogue among corporate counsel, law firms, and eventually other stakeholders, including law schools, to help drive alignment and focus on value;
- develop methodologies and metrics that corporate counsel can use to assess the strengths and weaknesses of law firm vendors;
- create tools that in-house counsel and firms can share to drive change in the performance of valued legal services; and
- enhance awareness and promote communication of success stories in achieving value and alignment—creating practical benchmarking.

To accomplish these goals we're prepared to really dig in, dig deep, and commit ACC resources and stake our reputation for delivering results. While we have lots of ideas on tap and will be working on several plans concurrently, I wanted to use this forum to discuss an early role for chapter leaders and members:

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?—Getting Started.** We hope to engage members, local law firm leadership, ACC chapters, local and national bar groups, law schools, and other stakeholders to discuss what we should

do and how we should do it in a highly interactive discussion format involving small groups focused on delivering recommendations and direction. These conversations will cover a variety of topics, discuss best practices at work, help define “value” in legal services, discuss alternative models for law firms to use to conduct their business and to cost/bill their work, and really drill in on retention, training/development, and promotion of talent (at the entry level, in the middle ranks, and at the highest end of business). We will use the resulting intelligence to help shape more and better tools, resources, models for consideration, best practices and so on. In other words, we'll evolve together.

You will also be receiving an email soon (depending on publication dates, some of you may have already received it) from ACC's Value Challenge Steering Committee that asks you some simple survey questions that will allow us to collect some baseline information and feedback to target meaningful dialogue in these first sessions. Please watch for it and invest the 3-5 minutes it will take to complete this survey (it's online, so it's simple to do).

### **WHAT WE HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH: Desired Outcomes**

1. Create a national dialog about the need to reconnect value to costs, especially within the law firm community, with a common language and framework that ACC will have helped define and that our members will help drive.
2. Identify and empower core groups of leaders in the in-house and outside firm communities, as well as in consulting houses, vendor organizations, legal and business media, and the law school community: engage them and then solicit more participants every year.
3. Offer a tool kit for use by in-house counsel and another for outside firms (and shared resources, as well, of course), containing leading practices, management tools, models for managing value, and networks by which participants in this process can communicate their experiences and ask questions of each other, including “who do you use and how do you do this?”

4. Nourish the development of an in-house client community that gives law firms reasonable comfort that their efforts to implement change will be supported and rewarded.
5. Encourage law firms that are more focused on retention of talent valued by clients, and matter management driven by the client's expectations and needs.
6. Foster greater satisfaction and pride in their work for both inside and outside lawyers—spending less time bickering over bills and more time focused on solving client problems.
7. Ensure recognition by senior (non-legal) management that in-house counsel are taking the lead, rather than simply being reactive, and that they are exercising strong business skills in balancing their inside and outside legal spend—targeting results and outcomes, rather than just hoping to manage an unpredictable process.

*All of this is in pursuit of perhaps the most important outcome: a legal profession in which all attorneys deliver value.*

As the “increasingly mature” lady of the in-house bar, I see this initiative as the culmination of my career with this organization to date; yeah, I guess that makes it personal for me. But if these problems, and your dissatisfaction with the way things are is personal to you, too, please join me in starting the ACC Value Challenge (R)evolution. We here at ACC can think of nothing that's more *valuable* that we can offer you, your clients and our profession.

Susan Hackett: [hackett@acc.com](mailto:hackett@acc.com)

## April 2008 Panel on Generational Diversity in the Workplace

By Keisha Hudson, Senior Business Development Director, Special Counsel

The April 2008 lunch meeting tackled the hot button topic of generational diversity in the workplace. The discussion, titled, *“Across the Generational Divide: Strategies for Managing Boomers, Xers & Ys,”* was sponsored by the Atlanta office of Special Counsel, the largest provider of legal staffing services to corporate legal departments and law firms nationwide. Senior Business Development Director, Keisha Hudson, moderated the event. Panelists included: Tom Tallmadge, assistant general counsel, S1 Enterprises; Lucia Duncan, attorney, John Deere Agri Services; Bettina Yip, labor & employment counsel, AT&T Mobility; and Samuel Matchett, partner, King & Spalding. Participants discussed how to leverage the advantages of generational diversity to maximize recruiting, management, and retention initiatives within legal work environments.

