

A World of Good

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Raising Our Voices for Women's Rights in Africa



by **Miriam Gonzalez** and **Chloe Barker**

A team of our London lawyers, led by Miriam Gonzalez, is collaborating with Oxfam on a pro bono project called Raising Her Voice (RHV). RHV was launched by Oxfam in August 2008 and aims to empower women in developing countries and promote their rights and capacity to effectively engage in all levels of governance.

RHV is a collection of projects in 17 countries, each with its own priorities and approaches that take into account local realities and opportunities. However, all RHV projects focus on four broad areas of work:

- Enabling women activists in developing countries to network, campaign and advocate;
- Working with public institutions and decision-making forums, including traditional structures;
- Empowering civil-society organizations to achieve women's rights as citizens, through awareness-raising, capacity building, and training; and
- Disseminating lessons and best practices through innovative media and communications work.

RHV has been championed by musician and political and social activist Annie Lennox. Together with Oxfam, Annie inspired the establishment of "The Circle" – a group of influential women who use their profiles, ideas, skills and resources to connect with women living in poverty around the world. As an offshoot of "The Circle," Miriam Gonzalez, along with a leading British barrister, Melanie Hall QC, founded the "Lawyers' Circle," which is a group of lawyers lending their influence, networks, legal skills and

resources in support of women's legal rights. The "Lawyers' Circle" has chosen to support the RHV program in Africa, and the Dechert team is working with it on this project.

Raising Her Voice – Africa

Women in Africa face a variety of legal, economic and social constraints to their participation in public life. In addition, discrimination and violence against women remains widespread. The Maputo Protocol, which is the African Union's Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, was signed in 2003 and marks a significant step forward in improving the lives of African women. The Maputo Protocol is particularly significant, because it was developed by African leaders in response to the demands of activists within African women's movements. It guarantees comprehensive rights to women, including their right to take part in political processes, enjoy social and political equality with men, and control their reproductive health. The Protocol also includes clauses aimed at the elimination of harmful practices, including female genital mutilation.

This project is ambitious, and it will require the assistance of many lawyers to produce a comprehensive, high-quality report that will make a real difference to women in Africa.

For the Dechert team, supporting the Maputo Protocol was an attractive option from the very beginning, because this is a protocol written, signed and ratified by African countries and not by foreign policymakers. Through our involvement with RHV, we intend to put together a thorough, objective and high-quality legal analysis on the state of implementation of the Maputo Protocol in each of the 36 African countries that have already ratified it.

One goal of our analysis is to provide ideas to African countries as to how others have implemented the key rights of the Protocol. Many African countries

face similar obstacles e.g., the coexistence of legislation with customary and religious legal orders, and some have found ways around these obstacles. Sharing best practices between nations would be an immensely valuable tool to further advance the implementation of the Protocol. Our second goal is to identify the countries that have done the most to implement the Protocol. Next year will mark the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Protocol, and we hope to publicize and celebrate the most significant accomplishments worldwide.

Our involvement in this project will allow us to contribute to improving women's rights in Africa by utilizing our skills of legal analysis, research and advocacy. The work of the "Lawyers' Circle" in Africa comes in response to a request made to Oxfam by various women's groups throughout the continent. Oxfam is already working to meet this request, and their support gives us access to the network of Oxfam desks in Africa. Having those contacts on the ground is an invaluable way for us to ensure that our work is responding to women's actual needs and creating a useful final product.

This project is ambitious, and it will require the assistance of many lawyers to produce a comprehensive, high-quality report that will make a real difference to women in Africa. We currently have nearly 70 lawyers from different law firms and barristers' chambers across the UK enrolled in the "Lawyers' Circle." We would like to double that number and hope that you will join us in doing so.

We are very excited about this project, particularly because it is one in which all Dechert lawyers can participate. Regardless of your office location or level of qualification, your involvement in the "Lawyers' Circle" would be of great value to our team and the women we aim to help. Please contact Miriam Gonzalez or Chloe Barker if you are interested in getting involved or would like a high-level summary of the project to send to your contacts.

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Challenge of an Illegal NYPD "Stop & Frisk" Leads to Dismissal of Criminal Case



by **Daphne Putka**

Every year, a Dechert team led by **Michael Gilbert** represents several indigent individuals facing federal criminal charges in the Southern District of New York.

