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Law firm provides pro bono services for not-for-profit entities in Chicago

By John Flynn Rooney
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Chicago lawyer [Jordan H. Peters](#) recently provided pro bono legal services on real estate transactions for two local not-for-profit entities.

Peters, a founding partner of Freeborn & Peters LLP who concentrates on real estate transactions and corporate matters, said about 10 percent of his practice involves pro bono matters.

"I am interested in charities and community work in the metropolitan area," he said.

In late 2009, Peters, along with partner [Helen N. Baker](#) and two other Freeborn & Peters lawyers, helped Interfaith House Inc. purchase the building it occupied for 16 years on Chicago's West Side.

The 64-bed facility at 3456 W. Franklin Blvd. provides interim housing and care for indigent adults following their release from local hospitals. Interfaith Foundation, which has about 30 employees, opened in 1994 and has served more than 6,600 homeless men and women.

"It's been a long-term goal of Interfaith House, going back to its founding, that it would purchase the building it occupies," said Baker, chair of Interfaith House's board of directors.

Peters said Wednesday that he was pleased to take the lead in helping Interfaith House to purchase the building.

"It's a very worthwhile charity," he said.

Baker said she finds assisting the residents inspiring.

"For me, it's not only the matter of helping these individuals to improve their lives and to change their temporary circumstances" into a more positive situation, Baker said. "But I also see it as a [healthy] thing for the City of Chicago that these people are living in safe housing and not having to recover from their surgeries and their illnesses while on the streets."

Jennifer Nelson-Seals, Interfaith House's executive director, praised the efforts of Peters and his colleagues in the approximately \$250,000 transaction.

"We're happy to have them on board," Nelson-Seals said Thursday.

Due to Baker's role with Interfaith House, Peters began representing that entity about three years ago. Baker, an employment lawyer, first became involved with Interfaith House about eight years ago as a member of a committee that advised that entity on human resources matters.

Peters and other lawyers with his firm continue representing Interfaith House on matters related to the purchase of the building, including making renovations to the facility.

"After that, we stand ready to help Interfaith House with its next big project," Baker said.

Getting other colleagues from the Freeborn & Peters firm to work on the Interfaith House transaction, which closed in late 2009, took no convincing from her, Baker said.

"Everyone was eager to do so and took a lot of pride in the result," Baker said.

Other members of the legal team from Freeborn & Peters that worked on the transaction are partners, [Mitchell A. Carrel](#) and [Robert M. Baratta Jr.](#)

Also in late 2009, Freeborn & Peters represented Inspiration Corp. in its purchase of a building on Chicago's West Side, where a restaurant is planned along with a vocational center to train people for jobs in the food service industry, Peters said.

In past years, Peters also has represented on a pro bono basis several churches in Chicago and Wilmette relating to real estate transactions and financing, along with providing corporate and tax advice.

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