



Consortium for the National Equal Justice Library  
Oral History Collection  
Interview with

**Steve Scudder**

Conducted by Alan Houseman  
May 10, 2018

Alan Houseman: This is an oral history of Steve Scudder, who has been with the ABA in leadership positions, particularly around pro bono, for many years. This is being taken at the Equal Justice Conference in San Diego on May 10, 2018. The interviewer is Alan Houseman for the National Equal Justice Library. Steve, let's start with a brief overview of your background, where you grew up, where you went to college, law school, and the jobs you've held.

Steve Scudder: Sure. I grew up in Omaha, Nebraska. I was engaged in a variety of typical Midwestern activities as a boy, such as football. The Nebraska Cornhuskers were my team, and I loved the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team because Bob Gibson was from Omaha. So it was a pretty typical childhood in a lot of ways.

SS: I think it's important to note for this purpose that my father was a lawyer. He was a Nebraska farm boy who wanted to make his way out of the poverty that he grew up in. He ended up a little later than he might normally have in a career or college track going to college at the University of Omaha. He went to Creighton University Law School. His first job after law school was with a small firm in Omaha, and he was mentored well by a couple of really interesting lawyers. He had a good experience there but found that he wasn't getting his soul needs met, I think it's fair to say. He ended up going to work for Omaha Legal Aid. I mean, about 1965 or so. It was a time when Omaha Legal Aid was an OEO legal aid program, a pretty typical storefront operation. My dad worked there representing low-income clients in a variety of matters for four or five years. He ended up going into private practice after that, and he really spent the rest of his career until his retirement as a lawyer doing a variety of matters, but he always did pro bono work. He was engaged with the pro bono program initiatives of the Nebraska State Bar. I lay that out there just as a foundational point about what my values were watching his career.

SS: On my mother's side, my mother grew up in New York City. She was born in Philadelphia. Her family and particularly her grandmother, Ida [Espen Guggenheimer], was radical. Ida was the patron for Ralph Ellison when he wrote the Invisible Man. The Invisible Man is dedicated to my great grandmother, Ida. My mother's mother (my grandmother), Clara [Guggenheimer Binswanger ?], was also a radical. My grandmother Clara was good friends with Alger Hiss, and so there was a history of engagement around radical ideas and individuals in my family on my mother's side. How my East Coast mother met my father, the Nebraska farm boy, is a whole 'nother story I won't bore you with, but my mother ended up in Omaha and they had six children. I was the second oldest of those kids. My parents together were very involved in the Omaha arts community and engaged in a variety of activities one would say are community-based related activities, so I grew up with all of that.

SS: Looking back on it, I think my values around those issues was really formed early on and reinforced throughout my childhood, and into my college years, and beyond. I had not such a great experience in high school. Made my way through. Graduated. Took a year off -- it turned out to be a year and a half -- before I went to college. I was pretty uncertain about what I wanted to do.

Didn't feel like it was worth spending the time at college if I didn't have a plan about it, and wanted a particular kind of college experience.

SS: That led me to Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts, and if you know Hampshire College, it's a college that is very innovative. It started as an experimental college developed by four other colleges in the area -- Smith, Mount Holyoke, Amherst, and the University of Massachusetts. So, Hampshire was experimental -- and they like to say experimenting as an ongoing thing as opposed to just a one-shot deal. I'm a Hampshire College graduate. There aren't majors at Hampshire, but my focus at Hampshire was primarily in education. I did my student teaching. I was prepared to be a teacher. My student teaching led me to really look at some issues about testing and tracking of students.

SS: During my last year at Hampshire I ended up writing, essentially, my senior thesis around the issue of discrimination and how testing and tracking placed kids based on poverty as opposed to competency. That led me into a real understanding of legal system injustice, a variety of issues around how those issues were handled in the courts at the time. I thought maybe I should become a lawyer instead of a teacher, so I took another year off. I had met my now-wife at Hampshire, an East Coast girl, and I dragged her back to Omaha for a year. I worked at my father's law office. She was a special education teacher at a middle school in Omaha. We lived there for a year.