Michael has been a member of the court's Criminal Justice Act Panel since 2003. Under the Criminal Justice Act, all persons charged with federal criminal offenses who are financially unable to obtain counsel are entitled to appointment of counsel to represent them. In most cases, courts appoint public defenders to represent the accused. In some instances; however, qualified private attorneys, like Michael, can receive a court appointment. Michael has handled dozens of matters as a panel member. The cases range from securities fraud "boiler room" cases, to narcotics importation conspiracies, to illegal gun sales and other federal criminal offenses.

In a recent victory, Michael led a team of Dechert attorneys in successfully moving to suppress physical evidence seized from a client by members of the New York City Police Department (NYPD). Our client had been facing federal gun possession charges that carried a mandatory minimum penalty of 15 years in prison. All charges were dismissed after U.S. District Judge Naomi R. Buchwald granted our motion to suppress following an evidentiary hearing on January 24, 2012.

Judge Buchwald granted suppression, stating that looking "tough" in a high-crime area was not enough to justify police in frisking individuals for weapons.

In our briefing, we argued that NYPD officers violated our client's Fourth Amendment rights when they approached him outside of a public housing building and subsequently frisked him without reasonable suspicion or probable cause. We cited a pending class-action lawsuit on behalf of residents of New York City public housing alleging that the NYPD, using potential trespassing charges as a pretext, routinely stops and frisks public housing residents and their guests without justification.

Just a reminder . . .

All Dechert attorneys based in the United States and Paris, including partners, are required to perform at least 25 hours of pro bono work a year. This policy is on an FTE basis, so part-time attorneys are only required to do a proportionate amount. We urge you to contact your local Pro Bono Committee member now so you can find the type of project that best meets your skills and interests. If you have any questions about the policy or getting involved in the pro bono program, please contact Suzie Turner or any other member of the Pro Bono Committee (**see directory on last page**).

Many members of the class stated that they experienced treatment by the NYPD that was virtually identical to the unlawful stop of our client.

During Michael's cross-examination of the arresting police officer at the suppression hearing, the officer admitted that before arresting our client outside of a public housing building in upper Manhattan, he had no reason to suspect that our client was not a lawful visitor. The police officer further admitted that he had no reason to suspect that our client possessed a weapon or had committed a crime before frisking him for "safety" purposes. Judge Buchwald granted suppression, stating that looking "tough" in a high-crime area was not enough to justify police in frisking individuals for weapons.

This case afforded Dechert associates the opportunity to develop legal research and writing skills, to draft and submit memoranda in support of the suppression motion, and to learn courtroom skills from talented trial lawyers like Michael. We came away from this case with a sense of accomplishment in having contributed to preventing the further violation of low-income citizens' civil rights in New York.

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Dechert Represents United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania in Strategic Merger to Form a Regional Group



by **Alexander D. Gonzalez**

A team of Philadelphia-based Dechert attorneys and paralegals represented the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania in its merger with the United Way of Atlantic County, the United Way of Burlington County, the United Way of Camden County, the United Way of Cape May County, the United Way of Greater Cumberland County and the United Way of Southeast Delaware County. Our client, the surviving corporation, is now known as the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey (the "United Way"). The Dechert team, which was comprised of attorneys from five different practice groups, was led by **Geraldine Sinatra, William Elder**, and myself, with **Abbi Cohen** and **Scott Magargee** supervising. **Frederick Gerhart, Melissa Grossman, Marian Ryan** and **Jill Trickel** lent additional support.

"Mr. Dechert would have been pleased to see how far our relationship has progressed and the tremendous impact it has had on our community."

Our firm has a long and proud tradition of involvement with the United Way, which supports the work of hundreds of organizations with a focus on three primary areas: education for children and youth, financial stability for adults and their families, and increased health and safety for seniors.

The goal of the United Way is to support vital human services across the region, which now stretches from



eastern Chester County, Pennsylvania to Cape May County, New Jersey. The merger is part of a slow trend toward consolidation of United Way chapters throughout the country. As part of this trend, Dechert also represented the United Way of Morris County (now known as the United Way of Northern New Jersey) in 2010 in its merger with the United Way of Somerset County, the United Way of Sussex County, the United Way of North Essex and the United Way of Warren County.

