

Washington State Bar Association

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William Braun Receives Pro Bono and Public Service Award—Individual

Influential Attorney Acknowledged for Pro Bono Work to Protect Domestic Violence Survivors

SEATTLE, WA [Sept. 27, 2019] — The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) presented William Braun the 2019 APEX Award for Pro Bono and Public Service (Individual). This award is presented to an individual for outstanding cumulative efforts in providing pro bono services or who gives back in meaningful ways to the public, the community, or to the legal profession. WSBA President William D. Pickett presented the award at the annual WSBA APEX (Acknowledging Professional Excellence) Awards Dinner on Sept. 26 at the Sheraton Seattle.

After two decades serving as a trial attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice, Braun began pro bono work on behalf of survivors of domestic violence. He later successfully argued precedent-setting cases in *Smith v. Smith* and *Braatz v. Braatz* that empowered family law practitioners to better protect their clients and shift the power balance back toward domestic violence survivors, rather than their abusers.

Watch a video of Braun's life and contributions here: <https://bit.ly/2IKunzw>

"His résumé reads like a litany of famous cases—he's the real deal," Northwest Justice Project advocacy coordinators Mary Welch and Leslie Savina wrote in a joint statement of support for Braun. "... For more than 10 years Bill has represented domestic violence survivors in the most desperate and dangerous cases. ... But what makes Bill special is his day-to-day work of standing up in court on behalf of clients, for whom he is the last hope. He has done this work for years without accolade or remuneration."

Braun was also named the 2007 Volunteer of the Year by Eastside Legal Assistance Program and the 2009 King County Bar Association (KCBA) Pro Bono Services, Family Law Mentor Volunteer of the Year. He won the 2009 Take Action Award from the Coalition Ending Gender-Based Violence and the 2011 KCBA Pro Bono Award.

Outside of court, Braun mentors other legal professionals in how to better protect their clients, and makes regular appearances in local media, as well as penning articles to advocate for legal and procedural changes that will help those impacted by domestic violence. Braun has helped legal aid providers train, educate, and mentor other pro bono attorneys and worked with the KCBA Seattle Women's Commission to analyze data and draft a report on how firearm surrender orders are issued in domestic violence protection order cases.

"Mr. Braun does not simply do work that he knows how to do," Perkins Coie Pro Bono Counsel Leah Medway said. "He pushes himself and the rest of us to learn more about how we can help survivors and change their treatment in the legal system."

About the Washington State Bar Association

The WSBA operates under the delegated authority of the Washington Supreme Court to license the state's nearly 40,000 lawyers and other legal professionals. In furtherance of its obligation to protect and serve the public, the WSBA both regulates lawyers and other legal professionals and serves its members as a professional association — all without public funding. The WSBA's mission is to serve the public and the members of the Bar, to ensure the integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice. For more information, visit www.wsba.org.

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