SS: I had an opportunity to see my dad in practice to really see what the practice of law was like, to understand both at a substantive level and at an operational level what it meant to be a practicing lawyer. I thought, this is something that feels right for me. We decided during that year to get married, which we did in the fall of 1980 back in Worcester, Massachusetts, where my wife is from, and decided to move back to the East Coast. I looked at a number of law schools. I applied to Vermont Law School, Franklin Pierce Law Center in New Hampshire, the University of Maine Law School, and also Northeastern. Again, on the theme of a little innovative, and different, and different kinds of programming. So, I was really excited about that journey. I didn't get accepted to Northeastern. I ended up at Franklin Pierce in Concord, New Hampshire primarily because of its proximity to Boston. It gave my wife an opportunity to go to Harvard to get her master's in education. So Franklin Pierce was a perfect choice logistically for us.

SS: I had a good experience there and had an opportunity to do some good work both in the classroom and outside of the classroom. I probably wasn't the best student in the world, but I certainly enjoyed it and did well. I found opportunities to do internships, clinics, and a variety of other projects that engaged me with real-life issues, either with the Disability Rights Center or the public defender. All those opportunities really helped me understand issues of poverty and how lawyers can make a difference. It was 1983 when I graduated. Legal aid programs had just experienced pretty significant cuts in their budgets. There were no programs hiring, or if they were hiring, they were in places where I didn't want to be.

SS: So, I looked around locally and ended up finding an opportunity to work for a firm called The Legal Clinics. The Legal Clinics marketed itself as a firm that

would provide affordable legal services to moderate-income people. I think it's fair to say that at the end of the day, they had a nice marketing strategy, but probably each case ended up costing a client about as much as it might have at the firm down the street. My experience there was not particularly positive in a number of ways. They really, I think, wanted to hire laterally and not a new law graduate. There was a pile of files on the desk when I walked in the door, and my training was basically, "Take a look at these files. If you have any questions, come find us. Be aware of the trial dates." That was about it. I spent the next year feeling like (probably not, but feeling like) I was committing malpractice every day. Had some good experiences, some bad experiences. Got some help, at other times needed help that I didn't get, and knew that it just wasn't going to be a long-term success for me. I decided that I needed to start looking around for something else.

SS: That something else turned out to be a connection that I made through a law school classmate, who was married at the time to the then-director of New Hampshire Legal Assistance, Bob Gross. My classmate, Bob's wife Ellen, told me that Bob had let her know that they were about to let go of the director of the New Hampshire Pro Bono Program and would be looking for somebody to take his place. Bob was on the board of the Pro Bono Program at the time.

SS: When I saw the job posting, I thought, "I'm perfectly qualified for this job. I've never hired anyone before. I've never supervised anybody before. I've never written a grant application. I've never run a program at all. I'm their perfect candidate." I applied and got the job, much to my surprise, really. I was really excited about the job, and felt that it was the perfect next step in my career. It was October 1984 when I started that job. I had a really great time. The New Hampshire Pro Bono Program was housed at the New Hampshire Bar Association. It was a Legal Services Corporation-funded project, one of the original delivery system studies projects. I had the experience for the first few years of being an LSC grantee and having the opportunity to participate in both regional and national meetings of legal services attorneys. At the same time, because I was a Bar Association employee, I was attending a number of Bar Association meetings, and some of those were the pro bono conference put on by the ABA, but I also attended the ABA's National Association of Bar Executives meetings. So, my career at the New Hampshire Bar gave me this experience of being connected to the LSC community, to the bar community, and to the pro bono community at a local, regional, and national level. That served me well later.

SS: I became a consultant for the ABA Center for Pro Bono in, I think, 1988 or so. I was invited to serve as a consultant based on the successes I was having running the New Hampshire Pro Bono Program. Consulting gave me the opportunity to start doing some technical assistance visits at various pro bono programs around the country. I was in New York City for a program visit. I was in Great Falls, Montana. I think I did a visit at the State Bar of Nebraska at that time. Those consulting experiences enabled me to really see beyond my own program to offer technical assistance, but also to learn a lot about other pro bono programs, and things that were working and not working so well for them.