We worked tirelessly for nearly a year conducting diligence, drafting and negotiating agreements, ancillary documents, by-laws and local committee charters, and advising on complicated matters with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of New Jersey. We also took the lead in coordinating among the seven organizations and seven law firms involved in the mergers.

Some of our lawyers and paralegals actively serve the United Way in a variety of legal representations. For example, earlier in the year, the same Dechert team represented the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania in its merger with Greater Philadelphia Cares, forming a Community Action Center whereby volunteers are mobilized to support service projects and promote community involvement.

When asked about the impact of the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey merger on the community, Scott Magargee commented, "The larger United Way will be able to combine resources, reduce overhead costs and improve efficiency and effectiveness through the newly created regional group." He added that, "our relationship with the United Way goes back to 1959 when Mr. Dechert, our firm's namesake, formed the United Fund of the Philadelphia Area. Mr. Dechert would have been pleased to see how far our relationship has progressed and the tremendous impact it has had on our community."

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This Dechert pro bono update is a publication of the firm's Pro Bono Committee. If you have items you would like included in the next edition, please forward them to Paul Lee at Paul.Lee@dechert.com.

Elderly Tenant Receives Settlement from Landlord Thanks to Dechert Team



by **Debra D. O'Gorman**

Dechert represented a 95-year-old Holocaust survivor in an action for personal injury and property damage against her landlord. In 2007, our client returned home from vacation to find that there had been a leak in the walk-in closet of her bedroom. Many of her possessions, including mementos of her late husband and brother, who both died in the Holocaust, were wet and ruined, as were various other possessions such as clothing, coats, purses, suitcases, artwork and books. The landlord refused to make any payment to compensate our client for her ruined property and was also slow to make the necessary repairs to the walls and floor of the closet. Our client was unable to remove or dry her wet possessions, and they became moldy. The walls and floor of her closet also developed mold. As a result, our elderly client was not able to sleep in her bedroom for a number of years, and she experienced respiratory symptoms that she believes were due to mold exposure. There were several additional leaks in the bathroom of the apartment, and our client was unable to use her shower for periods of time while repairs were made.

Retired Dechert partner Robert Sparks took on the case in 2010. At the time Dechert became involved, many of our client's ruined possessions had been discarded and were therefore difficult to value. In addition, work to the exterior of her apartment had been completed, making it difficult to determine the exact source of the leak, which defendants attributed to an opened window in the closet. After unsuccessful settlement discussions and two mediations, the case was scheduled to be tried on June 13, 2012. **Rose Amandola** and I, under the supervision of partner **Edward McDonald**, were prepared to try the case and selected a jury on June 14. Due to delays in obtaining an assignment of a trial judge, the trial was not expected to begin until several days later, which allowed additional time to seek a resolution of the matter. On June 18 and 19, the defendants renewed good faith settlement discussions, and on June 19, we reached a settlement that included a monetary component and free rent for our client for a period of one year. The client was very happy to put this matter behind her and grateful for the assistance of the Dechert attorneys who helped her pursue her case.

Our client is active in Holocaust victim's organizations and speaks frequently to school and community groups about the horrors of the Holocaust. All of the Dechert attorneys and paralegals who met her were inspired by her strength and determination and were happy that we were able to bring about a favorable resolution of this matter.

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A Win for One Woman — and for the American Dream



by **Gretchen Sween**

Nearly two years ago, Dechert agreed to represent a woman from Honduras in an effort to preserve the asylum grant she had obtained on her own in an administrative law proceeding. She had arrived at the U.S. border after traveling from her home country. She was then detained in a facility in Texas pending a hearing on her request for asylum. During the hearing before an immigration judge, she described being essentially a prisoner in her own home for years — where she was subjected to unspeakable domestic violence in a culture that pays little more than lip-service to the concept of women's rights. The immigration judge found our client to be a "highly credible" witness who was so distraught in recounting her story that she frequently broke down while testifying. Moreover, the judge recognized that, under current immigration law, women who can show that they came to the U.S. to escape chronic domestic violence in countries where the authorities are more likely to condone than prosecute such violence can qualify as refugees.