The afternoon began with a brief overview of the four generations currently represented in the workforce—traditionalists, baby boomers, generation X, and millennials. The group examined each generation’s characteristics, influences, work styles and motivations. The panel then segued into a dialogue of how generational diversity impacts their own work environments as well as possible solutions to real and perceived conflicts between generations. Their comments were extremely insightful. For example, Mr. Matchett pointed out that generational conflict has always existed. In general most law firm associates represent generation X and millennials. Just like the generation before him, Mr. Matchett has to adapt to the associates he supervises daily. However, the end goal is the same—to

develop good lawyers. Mr. Matchett emphasized that while technology gives lawyers the ability to work from anywhere, new lawyers still need “face time” in the office with their peers and experienced attorneys in order to grasp the nuances of building a law practice. This cannot be done remotely. Nonetheless, he also pointed out that once trust is established in the associate’s abilities, then allowing for more flexibility their schedules definitely should be an option. The essential element is open communication and cooperation between the generations.

As an in-house attorney for the international wireless company, AT&T Mobility, Ms. Yip is faced with how to deal with millennials both as employees and as customers. She specifically pointed out that parents are playing a larger (if not somewhat awkward) role in the professional lives of their children. In kind, the millennials are seeking the counsel of their parents in their career decisions. Unlike in the past, when parents offered advice and made suggestions, they are now directly involved in everything from the interview process to termination.

According to Ms. Duncan, an attorney with John Deere Agri Services, it is vital to capture the wealth of knowledge accumulated by traditionalists and boomers. John Deere has been in operation for more than 170 years. Therefore, continuity is very important. The company has started to proactively address the possible challenges of generational diversity by instituting mentoring programs and creating a repository of information that is accessible by

all John Deere employees. The company is establishing best practices to ensure that it does not suffer from the possible “brain drain” that may affect other companies as boomers leave their current positions.

Mr. Tallmadge works for a technology company, and, as such, most of his co-workers represent either generation X or millennials. This configuration clearly impacts his work, as he has a great amount of flexibility on the job, including the ability to work from home. The environment is also very high energy, independent, and pioneering—much different from previous employers where the influence of traditionalists and boomers encouraged a much more structured and team focused approach to work.

Communication and open-mindedness were the common threads throughout the discussion. As the boomers scale back their work life and millennials enter the workforce at record numbers, change is to be expected. Companies that capitalize on the strengths that all generations bring to their jobs are positioned for success. As Mr. Matchett pointed out, it is important to step back and find the best way to relate to one another. In our hectic lives we sometimes neglect to think about the motivations behind someone’s actions and words. We must acknowledge the differences and learn methods to work through them to create an efficient and effective work environment.

## Chapter News

### Join Us for Exciting ACC-Georgia 2008 Programs Throughout the Year

Please join us at Maggiano's Little Italy at Cumberland Mall for the following interesting programs that have been scheduled for 2008 so far:

- May 13, lunch program titled "Impact of the 'Subprime Crisis': The Forecast and the Search for Solutions," sponsored by Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice, PLLC;
- June 10, lunch program titled "Challenging Conventional Wisdom in the Defense of Complex Litigation," sponsored by Bondurant, Mixson & Elmore;
- August 12, lunch program regarding the Pro Bono Alliance, sponsored by Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP;
- September 9, Annual Labor Law Update CLE, sponsored by Jackson Lewis LLP; and
- October 14, lunch program titled "Intellectual Property Update and Developing an IP Strategy for Innovation," sponsored by Woodcock Washburn LLP.

We appreciate our generous sponsors! Please contact Henry Abelman at 678.612.7872 or [henry@abelman.com](mailto:henry@abelman.com), or Stephen Kaplan at 770.828.3011 or [stephen.kaplan@compucredit.com](mailto:stephen.kaplan@compucredit.com) if you are interested in participating in or sponsoring a future program.

For more information on upcoming chapter programs, go to [www.acc.com/chapters/georgia.php](http://www.acc.com/chapters/georgia.php).

### Please Volunteer for the In-house Counsel Law School Tournament

ACC-Georgia is actively seeking volunteers to help organize an exciting new project designed to promote in-house careers to future lawyers—The inaugural ACC-Georgia In-house Counsel Law School Tournament will be a competition in which all five Georgia area law schools will be invited to be represented by their most talented students. The contest will function like a moot court competition, however instead of advocating before an appellate bench, the students will be in the hot seat as the general counsel of a corpo-

ration advising its board of directors about how to navigate thorny, cutting-edge legal issues. During their performances, the students must demonstrate risk assessment abilities, creativity, business acumen, broad knowledge of applicable substantive law, and a commitment to professionalism and ethics. The fictitious board (who will judge the contestants) will consist of CEOs and general counsel from prominent Atlanta corporations. The chapter needs assistance in all aspects of planning the tournament, including researching and drafting the problem, preparing the "board brief" (for the judges), identifying appropriate judges, and developing the tournament rules. If you are interested in participating in this event, please contact the committee chair of this program, Matt Schwartz (chapter secretary), by emailing him at [mhs426@yahoo.com](mailto:mhs426@yahoo.com) (please make sure to write "ACC Tournament" in the subject heading).