SS: In 1994 I was contacted early in the year by Terry Brooks, who was the director of the ABA's Division for Legal Services. I must have seen him at either an ABA event or maybe the Pro Bono Conference. Terry told me that they were about to let go of the director of the ABA Center for Pro Bono -- kind of a recurring theme in my career history, which is interesting. He encouraged me to apply for the job when it became available. I didn't hear anything more about it for a few months. I saw Terry again at another event and asked what was happening. He said, "It's happening, and you should be seriously thinking about whether you want to apply for this job or not." I took the opportunity to talk with my wife to consider where I was at in my career at the New Hampshire Bar, and to reflect on what it would mean to move to Chicago. We agreed that I would really enjoy the job, but we weren't taking our family to Chicago. I think the job, at that point, had become available. Terry had called me and asked me to apply. I replied that I was not interested if it meant moving to Chicago. I said, maybe jokingly or seriously, I really don't remember, "If we can find some way to work out some other arrangement, I would certainly be interested." He said, "Well, I don't know what that means, but let's figure something out."

SS: I proceeded to go to the Concord Public Library in 1994 and started to look up something about telecommuting, or working from home, or distance travel, or work and travel. It meant going up to the wooden card catalog files at the library. This was well before the internet, and opening up a drawer and just flipping through cards until I found something that resonated with what it was I was looking for. I found enough that it helped me to conceptualize an idea of how I could become an ABA employee and still work in New Hampshire. I put together a proposal on my Mac Classic, printed it out in triplicate, and sent a copy to Terry, and a copy to Bob Hirshon, who was then chair of what was called at the time the Standing Committee on Lawyers' Public Service Responsibility, now the Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service. In addition, I sent a copy to Esther Lardent, who was chair of the ABA's Consortium on Legal Services and the Public.

SS: The ABA Center for Pro Bono was housed under the Consortium and at the time was disconnected, a separate entity in the ABA structure from the Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service. So, I heard back pretty quickly from Terry. I would just note that I, over the years, had come to know Bob and Esther, and certainly I think they respected the work that I had been doing, and I had been the president of the National Association of Pro Bono Coordinators at some point in there. So, they knew me through my work with that. I had attended some meetings of the Standing Committee on Lawyers' Public Service Responsibility, some meetings with the Consortium, and so on. All of that is to say there was something about my proposal that resonated with them, and they invited me for an interview. I made my way to Chicago, had an interview with the three of them, Terry, Bob, and Esther, and probably Lynn Sterman, who was committee counsel to the Standing Committee on Lawyers' Public Service Responsibility.

SS: It was not too long after that that they offered me a job. The telecommuting arrangement that we agreed to did involve my ability to stay at home in Concord, New Hampshire, but for the first six or seven months, I lived in Chicago

and went home every other weekend to be with my family. That was a hard six or seven months, and yet it was valuable for me to really get to know my staff, for them to get to know me, to introduce me to the culture of the ABA, and for me to understand the organizational opportunities and capacities that are presented there. So, as challenging as it was, it was foundationally essential for my long-term success at the ABA.

AH: What does the Center for Pro Bono do?

SS: The Center for Pro Bono is the technical assistance arm of the ABA to provide guidance, support, and resources to help pro bono programs to both get started on the right foot and to improve. Any time we knew of a pro bono program of any kind that was being developed, we would try to insert ourselves into their planning process. We received calls all the time from pro bono programs that were struggling with a variety of operational issues, everything from recruitment, to case management, to board oversight and responsibility. It has continued to do many of those things in the many years since I first started at the ABA.

AH: Then you became counsel to the pro bono committee -- what's the formal name?

SS: The Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service. Lynn Sterman, when I started at the ABA, was counsel to two committees, the Committee on Pro Bono, and the SCLAID, the Standing Committee on Legal Aid. As I said, the Center for Pro Bono was separate from, but communicated with the Standing Committee on Lawyers' Public Service Responsibility. SCLPSR, the Standing Committee on what's now Pro Bono was more focused on policy, bar relations -- not activation but outreach and encouragement around why you should do pro bono. Then they'd kick it to the Center for Pro Bono, who would help with the activation and startup stuff. After two years, Lynn and her husband adopted a little girl from China. It didn't take long for Lynn to realize that she couldn't be a mom and work at the ABA at the same time, and she decided to leave. It was around 1996, but I may have the year wrong.

SS: The other thing that happened in 1996, though, was that there was a discussion about reorganization at the ABA, and a need to consolidate resources. We proposed, as part of that consolidation, the merger of the Center for Pro Bono under the authority of the Standing Committee on Lawyers' Public Service Responsibility. It really ended up, I think, probably not saving all that many resources. But it made logical sense from an operational point of view to have the two entities together. I'm pretty sure that that was when Lynn ended up leaving, and I became counsel to the standing committee. We now call it the Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service. Terry became counsel to SCLAID, so that was in 1996. Up until my retirement in March 2018, I remained as counsel to the Pro Bono Committee.