Despite the judge's credibility finding and the current state of the law, attorneys for the government in San Antonio decided to pursue an appeal to try to get the asylum grant reversed. Such appeals are taken to a special administrative appellate court, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). Before filing a briefing on our client's behalf, we tried to communicate with the government's attorneys about the fact that the legal position it was taking was at odds with the current position of the Department of Justice, its boss. Instead of engaging in informal negotiations with us, the

government moved forward with the appeal. After our brief was filed; however, the government, without seeking leave, filed an "amended brief" wherein it deleted its principle argument. The "amended brief" relied entirely on a challenge to the immigration judge's finding that our client had been a "highly credible" witness in describing the horror that had been her life before she risked all to journey by foot and bus from Honduras, through Guatemala, and through Mexico to the Texas border.

Finally, this spring, Dechert received word that the BIA had vindicated our client's claim, affirming the immigration judge's decision to grant her asylum and implicitly criticizing the government's decision to put her through this appeal. Our client is now working full-time and studying English as part of building a new life in this country. Her gratitude to Dechert and to the U.S. justice system is palpable. Dechert will represent her in her final hearing to formalize her new status in January 2013.

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Summers Spent Making a Difference: New York Summer Associates Represent Pro Bono Clients in Social Security Disability Hearings

by Dechert Summer Associates **Victor Bieger, Teddy Dunn, David Meyers** and **Amanda Tuminelli**

Along with six other summer associates in Dechert's New York office, we spent part of our summer supporting the New York Legal Aid Society by helping disabled individuals apply for Social Security benefits. Our clients had applied for benefits, but their claims had been denied. Under the guidance of Dechert attorneys, we helped our clients appeal those decisions at hearings before Social Security administrative law judges. This is the firm's first year participating in the Legal Aid Society's summer program, and it has been a stunning success thus far.

These cases presented an opportunity to experience work as a litigator hands-on. We met face-to-face with our clients so that we could understand their difficult circumstances and make the most compelling case for

their claims. We sought out evidence to build their claims, drafted pre-hearing briefs and helped guide our clients through the complicated benefits application process. After preparing them for the experience of a hearing under oath, we stood by our clients' side on their hearing day.

Under the guidance of **Thomas Munno**, Victor Bieger and David Meyers represented a client who suffers from epileptic seizures. Despite medical treatment, he has struggled with these seizures for most of his life. He has been homeless for the past two years, preventing him from establishing a consistent treatment relationship with his doctors and making it difficult to compile evidence of his condition. We reached out to our client's numerous physicians and began to unearth a complete picture of the impairments that affect his daily activities. Part of our client's claim depended on producing a first-hand account of his seizures, so we found a fellow resident at our client's homeless shelter who had witnessed one of our client's seizures and was able to provide that vital information.

Our client also suffers from social anxiety and depression, which the Social Security Administration did not consider when they denied his initial claim. We uncovered evidence of his psychiatric treatment and highlighted that evidence in our hearing brief. When we met with our client to prepare him for the hearing, we described the hearing process in detail to help reduce his anxiety about appearing before a judge. At the hearing, the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) overturned the agency's initial denial of benefits and awarded our client benefits to be paid retroactively from the date of his first application.

In another case for the New York Legal Aid Society, **Linda Goldstein** supervised Teddy Dunn and Amanda Tuminelli in the representation of a client with a long history of employment who had become disabled by severe hypertension and cardiomyopathy, two diseases that weaken the heart muscle and reduce its capacity to pump blood through the body. The combination of our client's

physical impairments effectively rendered her house-bound, causing her frustration and ultimately harming her mental health.

We began working on her case by supplementing the record with materials from our client's treating physician and psychologist, in order to show that she lacked the ability to perform even sedentary work. We then marshaled all of the evidence in the record in a pre-hearing memo to the presiding judge. At the hearing, the ALJ introduced the testimony of a government-retained vocational expert, who opined that our client could neither perform the work she had done in the past, nor do any other work available in the national economy. Not wanting to give the expert any reason to retract this favorable testimony, which eliminated one of the key grounds on which disability benefits are often denied, we declined to cross-examine. Now, we await the judge's ruling.

Three other summer associate teams took on Supplemental Security Income cases that are also heading toward administrative hearings: **Michael Maloney** and **Sarah Lyons**, supervised by **James McGuire**; **Collin Hessney** and **Caroline Levin**, supervised by **Martin Nussbaum**; and **David Goldberg** and **Jenny Liu**, supervised by **Derek Winokur**.

