

Verizon Legal Volunteers Launch New Program to Provide Free Legal Services

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Attorneys and Legal Staff at Verizon to Focus on Education, Supporting Victims of Domestic Violence, and Veterans Returning From Iraq and Afghanistan

NEW YORK, Nov. 4 /PRNewswire/ -- Verizon attorneys and legal staff have started a program that will provide free legal services to needy individuals and nonprofit organizations.

The program helps address a major issue: Nearly 1 million poor people will be denied representation in courts across the country this year because of insufficient resources, according to a recent study by Legal Services Corporation.

Verizon attorneys, who specialize in a variety of legal fields, and legal staff, will donate their time, talents and professional expertise, with an emphasis on civil matters involving education, domestic violence, and supporting veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

"This program is a natural extension of Verizon's long-standing commitment to the communities we serve," said Randal Milch, executive vice president and general counsel for Verizon. "With attorneys and staffers in 20 states and the District of Columbia, Verizon's pro bono program has the potential to have a significant impact in many of these communities. I'm proud that my colleagues will be answering the call and generously donating their talents and time."

Under the program, the more than 700 attorneys, paralegals and staffers in the company's legal department will be encouraged to volunteer a minimum of 25 hours a year. The department has established a Pro Bono Committee to oversee the program, approve pro bono projects and partners, assess the program's effectiveness, and ensure that volunteers have access to proper training resources.

The program will provide legal assistance in these key areas:

Education -- Verizon legal volunteers will meet with high school law classes to teach a diverse group of students about civil law and careers in the legal profession. Volunteers will also advise schools and education nonprofits on corporate, tax and business law issues, and represent learning-disabled students in proceedings aimed at securing appropriate special educational services.

Domestic Violence -- Legal volunteers will provide assistance to victims of domestic violence, a core commitment of the Verizon Foundation - the company's philanthropic arm. Assistance will include: helping immigrants who are victims of domestic violence file immigration papers; helping domestic violence victims secure protective orders in court; and providing corporate and business law advice to organizations, such as nonprofits and shelters.

Veterans -- America's returning veterans often have significant unmet legal needs, particularly when they have suffered physical or mental injuries as a result of their service. Verizon legal volunteers will be partnered with veterans needing pro bono representation in disability evaluations, disability benefits appeals, and involuntary separation proceedings. The volunteers will also provide legal advice and support to disabled veteran entrepreneurs who need business-law assistance.

To broaden the program's reach, Verizon has partnered with the law firm of DLA Piper, which has a similar program that provides legal services to the needy, and joined the Corporate Pro Bono Challenge - a program sponsored by Corporate Pro Bono. The Challenge's goal is for at least half of the members of Verizon's legal department to participate in the program.

Volunteerism is a cornerstone of Verizon's corporate culture, and the company encourages and supports employees' volunteer efforts. In 2008, Verizon employees volunteered more than 600,000 hours in the communities where they live and work, and contributed \$12.7 million to causes and organizations they care about. The Verizon Foundation provided \$13.4 million in matching gifts.

More information is available at <http://aboutus.vzw.com/communityservice/hopeLine.html>.

Verizon has long been committed to the prevention of domestic violence and the advancement of education in literacy. Since 2006, the Verizon Foundation has invested \$15 million to raise awareness of and aid in the prevention of domestic violence. The Verizon Wireless HopeLine phone recycling program provides wireless phones with free service to nonprofit organizations for use by victims and survivors, giving them an immediate connection to help. Also through the HopeLine program, the American Bar Association Commission on Domestic Violence maintains a National Domestic Violence Pro Bono Directory, a comprehensive national database of programs providing pro bono legal services to victims.

Verizon Communications Inc. (NYSE: VZ), headquartered in New York, is a global leader in delivering broadband and other wireless and wireline communications services to mass market, business, government and wholesale customers. Verizon Wireless operates America's most reliable wireless network, serving more than 89 million customers nationwide. Verizon also provides converged communications, information and entertainment services over America's most advanced fiber-optic network, and delivers innovative, seamless business solutions to customers around the world. A Dow 30 company, Verizon employs a diverse workforce of more than 230,000 and last year generated consolidated revenues of more than \$97 billion. For more information, visit www.verizon.com.

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