AH: What did that mean? I mean, I understand a little bit what the Center for Pro Bono does, and you described a lot of that. So, what does counsel to the committee mean?

SS: Sure. ABA committees are focused on any number of issues. The Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service has a set of strategies that are pretty much outlined in the bylaws of the ABA. It's kind of clear what those responsibilities are. But in practice what it meant was that the president of the ABA appointed a committee that was responsible for leading the ABA's efforts to promote, expand, and effectuate quality pro bono programs around the country. It did that in the 1990s, and still does today, using a variety of strategies. Policy is certainly one of those, and I'll come back to that in a minute. Training and outreach are other ways, and using the national platform of the ABA to promote pro bono has been the broad set of responsibilities.

SS: In practice, that has meant the development of the Equal Justice Conference in 1999 as a successor to what was called the Pro Bono Conference. It has included the development of standards for the operation of pro bono programs. It's included the creation of something called the National Celebration of Pro Bono, the presentation of pro bono awards each year, the engagement of resources to focus on specific projects at a national level to respond to particular legal needs that weren't otherwise being addressed in an effective way. For example, most recently we've partnered with the ABA's Commission on Immigration on a working group to provide pro bono lawyers for unaccompanied minor immigrants as a result of the crisis of Central American kids coming over the border and needing legal representation in the immigration courts. So, finding those opportunities, understanding who the constituents are, paying attention to new developments in the pro bono arena, everything from technological developments to the engagement of large law firms as that developed, the involvement of law schools and the growth of their engagement with pro bono, and many, many other initiatives like that.

AH: What is the National Celebration of Pro Bono?

SS: 2018 will be the 10th anniversary of the National Celebration of Pro Bono. We started it as a strategy to create a moment in time every year where programs could celebrate the role of pro bono lawyers in their communities, but not so much to create opportunities for celebration, but to create opportunities for service. When I say programs, I am talking about the broad array of potential sponsors, so bar associations, law firms, corporate law departments, law schools, pro bono programs, legal aid offices, and many other institutions within the legal profession. Our goal was to have a designated week that would create the opportunity for those players to do something in their community to, yes, sure, celebrate pro bono, but also to create new projects and to have lawyers do more pro bono work. Our experience has always been that once lawyers have had the opportunity to do pro bono, they are going to be more likely to do pro bono in the future, and that's borne itself out. So, this was a way to create some local initiatives, local attention, some marketing moments, and new service opportunities for lawyers.

SS: The most recent national celebration reflects the experience of growth and excitement that's developed with these kinds of initiatives. There were programs in all 50 states, in Canada, in a few foreign countries, Puerto Rico. I forget the number (I'm sorry, I should know this off the top of my head), but I

think it was like 1,300 different programs. The other thing that's significant about the national celebration is, in many places now, they've given up trying to do all the work that they want to do in one week, and so October, not just the last week in October, has become Pro Bono Month in at least a few states.

AH: You mentioned standards. What are the pro bono standards? How were they developed? What was your role in those? Then I want to talk about 6.1.

SS: Yeah. I was going to get back to the policy.

AH: Then I want to talk about the studies that you've done or overseen, and there's probably other things.

SS: Yeah. Thanks.

AH: I don't care what order you go in.

SS: Yeah. The pro bono standards were developed by the standing committee. I think the first adoption was in 1996, so the development of them started probably in 1993 before I joined the ABA. After I joined the ABA, I picked up the responsibility of helping to carry the project forward. The committee worked long and hard, really, on this, but the genesis of the project stemmed from a belief that pro bono programs were providing inconsistent quality, and needed some guidance about what a quality pro bono program would look like. There's a standards model, the standards that were developed for civil legal services programs. But pro bono standards obviously take a different spin because of the setting of pro bono and the engagement of these outside lawyers to do this important legal work, so it was a multi-year project. Standard by standard by standard, they made their way through it. They developed an outline. They created a vision for what they wanted these standards to be and how they wanted them to be used. They clearly, both ahead of time and throughout the process, wanted to create something that would not just be another book on the shelf that collects dust, but something that would be a useful day-to-day operational manual. The standards are set up with black letters, so a black-letter standard followed by commentary that describes what it means. The commentary for every standard includes examples from different pro bono programs. In 1996, those standards were adopted by the ABA House of Delegates and distributed widely across the pro bono community. The Center for Pro Bono, as it does technical assistance and training with programs, uses the standards to this day. They've been modified since 1996, but they continue to provide that same structural guidance that helps programs provide quality services not only to their clients, but also to their volunteers.