Our participation in the New York Legal Aid Society afforded Dechert's New York summer associates the unique opportunity to work directly with clients in presenting their claims before a judicial authority, something that many students graduate from law school having never experienced. It also provided us with the chance to work one-on-one with Dechert attorneys in developing our cases from the ground up. We gained invaluable insight into methods of incorporating legal strategy, case preparation, presentation and crafting lines of argumentation. We also honed our legal research and writing skills through our drafting of pre-hearing submissions to the presiding judges.

Of course, the most important and rewarding aspect of our experience came through our interactions with our clients. There is no substitute for the lessons learned from employing the skills we have spent the last two years acquiring in an effort to actualize a legal remedy for someone in need. Perhaps the greatest lesson is one of perspective: we are very fortunate to have our health and the opportunity to pursue a legal career. Using that opportunity to positively affect the life of someone less fortunate than ourselves has been an immensely fulfilling experience and an integral part of our summers at Dechert.

Pro Bono Section of Dechert's Intranet Site

Remember, the firm's intranet site has a separate section on pro bono including sample forms, a directory of pro bono referral organizations and a calendar of training opportunities.

<http://intranet.dechert.com/dechertapps/probono>

New York Office Launches Pro Bono Practice Group Structure



by **Sean H. Porter** and **Adam J. Wasserman**

The New York office launched its pro bono practice group structure at a reception on June

28, 2012. This new approach to pro bono is designed to build enthusiasm, leadership and more collaboration among our attorneys by providing topic-specific working groups to our lawyers who have expressed an interest in a particular area of pro bono work. The new pro bono practice groups are structured similarly to our billable practices, in that they will enable us to focus more on our pro bono cases and to work more efficiently for our low-income clients. Dechert's Philadelphia and Washington offices have also adopted the new structure.

The pro bono practice groups were created based on the interest and experience already demonstrated by attorneys and paralegals in the New York office. The New York pro bono practice groups are: Bankruptcy (led by **Glenn Siegel**), Civil Rights (led by **David Hoffner**), Criminal (led by **Michael Gilbert**), Immigration (led by **Eric Kirsch** and **Samantha Koplik**), Nonprofit/Small Business (led by **Kira Brereton** and **Michael Hirschfeld**), and State Court Practice/Public Benefits (led by **Jamie Halavais** and **James McGuire**).

We invited representatives from our community partners to explain how Dechert attorneys could get involved with their projects. In attendance at the reception were staff from the City Bar Justice Center's Immigrant Women & Children's Project and Neighborhood Entrepreneur Law Project, Immigration Equality, The Legal Aid Society's Criminal Appeals Bureau and Prisoners' Rights Project, Legal Services NYC's Bankruptcy Assistance Project, the NYC Family Court Volunteer Attorney Program and the Urban Justice Center's Community Development Project. Attorneys and paralegals mixed and mingled with our community partners to learn about the need in our community and ways we can help.

The pro bono practice groups are in no way meant to limit the scope or variety of the firm's pro bono work. Dechert still subscribes to a "big tent" policy when handling pro bono work. If you are interested in an area of pro bono not covered by a pro bono practice group, please continue

to let your pro bono committee members know. We are always glad to assist you in finding the best pro bono opportunities for you.



Guests mingle during the reception.



Laura Matthews-Jolly of the City Bar Justice Center Immigrant Women & Children Project and **Samantha Koplik**, Co-Leader of Dechert's Immigration Pro Bono Practice Group.



Jamie Halavais, Co-Leader of Dechert's State Court Practice/Public Benefits Pro Bono Practice Group and **Bonnie Gershon** of the NYC Family Court Volunteer Attorney Program.



David Crow of The Legal Aid Society Criminal Appeals Bureau and Dechert Partner **Jonathan Streeter**.