### Sponsorships Positions Running Out for ACC-GA's Largest Networking and Charity Event: Golf/Tennis/Spa to Benefit Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta

Time and spaces are running low for law firms and law-related vendors to sponsor the event planned to be the largest law-related charity event in the state for 2008! The event is scheduled for August 18, 2008.

Last year's event, which only included Golf and Tennis, drew over 125 participants and 20+ sponsors. This year, ACC-GA is planning for over 225 participants and 30 or more sponsors!

The event will be "closed format," meaning ONLY sponsors, their guests, and in-house counsel may participate. This ensures our sponsors receive exclusive and excellent access to potential clients who will be participating.

Any law-related organizations, including law firms, law-related service providers, and others, may apply for sponsorship by contacting Tournament Chair Stephen Kaplan at [stephen.kaplan@compucredit.com](mailto:stephen.kaplan@compucredit.com). Do so today, as sponsorships are limited and are going fast!

Current Committed Sponsors include:

- Kilpatrick Stockton, LLP
- Troutman Sanders LLP
- Swift Currie McGhee & Hiers, LLP
- Alston + Bird, LLP; Holland + Knight, LLP; Huron Consulting Group; Thomson West; Woodcock Washburn LLP
- Bondurant, Mixson, & Elmore, L.L.P.; CT, A Wolters Kluwer Business; HIRE-Counsel; Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.; Jones Day; Littler Mendelson P.C.; Morris, Manning & Martin LLP; McGuire Woods, LLP; SpencerStuart; Sutherland Asbill & Brennan, L.L.P.; Thomas, Kayden, Horstemeyer & Risley, L.L.P.; Weinberg, Wheeler, Hudgins, Gunn & Dial, LLC.
- Connect Staffing; Kelly Law Registry, Miller and Martin PLLC
- Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell LLP; Metropolitan Technologies; R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company; The Ledlie Group; Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, L.L.P.

### ACC-GA Proudly Sponsors EPIC Intern at Pro Bono Partnership

ACC-GA is proud to be a sponsor of the Emory Public Interest Committee (EPIC) internship again this year. EPIC is a student-run organization that promotes public interest law at Emory. The organization provides grants for students who volunteer in unpaid legal internships during the summer.

Last year, EPIC raised more than \$124,000, providing 26 summer grants for rising second- and third-year students volunteering in public sector jobs. Grant recipients worked at a variety of local and national organizations, including the National Wildlife Federation in Washington; the Women's Law Project in Philadelphia; the Institute for Justice in Arlington, Va.; Lambda Legal in Atlanta; and the DeKalb County Public Defender's Office in Decatur, Ga.

This year, the EPIC intern sponsored by ACC-GA is Daniel Shulak, who will be working at the Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta.

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## ACC-GA Joins Forces with Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta

Some things just go together like milk and cookies, summer and baseball, and Tom and Jerry. It's time to add a new pair to that list: Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta and the Association of Corporate Counsel, Georgia Chapter (ACC-GA).

The mission of Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta (PBP-ATL) is to make it as easy and enjoyable as possible for in-house and transactional counsel to provide valuable pro bono services for nonprofit agencies serving low-income and disadvantaged individuals in the greater Atlanta area. A partnership volunteer might revise an employee handbook, review a contract, or even register a trademark for a nonprofit client. The partnership matches both in-house and law firm transactional attorneys with pro bono legal matters, but with a board made up exclusively of in-house counsel from Atlanta corporations such as Coca-Cola, GE Energy, Southern Company, and Delta, their main focus is on in-house attorneys.

The relationship between the partnership and ACC-GA began last year when Pro

Bono Partnership of Atlanta was the chosen beneficiary of almost \$40,000 raised at the first annual ACC-GA Golf and Tennis Tournament. The attached pictures show some of the many participants in that great event! After the legal nonprofit was chosen again as the beneficiary for the 2008 Golf, Tennis & Spa Event, it only seemed natural that the two organizations would go forward in a relationship that involved more than just recreation.