SS: Model Rule 6.1 is a great example of how the Pro Bono Committee has been involved in the development of policy. This particular policy happens to be a rule in the ABA Model Code of Professional Responsibility, but the Pro Bono Committee has worked on other policy strategies that have helped to promote and activate pro bono, and you'll remind me to come back to that. Model Rule 6.1 was developed because there had been ABA policy adopted at two different meetings of the ABA House of Delegates, one in Toronto and one in Montreal, if

I'm not mistaken, that provided more detail of lawyers' professional responsibility to do pro bono work than was contained in the Model Rules of Professional Conduct. The effort to modify Model Rule 6.1 was driven by a need to bring ABA policy into the Rules of Professional Conduct. The critical issue in 1993 as the committee made its proposal was incorporating into the rule a quantification -- a 50-hour standard of pro bono service. That 50 hours created some real debate among the House of Delegates, driven by opposition from the ABA's Ethics Committee.

SS: There were a few things that happened, Alan, that I think are interesting around this. Bob Hirshon is now a professor of ethics in his retirement at the University of Michigan School of Law, and he has had me come and present to his students occasionally, and he and I have talked about this history. I hope I haven't gotten it wrong here, but the proposal that was made by the Pro Bono Committee created a problem for the Ethics Committee for two reasons. One was that I think up until then, no outside entity other than the Ethics Committee had ever proposed an amendment to the Rules of Professional Conduct, and they were not particularly happy that this rogue committee of the ABA was suggesting a modification to a Rule of Professional Conduct without their approval, and permission, and sponsorship. That was number one. Number two, the proposal included several things that the Ethics Committee didn't like, certainly the quantification. The 50-hour standard was part of that. The other part of it was that the rule does not require pro bono service. It's an aspirational rule, and for an ethics purist, the notion that there would be a rule in the Rules of Professional Conduct that does not require some action was problematic. It's the only rule in the Rules of Professional Conduct to this day that does not have a mandatory requirement, so that was a problem for the Ethics Committee. There are a number of other nuances that I won't go into now about the proposal, but those were the two primary issues.

SS: There was a lot of negotiation back and forth. They negotiated in the back of the hall on the day of the vote. They made some changes, but they couldn't agree on everything. The vote was, as I understand it, to this day the closest vote ever in the ABA House of Delegates. I think the proposal advanced or was approved by about 11 or 15 votes -- a very small number. So it was a very tight vote and really important discussion. In the long run, I think the history serves as an illustration of a number of things, particularly if you're an ethics student, but relative to the impact that it had on the rule as a guide for pro bono, the proof is in the pudding. As state after state after state adopted either the 1993 version of Model Rule 6.1 or something close to it, it was pretty clear that the Pro Bono Committee's vision for what the rule could be and should be was justified, at least in my view. So, that's Model Rule 6.1.

SS: The committee's involvement around policy activities includes some other important policy initiatives. Florida, of its own volition, developed a rule on mandatory pro bono reporting, and I'm not going to remember what year that was. Mandatory pro bono reporting was very controversial. Lots of debate. Close vote. It was adopted, and the Pro Bono Committee watched from afar as all this was happening and decided that this was a pretty exciting model and it should be promoted elsewhere. The Committee tried to get other states to take

it on. It probably was another five or so years before a second state tried it. Maryland, I think it was, was next. Maryland adopted some version of a mandatory reporting rule. The Pro Bono Committee continued to and still does want states to look at mandatory pro bono reporting as a strategy for engaging lawyers with pro bono. The rules do not require pro bono service. They require reporting of pro bono activity, so you can report zero hours, but you have to report something. If I'm not mistaken, there are 12 or 13 states that have adopted some type of mandatory pro bono reporting, but that's not very many since the first one was adopted in Florida.

