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# American Immigration Lawyers Association Recognizes Troutman Pepper with 2023 Michael Maggio Memorial Pro Bono Award

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**WASHINGTON** – In recognition of outstanding efforts in providing pro bono representation in the immigration field, Troutman Pepper has received the [2023 Michael Maggio Memorial Pro Bono Award](#) from the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA). AILA's annual awards are the highest recognition of achievement and contributions in the national immigration law community.

Troutman Pepper attorneys and fellows of the [Pepper Center for Public Service](#) have a long history of representing pro bono clients needing immigration assistance. In 2022, nearly one-fifth of the firm's total pro bono hours were in assisting refugees and other immigrants in a variety of immigration matters. Some of the highlights included representing Afghan refugees seeking asylum; obtaining a green card for a victim of labor trafficking; obtaining work authorizations that had been wrongful denied; obtaining the release of a person wrongfully detained through a habeas petition; and successfully challenging removal proceedings against a legal permanent resident in a Third Circuit Court of Appeals case that involved important questions regarding application of the categorical approach. This work is done in close collaboration with community partners across the country.

Business Litigation attorneys [David Dantzler](#), [Brian Watt](#) and [Bianca DiBella](#) devoted their recent pro bono efforts fighting for the return of a client to the United States who had been deported while his immigration proceedings were on appeal. Although asylum was granted in January 2021, it took until October 2022 for him to successfully board a plane in Kenya and return to safety in the U.S.

"We are honored to receive this recognition from the American Immigration Lawyers Association," said [Sara Richman](#), Chair of Pro Bono at Troutman Pepper. "Bianca, Brian, and David were relentless advocates in this case, refusing to give up until our client was safely home in the U.S. We are thankful for our community partner, the Georgia Asylum and Immigration Network, who referred us this pro bono opportunity and has supported our nomination for this award. We look forward to partnering with GAIN for years to come."

This year's award recipients will be recognized at AILA's Annual Conference on June 22 in Orlando, Florida.

AILA is the national association of immigration lawyers established to promote justice, advocate for fair and reasonable immigration law and policy, advance the quality of immigration and nationality law and practice, and enhance the professional development of its members. Learn more at [aila.org](https://aila.org).

Each year, Troutman Pepper attorneys dedicate thousands of pro bono hours in support of nonprofits, immigrants, military veterans, children, the wrongfully convicted, civil rights and social justice initiatives, and so many more. Learn more at [troutman.com/pro-bono](https://troutman.com/pro-bono).

### **About Troutman Pepper**

Troutman Pepper is a national law firm with more than 1,200 attorneys strategically located in 23 U.S. cities. The firm's litigation, transactional, and regulatory practices advise a diverse client base, from startups to multinational enterprises. The firm provides sophisticated legal solutions to clients' most pressing business challenges, with depth across industry sectors, including energy, financial services, health sciences, insurance, and private equity, among others. Learn more at [troutman.com](https://troutman.com).

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