

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Offices
FROM: Alfred W. Putnam, Jr.
Andrew C. Kassner
DATE: April 29, 2014
RE: Servant of Justice Award – Barbara McDowell

Tonight, the Legal Aid Society of Washington, D.C., will bestow its highest honor - the Servant of Justice Award – on Barbara McDowell, the late wife of our partner Jerry Hartman. The award will be presented at Legal Aid’s annual dinner by Sarah Barringer Gordon, Professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, and Barbara’s friend and former roommate. Jerry will accept the award on Barbara’s behalf.

Before her death in 2009, Barbara was the Assistant to the Solicitor General of the United States and the Founding Director of the Appellate Advocacy Project (AAP) for the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia. She handled a broad range of cases that developed important law for families, individuals and communities living in poverty. Barbara worked to protect the rights of women escaping domestic violence, low-income tenants, persons with disabilities, and many others. While at Legal Aid, she handled more than 70 matters and won several important cases establishing the rights of the poor. Several of her Legal Aid cases have national significance.

The Barbara McDowell and Gerald Hartman Foundation continues Barbara’s work today. The Foundation grants funds to tax-exempt organizations that promote the foundation’s mission through litigation designed to improve the economic well-being, social conditions, and civil liberties of disadvantaged persons and groups throughout the United States.

Barbara’s spirit is also very much a part of our firm’s pro bono efforts. Shortly after Barbara’s death, the firm launched the Barbara McDowell Pro Bono Initiative, which undertakes high impact pro bono cases in a variety of jurisdictions. Recently, partnering with the Foundation, Drinker Biddle lawyers helped expose the unfair treatment of death row prisoners in *Knox v. Mississippi*,

and partnered with the Equal Rights Center to release a report revealing unfair treatment of Latinos seeking rental housing across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

We salute the Legal Aid Society for honoring Barbara tonight and we are proud to be a continuing part of her legacy.