SS: Other rules have developed along the way. In states where there is mandatory continuing legal education, some states have adopted rules that create the opportunity for lawyers to count toward their mandatory CLE credit some pro bono service. Other states have adopted rules that create the opportunity for retired or inactive lawyers to do pro bono work, provided they do it through an organized pro bono or legal services program. After Hurricane Katrina, there was an ABA Model Rule that was developed about disaster legal relief that helped states use out-of-state lawyers to provide assistance for disaster victims. Out-of-state lawyers are given a limited practice license for that purpose. Those are just some examples of the creativity that happens at a local level. The ABA Pro Bono Committee looks at it and says, "That's a great idea. Let's run with that and see what we can do to get other states to adopt it." You mentioned a third thing?

AH: Studies.

SS: Studies. Thanks. The Pro Bono Committee has, for its history, probably been asked repeatedly to respond to questions from reporters about how much pro bono work is being done by America's lawyers. Frankly, as much as we tried to collect that information over time, it wasn't until we were able to do some empirical research as opposed to getting reports from pro bono programs were we ever able to really capture some sense of what that looked like. We got some grant money internally from the ABA that we were able to use to do our first study -- it might have been in 2011?

AH: That might have been the year.

SS: Close to that. That study set a marker as much as anything, kind of, "Let's just take a look at and see where we're at." I'm not going to sit here and pretend that I can remember what those numbers were, but there were three key parts to that first study that we continued to come back to through the most recent studies that we've done. One is an assessment of how many hours of pro bono time America's lawyers do, so we've got enough good data to be able to say lawyers, on average, do X number of hours per attorney. If an attorney says that they are not doing pro bono, we know they don't do any. So then we can look for those lawyers who do pro bono work, how many hours have those lawyers done? We can look at those kinds of numbers. We can look at the overall percentage of lawyers that do pro bono versus not doing pro bono work.

SS: More important, I've always felt, is the information about why lawyers do or don't do pro bono. It's that information that helps us. It helps the PBC reach out to programs and provide them with more guidance. If we know that lawyers don't do pro bono work because their employers don't support it, we know that pro bono programs should be working with their local legal community to get more support for pro bono. If we know that lawyers don't do pro bono because they want to have malpractice insurance, we want to make sure that pro bono programs can provide that malpractice insurance for those volunteers, and so on.

SS: We did a second study probably three years later, and then a third study two or three years after that. All of those were national studies. The next initiative was a statewide study, and I think this is about three years ago now, so 2015 or so. We we took one state and just wanted to see if the numbers in that state matched the national study, and it was a much bigger sample. Instead of the statistically significant number that we used for the national studies, the state study was very carefully weighted. We sent out the same survey instrument to every lawyer in the state of Nebraska. That gave us a pretty good sense of the quality of our earlier studies. We'd made some changes, really, around definition of pro bono. That was always the most challenging part of these surveys, and then used it as a way to encourage other states to sign on. So, we reached out with the Nebraska study and invited other states to use a similar strategy. 24 states joined that effort, and we did the same thing. We sent surveys out to tens of thousands of attorneys in the 24 states that had agreed to participate. We were able to provide each state with their own survey findings, and then developed a national report that was just released two or three weeks ago that really reflects a much, much larger number of attorneys participating. It gives some geographically interesting detail about pro bono participation, and so gives us some deeper opportunities to delve into the data.

AH: Before I go to the vision question, do you have other things you want to add? Your work at the ABA, stuff for pro bono, and the counsel work, the ABA pro bono work that you've done?

SS: I think, Alan, that the one thing that I really want to make sure I talk about a little bit is the Equal Justice Conference. We're sitting here in San Diego at the 20th Equal Justice Conference, and there are almost 1,000 people here who've come together to talk about access to justice issues writ large. But a significant part of that is pro bono. We couldn't do this without our long-term partnership with the National Legal Aid and Defender Association, and the Equal Justice Conference was created as a co-sponsored event in 1999. We've been able to maintain a really strong partnership with NLADA throughout that time, both at the logistical level of putting on the conference, but really more importantly at a substantive level. I think it's a measure of the organizational relationship between the two groups that this event really reflects, in a meaningful way, the way that two important national organizations that maybe don't always agree on every issue can agree that there is a critical need for training or for giving people the opportunity to come together and learn together about how to improve the justice system. I'm excited about the quality of the programming, the energy the people bring to the conference, the networking that happens in

the hallways. Each year this conference, for the past 20 years, has just been really the center of opportunity for people to reconnect with each other and with these really important issues.

