

Nexsen Pruet announces 2018 Julian Nexsen Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year Award recipient

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News from Nexsen Pruet

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David Garrett, an employment and immigration attorney based in Raleigh, North Carolina, has earned the first-ever Julian Nexsen Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year Award for his outstanding dedication to pro bono efforts. Named for **Julian Nexsen**, this award was established to honor Mr. Nexsen's commitment to legal excellence and public service through pro bono works.

David spent hundreds of hours, in conjunction with **Advocates for Human Rights**, advocating on behalf of individuals seeking asylum protection in the United States. The cases he has worked on, while extraordinarily complex due to complicated processes, language barriers and fearful witnesses, have saved lives. David's tireless efforts and resolute advocacy on his clients' behalf serves as a model for attorneys across the United States when arguing similar cases.

Throughout 2018, many Nexsen Pruet attorneys devoted their time and experience to pro bono causes. The firm was proud to highlight several attorneys for their pro bono commitment including:

- Margaret Burnham – Using her legal knowledge and real estate experience, Margaret helped create and support the **Francis Springs Prayer Center, Inc.**, an interfaith retreat center in Rockingham County, North Carolina, that also houses a peace and justice program.
- David Robinson – For the last five years, David Robinson has been working to support the **Veterans Life Center**, a 100+ bed facility for homeless and at-risk Veterans in Butner, North Carolina. Upon completion of the facility, the Veterans Life Center will work with Veterans to help them from falling into crisis, which among other things, can include chronic homelessness, incarceration, suicide or premature death.
- Melissa Spence – Appointed by the South Carolina Court of Appeals, Melissa focused her **pro bono efforts** on representing an indigent criminal client in front of appellate courts, which involved her writing,

preparing and arguing appellate briefs on behalf of her client.

- Lisa Sumner – Lisa volunteers for Legal Aid of North Carolina’s “Lawyer on the Line Program,” helping one client each month. The program gives private attorneys an easy way to provide basic legal advice and service to Legal Aid clients.
- John Zimmer – In Charlotte, John has been volunteering with the Council for Children’s Rights, through which he serves as a Court-appointed attorney on behalf of children in high conflict custody cases in Mecklenburg County.
- Mike Scott – Mike donated his time to represent an indigent, incarcerated client through the South Carolina Court of Appeals Pro Bono Program. On behalf of his client, Mike appeared before the South Carolina Court of Appeals, as well as the South Carolina Supreme Court, obtaining a positive outcome for his client while earning valuable courtroom experience.

Pro bono work is a fundamental part of Nexsen Pruet’s firm culture, just as Mr. Nexsen intended.

David Garrett’s work in immigration has taken him around the world to share his legal knowledge. As an active member of the North Carolina Bar Association (NCBA), he regularly represents the state as a delegate in meetings with the Dai-ni Tokyo Bar Association, Japan’s largest bar association. As a delegate, he helps to plan the trip and coordinate meetings with local law firms, government officials, businesses and bar organizations. Through his work with the NCBA Attorney Exchange Program, David recently helped the NCBA’s Young Lawyers Division host several young lawyers from Haiti as they visited the United States.

Nexsen Pruet is one of the largest law firms in the Carolinas, with more than 190 attorneys and offices in Columbia, Charleston, Greenville, Hilton Head and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, as well as Charlotte, Greensboro and Raleigh, North Carolina. Founded in 1945, Nexsen Pruet provides a broad range of legal services to the business community and represents companies and other entities in local, state, national and international venues.