

Sara Ghadiri

PRO BONO COUNSEL

Chicago

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Sara Ghadiri serves as Chapman's Pro Bono Counsel, where she supervises and administers the firm's pro bono programming, services, and partnerships across all offices.

Pro Bono Program

Sara coordinates Chapman's pro bono projects and partnerships firmwide as well as collaboration initiatives with clients. She serves as a mentor and supervising lawyer on pro bono matters in various areas of public interest law and maintains a substantive pro bono case load, much of which focuses on matters related to immigration, pro se advice, orders of protection, legislation, impact litigation, and wills and advanced directives, both in and outside of state and federal court.

In her role, Sara seeks out new partnerships and strengthens existing ones, both with legal service partners and with business clients, to identify strategies for growth in pro bono work and launch new pro bono initiatives. She works closely with Chapman's financial institution clients to create pro bono partnerships with a focus on identifying relevant, succinct, and rewarding opportunities, many of which involve clinics with legal aid organization partners.

Sara is the Assistant Director of LegalTrek, which is a collaboration between the Chicago Committee for Minorities in Large Law Firms and DePaul University College of Law. LegalTrek's mission is to diversify the legal profession by encouraging and supporting college students from historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minority groups, as well as socioeconomically disadvantaged students, LGBTQ+ students, and disabled students, to attend law school.

Admitted

Illinois

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois, Trial Bar

U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois

Wisconsin

Education

The University of Iowa
College of Law, J.D., 2014

- Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Transnational Law and Contemporary Problems*
- American Bar Association Judicial Intern Opportunity Program Intern to the Honorable Judge Ruben Castillo

Illinois Wesleyan University,
B.A., Political Science and
Philosophy, *magna cum
laude*, 2010

Chicago Committee on
Minorities in Large Law Firms
LegalTrek Scholar, 2010

While in law school, Sara worked as a student legal intern with the University of Iowa Clinical Law Program, where she worked in the domestic violence, immigration, general civil, and family representation practices. She participated in Chapman's summer associate program in 2013 and joined Chapman as an associate in 2014, where she practiced in the Banking and Financial Services Department with a focus on commercial litigation, regulatory advice, and contested trusts and estates matters. She has coordinated Chapman's pro bono activities since 2018, and became Pro Bono Counsel on a full-time basis in 2021.

Legislation and Innovation

Sara leads the firm's work in helping individuals access the legal system, work that has immense meaning and life-changing impact. Sara led Chapman's involvement in drafting Illinois legislation to address a blind spot in the laws that protect survivors of domestic violence resulting in additional safeguards. She also leads efforts to provide smarter and better ways for legal aid organizations to deliver services to those in need. Together with Chapman's Practice Innovations Group, Sara has connected two legal aid organizations with technology solutions and document automation programs that allow each organization to dramatically increase volunteers and the number of people who can be served.

Pro Bono Referrals

The firm accepts referrals for pro bono services from pro bono organizations, such as legal aid organizations, with whom we have established relationships. If you are looking for such a referral, contact a local legal aid organization in your area for an intake appointment. If you are looking for an attorney with a criminal matter, this firm cannot assist you directly. You should call the State Bar in your state for a referral.

Memberships

Iranian-American Bar Association

Languages

Farsi

Community

Association of Pro Bono Counsel

- Board of Directors

Honors & Awards

- National Immigrant Justice Center's Human Rights Award, 2021
- American Bar Association Free Legal Answers Pro Bono Leader, 2018–2021

- Illinois Wesleyan University's 2020 Robert M. Montgomery Outstanding Young Alumni Award
- National Immigrant Justice Center's Rising Star Award, 2019
- Illinois Jaycees's The Outstanding Young Persons of Illinois, 2019
- LAF (currently Legal Aid Chicago) Order of Protection Litigation Project's Volunteer of the Year, 2018
- Chapman and Cutler LLP's Pro Bono and Volunteer Achievement Award, 2017
- Boyd Service Award, 2014
- Antonia "DJ" Miller Award for Advancement of Human Rights, 2014
- Michelle R. Bennett Client Representation Award, 2014
- Dean's Award for Legal Analysis, Writing, and Research II, 2012

Publications

July 14, 2023

Practice Innovations: Pro Bono legal work – Easy as pie, bite-size ways to increase participation

Presentations

December 2021

PILI's 2021 Annual Awards Luncheon (Video)

News

February 2023

Chapman Recognized as an ABA Free Legal Answers Pro Bono Leader

November 2021

Chapman Receives Bank of America Legal Department's 2020-2021 Pro Bono Award

June 8, 2021

Chapman's Sara Ghadiri Recognized by the National Immigrant Justice Center

April 12, 2021

National Immigrant Justice Center to Recognize Chapman's Sara Ghadiri

February 24, 2021

CDEL Recognizes Chapman as "Corporate Partner of the Year"

February 2021

American Bar Association Recognizes Chapman as a "Pro Bono Leader"

November 2, 2020

Legal Aid Chicago Launches Criminal Record Expungement App Developed by Chapman's Innovations Team

October 2020

Sara Ghadiri Recognized by Illinois Wesleyan University

September 14, 2020

The Center for Disability and Elder Law (CDEL) Launches Estate Planning Documents App Developed by Chapman's Innovations Team

March 25, 2020

Chapman's Sara Ghadiri Discusses Virtual Legal Aid in the COVID-19 Pandemic

March 2020

Chapman Named a "Pro Bono Leader" by the American Bar Association

May 2019

Sara Ghadiri Named One of The Outstanding Young Persons of Illinois

January 2, 2019

New Law Takes Effect Expanding Protections for Domestic Abuse Survivors

September 17, 2018

Ghadiri '10 Authors Law to Protect Domestic Violence Survivors

August 13, 2018

Governor Signs Bill Supported by Chapman That Expands Protections for Domestic Abuse Survivors

February 21, 2018

Bill Expanding Protections for Domestic Abuse Survivors in Illinois Advances with Chapman Support