The pairing between ACC-GA and PBP-ATL will present great opportunities for in-house counsel to get involved in pro bono work. Already in the planning stages is an ACC-GA monthly luncheon on August 12, 2008, sponsored by Sutherland, Asbill & Brennan on "Pro Bono For the In-house Lawyer," which will feature a panel of your colleagues discussing best practices for encouraging pro bono in

their legal department. If you have other ideas for pro bono-related events or if your company would like to learn more about pro bono opportunities for your in-house legal department, please feel free to contact John Tanner, ACC-GA vp-outreach ([jtanner@mcgriff.com](mailto:jtanner@mcgriff.com)), or Rachel Epps Spears, executive director of Pro Bono Partner-

ship of Atlanta ([rachel.spears@pbpatl.org](mailto:rachel.spears@pbpatl.org)). Read more about the Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta in the article below.



## Pro Bono Partnership Helps In-house Lawyers Do Pro Bono

By Kristen Ristino

When Elizabeth Finn Johnson, senior counsel in litigation and employment for The Coca Cola Company, signed up as a volunteer for Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta (PBP), she indicated that she had an interest in nonprofits serving children.

PBP matches nonprofits in metropolitan Atlanta that need but can't afford legal assistance with transactional attorneys from corporations and law firms who want to do pro bono work. The legal work is free to nonprofits that qualify.

Rachel Epps Spears, executive director of the Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta, remembered Elizabeth's interest when a child-serving nonprofit requested assistance with employment legal issues.

"In this case I called her and said I thought this might suit her interests and abilities and she immediately said yes," said Spears.

Johnson was one of the first attorneys to offer her services to PBP that began serving clients in September 2005. Her employer, Coca Cola is one of the founding partners of PBP and one of her colleagues from Coca Cola, Michael J. Kline was the organization's first Board Chair. About 15 attorneys from Coca-Cola's legal department have volunteered for PBP on over 35 different legal matters and the company was the recipient of PBP's 2007 Company of the Year Award and In-House Volunteer of the Year Award (Dara Redler).

"Our legal division at Coca Cola is very committed to pro bono work and PBP provides for us a way of getting our people to participate in pro bono work," said Johnson.

PBP's clients are small, community-based nonprofits that serve low-income or disadvantaged individuals. PBP connects them with transactional attorneys that handle matters such as revising bylaws, reviewing contracts, drafting personnel policies, and registering trademarks.

Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta focuses its efforts on providing pro bono opportunities to in-house attorneys by finding matters which are discrete, manageable, and in

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the volunteer's area of expertise. Spears screens all clients before matching them with attorneys and attends the initial meeting between the client and the volunteer.

"The Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta is great because it has fulfilled a need for these nonprofits and for transactional attorneys that was unmet in an organized way in our community," said Johnson.

Johnson gave 15 to 20 hours of her time to the Georgia Center for Children, an advocacy organization that works with sexually abused children. She advised the organization on an employee handbook and on a personnel issue.

"Those things are always difficult and having the expertise of someone with a tremendous amount of experience just helped us to resolve the issues we needed to address effectively and I think because of her involvement we avoided some painful mistakes," said LaVann Landrum, executive director of the Georgia Center for Children.

Landrum said without PBP her small organization, with an annual budget of \$1 million, would have had to take money away from services for children to resolve their legal issue. PBP saved her organization thousands of dollars.

Several corporations and law firms in Atlanta founded PBP including The Coca-Cola Company, GE Energy, AGL Resources, BellSouth Corporation (now AT&T), Kilpatrick Stockton, King & Spalding, and Sutherland, Asbill & Brennan, which also donates office space to the organization.

Since PBP opened its doors three years ago it has assisted about 250 nonprofit clients with more than 450 legal matters. More than 400 active volunteer attorneys have taken on matters with PBP.

The majority of PBP volunteers come from law firms and Spears would like to get more in-house attorneys involved. PBP is also focusing on outreach to nonprofits to make them aware of the services available to them.

Spears, a former tax-exempt bond attorney with King & Spalding, said PBP's three-person staff is reaching out to nonprofits and word is spreading of their services. The organization has taken off much faster than many people expected and continues to grow, said Spears.

Corporate attorneys who are interested in signing up to receive PBP's monthly email with available volunteer opportunities can contact Spears at 404.407.5059 or rachel.spears@pbpatl.org, or visit [www.pbpatl.org](http://www.pbpatl.org).

*Original article printed in the Atlanta Business Chronicle, April 2006.*