



Pro Bono Attorney Spotlight

In these challenging times, KIND is deeply grateful for your continued support of unaccompanied children, especially for the pro bono attorneys who fight on behalf of their KIND clients each and every day. In July, we are pleased to spotlight Shamus Hyland of Gesmer Updegrove LLP, who recently completed an amicus filing on behalf of a KIND client as well as previously representing four children through KIND. Thank you Shamus!

Why did you take a KIND case?

I took a case after KIND attorneys gave a presentation at my firm. It seemed like a great way for a junior attorney to jump in and offer legal representation to those most in need.

What have you learned from this experience or from your client?

KIND clients often face horrific violence in their home countries, and end up here due to forces beyond their control. When they get here, they hope to attend safe schools, work, and partake in the best of what this country offers. Meanwhile, they're stuck trying to navigate a system where they aren't guaranteed help from a lawyer. These cases require patience and empathy, but the clients are resilient and inspiring.

What is the most surprising thing you've learned about the U.S. immigration system? It's no secret the immigration apparatus in the US can be an imposing, frustrating bureaucracy. But I was surprised by the extent of the obstacles these child clients face throughout the immigration process.

What would you tell other attorneys to encourage them to take a KIND case?

I worked on KIND cases hoping in a vague way to help kids in need and maybe gain some litigation experience. But the cases turned out to be life-changing. KIND cases afford opportunities that make you a better lawyer, but also connect you to the rewarding human side of the profession. These clients really need the help, and by investing a little bit of time, an attorney can change the course of a child's life. KIND also provides tremendous support and expertise along the way.

Do you have any advice for a new attorney taking their first pro bono case?

It's important to maintain close personal connections with juvenile clients, and very helpful to have a good handle on how your client is doing both in and out of school.

Thank you to Shamus all that you do on behalf of your KIND as well as your ongoing support of KIND!