



IN THIS ISSUE:

- ▶ Simpson Thacher Represents NYCLU Pro Bono in Suit Against the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
- ▶ Simpson Thacher Wins Release of Pro Bono Client After Court Cuts Over Thirty Years of His Sentence
- ▶ Simpson Thacher and Morgan Stanley Sponsor 7th Equal Justice Works Fellow to Work at Brooklyn Legal Services
- ▶ Simpson Thacher Obtains SIJS and Permanent Residence Status for Unaccompanied Minor After Over Five Years of Representation
- ▶ Simpson Thacher Hosts Presentations for New York Entrepreneurs
- ▶ Simpson Thacher Team Helps Client Remove Collateral Consequences of Criminal Convictions
- ▶ Awards, Events & Mentions

Simpson Thacher Represents NYCLU Pro Bono in Suit Against the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision

Simpson Thacher is serving as pro bono counsel for the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) in a lawsuit filed in January 2023 against the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS). The lawsuit alleges that DOCCS unlawfully denied in part NYCLU's Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request seeking records relating to alleged misconduct by DOCCS' corrections and parole officers. NYCLU submitted a FOIL request on October 16, 2020 seeking public records specifically authorized to be disclosed under state FOIL after New York's repeal of Civil Rights Law § 50-a, a statute that had been used for decades to bar the disclosure of misconduct by law enforcement. The lawsuit received media coverage by several publications, including the *New York Law Journal*, *Yahoo!*, *Buffalo News* and *Ithaca Journal*. The Simpson Thacher team includes Partner **Linton Mann III** and Associates **Alison Sher**, **Nicole Palmadesso** and **Kelsey Vickery**.

Simpson Thacher Wins Release of Pro Bono Client After Court Cuts Over Thirty Years of His Sentence

Simpson Thacher successfully secured a reduced sentence for a 56-year-old Black individual who was serving a 54-year sentence that could have kept him incarcerated until 2041. Instead, Associate **Pierce MacConaghy** persuaded the court to release our client this year under one of California's newly enacted sentencing laws, SB 483, under which thousands of inmates are eligible for a one-year sentence reduction for prior drug related offenses. Notably, for our client, this new law also permits the court to consider resentencing an inmate to a lesser term "in the interest of justice."

Following several conversations with the San Diego County District Attorney's office, prosecutors agreed to Simpson Thacher's recommendation to strike over thirty-years from our client's sentence "in the interest of justice." The court then granted

the joint stipulation and resented our client to twenty-four years and eight months. Because our client had already served more than two decades in prison and had accrued good time credit, he was released from prison on December 6, 2022. Welcomed home by his daughter, sister, nephews, nieces and mother, our client looked forward to spending Christmas with his family for the first time in twenty-three years. Simpson Thacher will continue to represent our client in an upcoming jury trial in August 2023 against prison officials who unlawfully withheld his mail, preventing him from continuing to prosecute his habeas petition and thwarting any chance our client had to say goodbye to his father before he died. The Simpson Thacher team included Associate **Pierce MacConaghy** and now-Retired Partner **Buzz Frahn**.

Simpson Thacher and Morgan Stanley Sponsor 7th Equal Justice Works Fellow to Work at Brooklyn Legal Services

The Firm will sponsor its 7th Equal Justice Works Fellow jointly with Morgan Stanley. The Fellowship provides two years of funding to allow a recent law graduate to work on a public interest law project of their choice. Our 2023 Fellow, Jack Pellicano, will work for Brooklyn Legal Service's LGBTQ/HIV Advocacy Unit (BLS), providing representation



to low-income TGNC young people seeking to challenge discrimination, access public benefits, and obtain legal name and

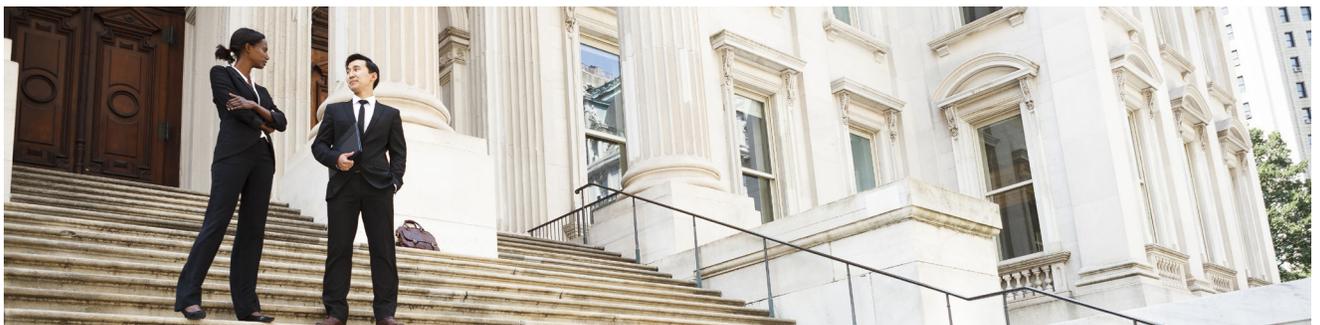
gender changes, and will educate the community on these issues via training and know-your-rights materials. We look forward to working with Jack and BLS to help serve this population through the Firm's Pro Bono work.

