

Headline News

Five Andrews Kurth Associates Join Volunteer Prosecutor Program

April 20, 2009
Houston, Texas

Provides an opportunity to gain trial experience and assist the City of Houston

(Houston) - Five Andrews Kurth litigation associates will begin participation in the City of Houston's Volunteer Prosecutor Program today. While the associates are on loan to the City of Houston, they will gain trial experience as well as help to expedite the city's dockets.

"From a hands-on training and development standpoint, participating in the City of Houston's Volunteer Prosecutor Program is invaluable and has been a goal of our Attorney Professional Development Program since its inception," says Amy Sladczyk Hancock, Director of Professional Development at the firm. "We have fielded our first rotation with excellent litigation associates and in this age of the dying jury trial, being able to provide them with significant judge-and-jury trial experience is something for which we are grateful and excited about."

The associates participating in the program are Courtney E. Ervin, Kevin Hardman, Raymond G. Randle, Jr., Mitch A. Reid and Kelly Spragins Sandill.

"It is becoming increasingly difficult to gain true courtroom experience with more and more cases settling before going to trial," says Tom Taylor, Andrews Kurth partner and co-chair of the litigation section, "This program is a welcome opportunity for our associates."

Each lawyer will spend one day a week staffing the municipal courts for a total of 20 weeks. While participating in the program, they will be mentored by former Navy JAG Corps prosecutor and 35 year Andrews Kurth litigation partner, Larry Bellatti.

"This is a mutually beneficial opportunity," says Bellatti, "Andrews Kurth has the ability to provide the associates' time to the city and, in turn, the associates will be amassing invaluable trial experience."

Each attorney participant in this program has the potential to realize at least 10 jury trials (and possibly as many as 20) during their time with the court.

Since its launch, the program has been an excellent example of public-private partnership. Participation in this program is an important contribution to public service and the City of Houston, whose municipal courthouse has one of the busiest dockets in the nation. For a total of twenty weeks, the five Andrews Kurth associates will be trying cases involving transportation code violations, which tend to dominate the dockets. Other Class C misdemeanors, such as assaults, public intoxication and ordinance violations are frequently tried by City of Houston volunteer prosecutors.

"Attorneys in this program will experience the 'real' world of attorneys and witnesses and the pressures assessing the sufficiency of evidence in a time-critical environment," says Lloyd Segall, a veteran of the City Attorney's Office and program coordinator for the City of Houston.

ABOUT ANDREWS KURTH LLP

For more than a century, Andrews Kurth has built its practice on the belief that "straight talk is good business." Real answers, clear vision and mutual respect define the firm's relationships with clients, colleagues, communities and employees. With more than 400 lawyers and offices in Austin, Beijing, Dallas, Houston, London, Los Angeles, New York, The Woodlands and Washington, DC, Andrews Kurth represents a wide array of clients in all areas of business law. For more information about Andrews Kurth, please visit andrewskurth.com.