



Dear Friends:

As Jim Jones' message indicates, I will be stepping down as CEO and President of Pro Bono Institute (PBI) while continuing to play a key role providing counsel at PBI for the foreseeable future.

This is a transformational decision, and the Board and I have come to it for two reasons: first, my recovery from my most recent health problems will be slower than my recovery last year, requiring more time, focused attention, and patience; and, second, after almost 20 years as founder, Executive Director and now President and CEO of PBI, I think the time has come for a new perspective at the top of the organization. As Jim has said, PBI has been successful because it has been a force for innovation among law firms and legal departments and, more generally, on the topic of access to justice.



Together, we have pioneered so many things that have become an accepted part of pro bono practice, including the Law Firm and Corporate Challenges and a data-driven approach to measuring success, regional and national pro bono training events, the business case for pro bono and corporate pro bono and so much more. Now is the moment for someone with a fresh vision to lead PBI and its great staff and volunteer leadership to guide its work. I want to continue to be part of PBI's work but in a different role that will enable PBI to grow and change while enabling me to find the time to recover.

I have loved every minute of my time in creating and leading PBI, particularly working with all of you. Your vision and passion inspire me every day. I hope that when we share the job description for my successor you will help us in the search process by suggesting potential candidates for the position.

I am enormously grateful to the PBI Board members – both past and current – for their support and great commitment to PBI and its vision and to our extraordinary Law Firm Advisory Committee and Corporate Pro Bono Advisory Board and their respective Co-Chairs, Kim Koopersmith and Regina Pisa, and Brad Smith and Laura Stein. And, most of all, I want to express my enormous respect, affection, and gratitude to PBI's staff – past and present – as well as our Sheehan Scholars and interns for their patience with me and for their generosity and willingness to take on work above and beyond their job descriptions not just for the past 18 months but since PBI was created in 1996. Special thanks go to our outsource partners, consultants, and partners in expanding access to justice.

Esther Lardent

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads 'Esther D. Lardent'.