Simpson Thacher Obtains SIJS and Permanent Residence Status for Unaccompanied Minor After Over Five Years of Representation

In October 2022, the Firm successfully assisted an individual from Honduras in obtaining permanent residency in the United States. The Simpson Thacher team—Partner **Chet Kronenberg**, Associates **Jacob Waschak** and **Ronita Khakshoor**, Paralegal **Andrea Parisi**, and Senior Recruiting and Administration Coordinator **Gisela DeSantiago**—represented the client after he was referred by Kids In Need of Defense (KIND) in 2016. The team assisted the client with his adoption by his aunt and uncle, moved for and successfully obtained administrative closure of his removal proceedings, and submitted an application for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). After the team successfully obtained SIJS status and the client's priority date became current, the team successfully moved the Los Angeles Immigration Court to reopen and dismiss the client's immigration proceedings to allow adjustment of status with USCIS, and USCIS granted the client's application for permanent residency.

Simpson Thacher Hosts Presentations for New York Entrepreneurs

In February 2023, Associate **Jack Nalen** partnered with attorneys from Volunteers of Legal Service Microenterprise Project to facilitate an in-person workshop in Brooklyn, NY for participants of Jobs Plus Fedcap, a program that helps New York City Housing Authority residents increase their earning potential through career services and financial literacy. The workshop covered legal basics for sole proprietors and start-up businesses including the benefits and disadvantages of running a business



as a freelancer, how to determine if they are ready to form a legal entity, and a look into how to avoid common legal problems that entrepreneurs encounter when running a business.



L to R: Kevin Perry and Andrea Tan of VOLS and Jack Nalen



Jack Nalen counseling an entrepreneur

In March 2023, Associates **David Goodman** and **Sofia Elkina** also co-hosted a virtual presentation for entrepreneurs in the NY/NJ region that covered legal basics for sole proprietors and start-up businesses. Participants were clients of VOLS and the Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership, a not-for-profit organization that supports economic development through entrepreneurship. Counsel **Matt Farrell** along with Associates **David Goodman**, **Cathy Ye**, and **Evan Zuckerman**, and Pfizer Corporate Counsels Rebecca Wright and Nate Leachman also presented on contracts, intellectual property, and entity formation basics for participants of Progress Playbook's Blueprint Project—an incubator program, which helps BIPOC entrepreneurs with side jobs formalize and grow their businesses. The team provided an overview on contracts and entity formation basics to a cohort of entrepreneurs starting and building businesses in areas that included catering, clothing, and health and wellness services.

Simpson Thacher Team Helps Client Remove Collateral Consequences of Criminal Convictions

As part of our ongoing work with The Legal Aid Society of New York, Simpson Thacher successfully represented a 35-year-old New Yorker with obtaining Certificates of Relief from Disabilities for seven misdemeanor convictions in three different courts. All of these convictions arose out of our client's long battle with drug addiction. These Certificates entitle our client to a legal presumption of rehabilitation with respect to each of his convictions, which will be very helpful when he applies for employment or housing.

Our client's convictions included a 2020 conviction for third-degree assault, as well as older convictions for criminal possession of a controlled substance in the seventh degree, petit larceny, and theft of services. Given the nature and extent of our client's convictions, the Legal Aid Society cautioned the team that it was possible that one or more of the courts of conviction would reject his application.

The team worked with our client to craft a personal statement that explained how our client had overcome his drug addiction, rebuilt his frayed relationships with his family members, and positioned himself for a promising career as a software engineer. The team also guided our client on procuring numerous letters of recommendation and other supporting materials in support of his applications. This robust application packet persuaded three different courts that our client had truly changed since his convictions and was entitled to a presumption of rehabilitation. The Simpson Thacher team included now-retired Partner **Mary Beth Forshaw**, Associate **Jared Quigley** and Pro Bono Attorney **Nihara Choudhri**.



Awards, Events & Mentions

Simpson Thacher Named “Pro Bono Firm of the Year” at 2023 Benchmark Litigation Awards

Simpson Thacher was recognized as “Pro Bono Firm of the Year” at Euromoney’s *Benchmark Litigation* 2023 Awards. The award was presented at the publication’s annual awards ceremony on March 15 in New York.



Pro Bono Counsel Harlene Katzman and Partner Martin Bell accept the award.

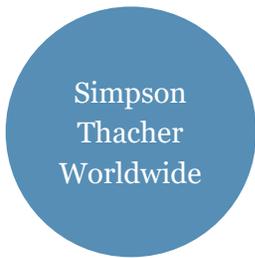
Simpson Thacher Sends Gifts to 325 Low Income Children Through Winter Wishes Program

For many years, the Firm has participated in Winter Wishes, sponsored by New York Cares, a program organized to provide gifts to tens of thousands of underserved children, teenagers, seniors and families in the New York City area. In 2022, we sent 325 gifts to children. For the past 10 years, the program has been organized by Partner **Jeannine McSweeney**, who was assisted this year by Associates **Scott Schilson** and **Hannah Daniels** (not pictured) and Lead Mail Coordinator **Denise Samuels**.



L to R: Jeannine McSweeney, Denise Samuels, and Scott Schilson

Please send news items, comments or suggestions regarding the Pro Bono Program to Harlene Katzman at hkatzman@stblaw.com.



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