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Good Results



Jaimee Farrer (Philadelphia), in partnership with the ACLU of Pennsylvania, recently secured a preliminary injunction on behalf of her client, a high school senior at Loyalsock Township High School in Pennsylvania, who challenged his school's random drug testing policy on state constitutional grounds. The policy required students seeking to participate in athletics or extracurricular activities, or those seeking to obtain a school parking permit, to consent to random, suspicion-less drug testing. The school district claimed that its documented drug/alcohol incident data from 2003 to present, coupled with the results of the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS), a bi-annual survey related to students' drug and alcohol use, among other behaviors, showed that there was a drug problem within the district and that drug and alcohol use was increasing over time, thereby necessitating the policy. At the preliminary injunction hearing, Jaimee put on an expert in statistics and econometrics who had analyzed the data relied upon by the school district and who testified that 1) students targeted by the policy (i.e. those who participate in extracurriculars, athletics or who drive to school) are 4.7 times less likely to engage in drug/alcohol incidents than students not targeted under the policy, and 2) the PAYS data did not show a general pattern of increasing drug use over time.

The granting of the preliminary injunction will allow the student to resume participation in his extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year, including being inducted into the National Honor Society. This is the third injunction that the Dechert team, which includes **Kevin Flannery** and **Kenneth Holloway**, has secured in school drug testing cases throughout the state.



Karen Daly (Philadelphia) served as amicus curiae on a case involving the appointment of a guardian for prisoners with mental health issues. Karen briefed the right to appointment of counsel or guardians of two pro se litigants with demonstrated mental health problems. Karen argued that Rule 17 (c)(2) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, which requires the appointment of a guardian or other steps to protect a minor or incompetent person who is unrepresented in an action, along with decisions of other appellate courts, suggested that appointment of counsel, or, at a minimum, examination of evidence suggesting the

litigants were mentally incompetent, was warranted. Karen's arguments led the court to rule that two district courts failed to properly consider Rule 17(c) (2) in granting summary judgment against the two pro se litigants after denying their requests for appointed counsel. The Dechert team was assisted by law student Brian Trainor as part of Dechert's appellate law project with Penn Law School. In its opinion, the court thanked Karen and the firm for their work on the case, noting that, "it is in the best tradition of the Philadelphia bar."



David T. Jones (Philadelphia), with the help of **Galia Porat** (Philadelphia), won an appeal on behalf of a prisoner who had contracted a MRSA infection due to poor living conditions in the prison where he was incarcerated. The prisoner had sued the government under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA); however, the government had the suit dismissed at trial level based on the untimely filing of the claim, just over the two-year prescribed limit for bringing such actions. The Dechert team successfully argued that the two-year period for filing should not have begun accruing at the moment of the client's diagnosis, but rather at the time his symptoms worsened, and when he learned that the infection could have been caused by the poor laundry facilities and worsened by the negligent medical care he received at the prison. The case was remanded to the district court, where the prisoner will have an opportunity to present his FTCA case for the injuries he suffered while under the government's care. **Stephen Brown** (Philadelphia) supervised the matter.



Audrey Wagner (Washington) successfully represented a Korean War veteran in obtaining a 100 percent disability rating for asbestosis resulting from his work as a boiler room attendant in the U.S. Navy. The matter, which was originally referred by the National Veterans Legal Services Program, was resolved after approximately five years of Dechert's representation. Dechert began representing the veteran in late July 2007, when his original claim was before the court of appeals for Veterans Claims on appeal from the Board of Veterans Affairs (VA). After losing the case in the court of appeals on matters of law, Dechert was able to assist the veteran with filing a new claim with new evidence at the regional office level. The first claim was denied. In the summer of 2011, Dechert filed another new claim

with new evidence. When the VA asked for evidence to show that the veteran was experiencing his symptoms from the time he was in the Navy or one year after leaving the Navy, Dechert was able to successfully defend the claim by pointing out to the VA that its service manual recognizes the latency period for the disease. The veteran received retroactive benefits dating from the summer of 2011. **Jerome Hoffman** (Philadelphia) supervised the matter.



Anne Laughlin (Washington) represented an elderly D.C. resident seeking assistance with his will, health care and financial powers of attorney. The case was referred to Anne by Legal Counsel for the Elderly. As the client has been undergoing treatment for prostate

cancer, Anne's representation was timely and provided him the comfort of knowing that he had set forth his wishes in legal documentation.