- AH: I agree. You've been, I mean, the most significant player in pro bono. Esther, maybe, too. Esther and you. What would you like to see happen in the future in the broad access to justice arena, but with particular focus (but not exclusive focus, up to you), on pro bono?
- SS: As I reach the end of my career, at the ABA anyway, and have the opportunity to reflect backward and think about that question, the one thing that stands out to me, as much as anything, is what we see happening in our country right now. The political divide and cultural divide has created an opportunity for lawyers to engage in issues in ways that we maybe had never thought possible. It's not just about poverty-driven pro bono legal service anymore. The work that's being done on voting rights is remarkable. The work that's being done on LGBT issues is just inspiring. The work that's being done on immigration could just make your heart ache for how important it is for these kids that are out there, and not just kids, but it's just inspiring work. I think, Alan, my vision is that these communities won't silo from each other. They'll find ways to build networks that connect, so the lawyers who are driven to pro bono around poverty issues will also find a way to engage, and the organizations that are doing the work will engage with each other around some of those other maybe non-poverty-driven issues.
- AH: According to your resume, you've received some awards in your past. There was one even today. Of the awards you received, what ones mean the most to you?
- SS: Gosh, that's hard. When an award is named after somebody in particular, it's touching, and it means a lot, and particularly since I've known those people. So, receiving the Reece Smith Award from the National Association of Pro Bono was really important to me. Reece and I didn't always agree about pro bono. He had a particular vision that pro bono should be bar-driven and that the legal aid community just needed to stay over there and do their own thing. He and I butted heads over that a lot, and I think I got him to meet me halfway, and he was still alive when I received the award named after him. He was there, and it meant a lot to me to receive that award.
- SS: I received the Bruce Friedman Award from the University of New Hampshire School of Law co-sponsored by the New Hampshire Bar Association. I had been a New Hampshire Bar employee. I was a graduate of the University of New Hampshire School of Law, formerly the Franklin Pierce Law Center. Bruce was my professor. He ran the Family and Housing Law Clinic, and was an incredible advocate and mentor, and just really was such a great teacher. Receiving that award mattered a lot to me.
- SS: I received an award named after Jon Ross, who is still alive, thank goodness, and it's from the New Hampshire Bar (the L. Jonathan Ross Award for Outstanding Commitment to Legal Services for the Poor). Jon is just a terrific role model for what a private lawyer can and should be around pro bono issues. Look at his

own engagement with pro bono, his leadership around pro bono activities at a local, state, and national level, and within his own firm. So, each of those three awards in particular just matter a lot to me for different reasons.

AH: You've been on several boards. We don't need to go into these, but you've been on the New Hampshire Bar Foundation Board, and the New Hampshire Legal Assistance Board, and National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership and also you're, as I recall, was on a board of your local temple. Of those boards, is there any one that stands out as something you really feel strongly about? Or they're all important, I think.

SS: Yeah. I mean, I'll just comment on giving away money. As part of the board of the New Hampshire Bar Foundation, we don't give out the IOLTA grants. There's a separate IOLTA grants committee. The board rubber stamps their recommendations and that's fine. But there was some other money that the Bar Foundation Board gave out. Thinking about ways to use some financial resources to activate new projects, to educate the community, to help a legal aid program or a pro bono program engage a new project always felt like it was a really important way to spend my time. That was mirrored, although it wasn't a board, when I served on the Allocations Committee of the local United Way in the community where I live. It's not coincidental that a couple of the programs that received some of the United Way money were the New Hampshire Legal Assistance and the New Hampshire Pro Bono Program, and so I had the opportunity to funnel some money, along with my colleagues on the Allocations Committee, to a couple of programs that I care about, but also to some other organizations that serve the homeless, or provide food for the hungry, or help senior citizens with their day-to-day activities. Understanding the way that all of those organizations connect with each other to make a community better, and the way that a funding organization can help to support those connections was something that I really appreciated.

AH: This has been fascinating. Is there any final thoughts that you want to leave with us?

SS: I guess I will just say that I've had some enjoyable experiences. I met some great people. I'm not going away. I'm grateful, Alan, for the mentors and the leaders that have come before me, and you're one of them for sure. I think that the important part of this story that's still being written about the legal aid community is that there are heroes coming after us, and we can see it. We know who those people are. They're here with us in San Diego. They're energetic and exciting. They're creative, and the future looks bright, I think, for the legal services community. I've been really proud to be a part of it for whatever I might have been able to contribute.

AH: Thank you. That's very good. Thank you-