

In The News

Carrie Ann Wozniak, Carolyn Haslam Honored by Legal Aid Society with Guardian ad Litem Award of Excellence

September 23, 2016

Carrie Ann Wozniak and Carolyn Haslam were selected as the recipients of the 2016 Elizabeth Susan Khoury Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Award of Excellence by the Legal Aid Society of the Orange County Bar Association (OCBA). They were presented with the award during a OCBA luncheon on Sept. 22 for their tremendous pro bono commitment to promote the best interests of abused and neglected children.

“My pro bono work is what keeps me grounded and my practice well-rounded,” said Wozniak. “When you are able to help a child from a struggling family, or convey a teen defendant’s value and potential to him or her while volunteering at Teen Court, everything else pales in comparison.”

“My pro bono work has been a life changer for me,” said Haslam. “It has opened my eyes to the struggles of others, made me aware of some of the needs of our community and emboldened my commitment to community service, both in and outside of the legal profession. I have been blessed to see families reunited and children to find their forever homes, including a child that now calls me her fairy god mother. I am hopeful that all lawyers, young and old, transactional and litigation alike will serve the community in a capacity which is meaningful to

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them, because it enriches your life as much as it does the lives of those you help.”

Their work is a testament to Akerman’s long-standing commitment to serve as allies and advocates in the community. Lawyers and other professionals in Orlando –and across the firm – have contributed numerous hours toward pro bono legal service, volunteerism and fundraising for underprivileged children and their families. The OCBA’s Legal Aid Society recently honored Akerman with the highest law firm award, the 2016 John R. Hamilton Law Firm Award of Excellence, for its increasing participation in the guardian ad litem program and commitment to foster youth. The Orlando team also was presented with the 2016 Champions for Children award by Florida’s Children First, whose mission is focused on advancing the rights of at-risk youth and making sustainable improvement in Florida’s child serving systems.