

Pro bono finishes year on a high note

Friday, 13th January 2012 by Rachel Hall

The end of 2011 saw three firms across Latin America strengthen their commitment to provide pro bono legal services for the following year.

As part of the firm's pro bono programme, Uruguayan firm Jiménez de Aréchaga, Viana & Brause has added two new projects to its roster this year – Ronald McDonald House charity association and the Teletón centres.

Jiménez de Aréchaga provided legal advice to the Ronald McDonald House Charities Association during the charity's incorporation process into Uruguay. The firm helped obtain approval from the local authorities for the charity, which aims to help children undergoing serious medical treatment and their families.

Partner Virginia Brause, who is also one of the association's head authorities, worked hard to finish the work within an unusually short time frame for the country alongside associates Mariana Errazquin, Ignacio Menendez and Cecilia Comas. The approval was secured on 17 November.

As in previous years, members of the firm participated in the charity day McHappyDay on 18 November, which McDonalds, which has been a client of Jiménez de Aréchaga for 20 years, holds annually. Fifty per cent of the proceeds from Big Mac sales on the day were donated to the Peluffo Giggens Association, which helps children affected with cancer. The remaining 50 per cent was donated to Ronald McDonald House Charities Uruguay Association.

Earlier on in the year, Jiménez de Aréchaga, Viana + Brause also joined the initiative taken by Banco Santander to help with one of Uruguay's fundraising Teletón centres over the 3/4 September weekend last year. Teletón is a foundation that focuses on collaborating in the rehabilitation and integration of disabled children, with a presence in over 20 countries.

The firm's lawyers, led by partner Nicolás Herrera Alonso, participated in both the collection of money for donating, volunteering to work in the bank branches, undertaking tasks such as counting the money and promoting and receiving the donations that came in.

Chile's Urenda Rencoret Orrego y Dörr has signed an agreement to affirm its commitment to the Fundación Pro Bono, a Chilean organisation which provides free legal services to vulnerable individuals and institutions.

In a meeting on 6 December, partners Juan Carlos Dörr Zegers and Pablo Bauer met with Fundación Pro Bono President Pablo Guerrero and Executive Director Marcela Fajardo to discuss contributing Urenda's lawyers working hours to pro bono initiatives.

The firm, which is now working on two pro bono cases, has named partner Jorge Vial to take charge of its relations with the foundation, with the assistance of associate Marcela Rodríguez.

Brazilian firm **Siqueira Castro - Advogados** is the newest supporter of Brazilian children's rheumatism NGO Acredite – Amigos da Criança com Reumatismo, which works to raise awareness about a health issue that often flies under the radar in the country.

Beginning in December last year, the partnership represents the cornerstone of a volunteering programme which the firm operates out of its São Paulo office, the principal beneficiary of which is Acredite.

The charity, which advocates a more humane treatment for children receiving care for the disease in the public health system, is now counseled by the firm. **Siqueira Castro** will provide pro bono legal services with a view to enabling the charity to expand its social programmes. The firm's lawyers will also be offered the opportunity to work in the charity's volunteering programme.

Siqueira Castro will also sponsor the forthcoming construction of a recreational space at Acredite's headquarters.

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