Susan Kilgore (Beijing/Philadelphia), along with Philadelphia summer associates **Daniel Mozes** and **Seth Popick**, recently assisted a Hong Kong-based non-profit organization, the Foundation for Youth Social Entrepreneurship, Ltd. (FYSE), in preparing

for the launch of its new Speakers' Bureau program. The Dechert team drafted template agreements between FYSE and the other persons and entities who will be involved in the project. FYSE is dedicated to inspiring, connecting and developing social entrepreneurs who have the potential to be at the forefront of addressing social and environmental challenges. The Speakers' Bureau program will allow FYSE to develop a pool of social entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations in mainland China who are willing to share their experiences and expertise with visiting student groups, largely from the U.S. and other foreign education programs, and other non-profits, small businesses and agencies. A key step in the development of the Speakers' Bureau program was the preparation of template agreements, in English and Chinese, between FYSE and Speakers' Bureau members, and between FYSE and the student groups and small businesses who will share in the knowledge and experience of some of China's preeminent social entrepreneurs.

Awards & Recognition

Dechert was recently recognized among the top 10 U.S. law firms for pro bono work in [The American Lawyer's Pro Bono Survey](#). The annual report measures the average number of pro bono hours per lawyer, as well as the percentage of lawyers who performed more than 20 hours of pro bono work. We thank all those at Dechert who have contributed to the firm's representation of our pro bono clients.



At the NAACP's national convention on July 9, 2012, the Texas State Conference of NAACP Branches honored Dechert with its Foot Soldier in the Sands Award. The award was presented in recognition of the work Dechert has done on the Texas Section 5 Voting Rights Act, pertaining to Texas' new photo ID requirements for voting. Following an expedited discovery schedule, the case was tried before a three-judge panel in Washington, D.C. The Dechert team, led by **Ezra Rosenberg** (Princeton, pictured), represented both the Texas NAACP and the Mexican-American Legislative Caucus, and served as lead/liaison counsel for all five groups of interveners (which include the ACLU, the NAACP Legal Defense fund, the Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund, the League of Women Voters, and others). The team now awaits the court's decision. **Stephen Weisburd** (Austin) accepted the award on Dechert's behalf. Other team members include Austin lawyers: **Amy Rudd** and **Lindsey Stelcen**, New York lawyers: **Hassan Ahmed**, **Alvin Knight** and **Marissa Wheeler**, Philadelphia paralegals and lawyers: **Kathryn Ball**, **April Banko**, **Marianne Bessey**, **Lorraine Consorte**, **Kate Ericsson**, **James Figorski**, **Jill Frankel**, **Jaime Freedman**, **Greg Harrison**, **Catherine Hewett**, **Nancy Hildreth**, **Todd Hunter** and **Helen Santoro**, Princeton paralegal and lawyers: **Antonella Capobianco-Ranallo**, **Michelle Hart Yeary** and **Brian Raphel**, and Washington paralegal and lawyer: **Charles Baker** and **Scott Taggart**.

The Legal Intelligencer named the Philadelphia-based team of **Kevin Flannery**, **Kenneth Holloway** and former Dechert lawyers Stephen McConnell and Michael Salimbene as “Unsung Heroes” in the publication’s 2012 pro bono supplement. The team was honored for its work on civil rights cases protecting the privacy rights of children against random drug testing in schools. Dechert partnered with the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania to challenge the random drug testing policies in certain school districts, because they invasively required children to submit to urinalysis as a prerequisite for extracurricular activities, such as participating in sports teams and even attending their senior proms. According to Dechert’s Philadelphia Pro Bono Committee Chair **Ethan Fogel**, “This work is vitally important toward preserving the constitutional rights of children, who should not be forced to submit to invasive testing in order to enrich their lives through extracurricular activities. I am proud of this team for so effectively standing up for a child’s right to privacy.” Kevin Flannery accepted the award at a reception in April.



Left to Right. Dechert partners **Kevin Flannery**, **Joseph Tate**, **Stephen Brown** and **Ethan Fogel** with Cathy Carr and Beth Goodell of Community Legal Services at the *Unsung Heroes Award Reception*.



Jeffrey Plies (Austin) was honored by community partner American Gateways for his excellence in pursuing equal access to justice for its clients seeking immigration relief. Jeff has been a long-time member of the American Gateways’ pro bono team and has worked on four U-visa cases in 2012 alone. In its nomination of Jeff, the organization wrote, “In every detail of his work, his commitment to his clients and to pro bono work shines through. American Gateways is especially grateful

for the leadership he’s demonstrated in influencing others at his firm to become involved in pro bono work.” Jeff received his award during American Gateways’ gala on June 5, 2012.

