

Drinker Biddle

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 14, 2009

Contact: John M. Byrne | 215-988-2597 | John.Byrne@dbr.com

Drinker Biddle Launches Pro Bono Initiative In Memory of Barbara McDowell

Project Continues Important Work of Veteran D.C. Legal Aid Society Lawyer

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The national law firm Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP has launched the Barbara McDowell Pro Bono Initiative, a program that will significantly and positively impact social justice concerns faced by indigent, charitable or civic groups unable to afford legal services.

The concept of the new Pro Bono Initiative derives from the work championed by the late Barbara McDowell, a national leader in public interest advocacy who died of brain cancer this past January and served as the founding director of the Appellate Advocacy Project of the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia. McDowell was the wife of Drinker Biddle partner Jerry Hartman, who will serve as director of the Initiative.

“The Initiative will enhance the economic, health, social condition and civil liberties of low-income and disadvantaged people through litigation, legislative and administrative rule-making engagements across a broad range of subject matters, including low-income housing, political asylum, domestic violence, human trafficking, children’s rights, immigration and disparities in community services, and opportunities for economic development,” said Hartman.

“We are thrilled that Barbara McDowell’s legacy of commitment, compassion and excellence has inspired Drinker Biddle to launch this Pro Bono Initiative to continue the work that was so important to her,” said Jonathan M. Smith, executive director of the Legal Aid Society. “Barbara was a tireless advocate with extraordinary talent who was a voice for justice and the poor in the D.C. Court of Appeals.”

McDowell was a distinguished lawyer and public servant who just last year received the Rex E. Lee Advocacy and Public Service Award as the outstanding appellate advocate of the year. At the presentation of that award, she was aptly described as “one of the outstanding appellate advocates of her generation.” She had been a partner at Jones Day and then served as an Assistant to the Solicitor General in the U.S. Department of Justice from 1997 to 2004, where she argued 18 cases before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Over the last four years, McDowell established and directed the appellate project at the Legal Aid Society. While at Legal Aid, she handled more than 70 matters and won several important cases establishing the rights of the poor in the areas of housing, public benefits and domestic violence. She also trained young lawyers, guiding their growth and honing their skills. The Legal Aid Society has named its appellate advocacy program after her and has established a supporting endowment in her name.

Drinker Biddle Launches Barbara McDowell Pro Bono Initiative

Page 2 – April 14, 2009

“The extraordinary work done by Barbara McDowell on behalf of the disadvantaged and downtrodden have inspired a generation of public advocacy lawyers and endowed the Legal Aid Society with a rich and compelling record of legal human rights achievement,” said Anita Cicero, partner in charge of Drinker Biddle’s Washington office. “We are extremely pleased that Jerry Hartman has agreed to lead the Pro Bono Initiative and to engage us all in furthering the work that Barbara did while she was at the Legal Aid Society.”

Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP is a national law firm with nearly 700 lawyers in 12 offices who concentrate their practices in areas such as government and regulatory affairs, commercial litigation, corporate and securities, real estate, corporate restructuring, intellectual property, labor and employment, environmental, communications litigation, products liability and mass tort litigation, health care, employee benefits and executive compensation, insurance coverage, investment management, life insurance and annuities, and private client services.