

2013 John Adams and John Quincy Adams  
Pro Bono Publico Awards

**Short Introduction**

Gandhi once said, "The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems." We are here today to honor those who have worked tirelessly to make our system of justice accessible to the most vulnerable among us, who have by their example demonstrated what can be accomplished by those who do what they are capable of doing.

**Carolyn Scott-Howe**

What Vickie, Regina and Robin have done for pro se litigants in Suffolk County Probate and Family Court, Carolyn Scott-Howe has brought with a flourish to Western Massachusetts. Carolyn has long been dedicated to pro bono work and has generously volunteered in the Lawyer for the Day project in the Hampden County Probate and Family Court. But it is Carolyn's leadership of the Uncontested Divorce Project in Hampden County that brings her to the podium today.

The Uncontested Divorce Project, or UDP, was created two years ago by the Massachusetts Justice Project to help steer low-income parties through the process of filing for divorce and securing judgments. When the Justice Project put the call out for a volunteer attorney to help supervise the project, Carolyn stepped up to the plate, and in true Big Papi fashion, she has knocked it out of the park.

Despite her busy solo practice and teaching responsibilities, Carolyn threw herself into organizing the UDP. She met with the judges of the Hampden Probate and Family Court to develop procedures where litigants could come to UDP clinics for help in filing and resolving uncontested cases. And with the help of volunteer paralegal students from Elms College, the project has taken off.

Since its launch in October 2011, the UDP has hosted 7 filing clinics and assisted over 30 individuals. In each case, Carolyn has been the attorney of record. She has been responsible for

serving every defendant with notice, meeting individually with plaintiffs to prepare financial statements and proposed settlements, notifying clients of court dates and appearing with them at pre-trial conferences, and ultimately, helping clients obtain judgments. All the while, the project has provided an invaluable and rewarding opportunity for Carolyn's paralegal students to get experience working on legal matters and assisting indigent clients, and she is in the process of expanding the UDP to include law students from her alma mater, Western New England College of Law.

Just like her students, we can all learn a great deal from Carolyn's example. We are thankful for her tireless service to make sure the legal system is accessible to the most vulnerable among us.