The Juvenile Law Center (JLC) honored attorneys from Dechert’s Philadelphia and Princeton offices for their longstanding work with the organization. Dechert’s current work with JLC includes a federal civil rights lawsuit on behalf of a youth who was subjected to excessive and intolerable isolation while in the custody of the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission. The Dechert attorneys honored at JLC’s gala on June 13, 2012 included: **Richard Berkman**, **Argia DiMarco**, **Robert Heim**, **Tara Kelly**, **Michael Kichline**, **Kristina Moon** and **Sabrina Reliford**. In addition, former Dechert attorneys Bruce Clark and Albert Suh were honored for the work they did with JLC during their time at the firm.

The Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia (PILCOP) has selected Dechert’s Philadelphia office as the recipient of its 2012 Thaddeus Stevens Award. This award honors an individual or organization for using high-stakes legal strategies to improve the well-being and quality of life of the most vulnerable populations in the Philadelphia region. PILCOP is particularly grateful for the work Dechert has done to handle a civil rights case involving tour bus companies being discriminated against based on race, challenge the Philadelphia school system for its policy of transferring students with autism between schools based solely on their disability, represent individual children with disabilities in special education proceedings, and provide nonprofit guidance for PILCOP itself. The award will be presented at the Down Town Club in Philadelphia on October 11, 2012.

[Tickets and more information are available here.](#)



Dr. Michael Meissner, LL.M. (Munich) was invited to speak during the Second International Legal Forum in St. Petersburg, Russia, on May 17, 2012. Dr. Meissner participated in a roundtable discussion titled, “Pro Bono and Legal Aid: Finding the Balance between Government Support and the Private Sector.” As a participant in this forum, Dr. Meissner represented Pro Bono Deutschland e.V., the newly-established German pro bono association of which Dechert is a member firm.

[To watch a video of his speech, please click here.](#)

Dechert Walks for Justice in London



by **Karen Coppens**

Ten London-based Dechert attorneys and support staff stretched their legs on a sunny day on May 21, 2012 to join more than 6,000 walkers and runners in the 10 km London Legal Walk. Other

event participants included the Lord Chief Justice, the President of the Law Society, the Chairman of the Bar Council, the Attorney General, the Director of Public Prosecutions, The Chancery Bar Association and the London Association of District Judges, as well as a number of Lords, Judges, barristers and other law firms.

The annual event is organized by the London Legal Support Trust to raise funds for law centers and pro bono agencies in and around London. We know from our own pro bono work at centers such as the Citizens' Advice Bureau at the Royal Courts of Justice, the Islington Law Centre, the Prince's Trust, and Community Matters, that the agencies do a fantastic job ensuring that those who do not have financial means still have access to justice. Recent cuts in legal aid mean that many of these law centers and pro bono agencies are struggling and need all the help they can get.

Our team started the walk/run at the Royal Courts of Justice and passed various London landmarks along the way, including Temple, Big Ben and the Millennium Bridge. We then walked back along Embankment and toward the Law Society, where we received a free drink.



Thousands of volunteers walk for justice.



The Dechert team. (Left to Right) Front Row: **Georgina Rowley, Abi Gillett, Emma Richardson, Kate Anderson, Helen Foley, Kate Astbury**. Back Row: **Rob Girvan** and **Joanna Hewitt**. Two participants are not pictured: **Javad Husain** and **Karen Coppens**.

In total, an amazing £575,000 was raised by participants and the Dechert team raised £847.20. If you are feeling generous, it is not too late to sponsor the team! [Donations can be made here.](#)

Many thanks to everyone who supported us and participated in the walk/run. We hope to participate in next year's event with an even bigger team!

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Dechert's Pro Bono Committee

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About Dechert LLP

With offices throughout the United States, Europe, Asia and the Middle East, Dechert LLP is an international law firm focused on corporate and securities, complex litigation and international arbitration, financial services and asset management, energy, life sciences, labor and employment, business restructuring and reorganization, intellectual property, trade and government affairs, real estate finance and tax law.

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