

IAM Pro Bono Committee Report

To: IAM Board of Directors

From: Rande S. Sotomayor

Date: September 14, 2022

Late spring or early summer 2022, Steve Paul and I agreed that the IAM Pro Bono efforts would continue to take the form described in the brochure Mike Young produced, *The IAM Pro Bono Mediation Initiative*. That meant identifying cases consistent with the criteria set out in the brochure: (1) Matter being handled by lawyers/firms on a completely pro bono basis; (2) Matter involves issues having social impact or important; and (3) Matter is ripe for mediation.

In early July, I was researching different ways to identify such cases, as individual efforts in the past, while somewhat successful, had not been as fruitful or widespread as hoped. I understand that in the past few years, identifying appropriate cases and opportunities has consisted of certain Members interested in pro bono mediation reaching out to contacts at law firms and legal aid organizations.

In this highly technological age, I started researching opportunities and ways to identify appropriate cases on the internet. I connected with an organization called [JoinPaladin.com](https://www.joinpaladin.com). Paladin states that its “mission is to increase access to justice by helping legal teams run more efficient pro bono programs.” Crunchbase describes Paladin as follows: “Paladin creates an easy way for lawyers to find cases they’re passionate about and to capture impact data for the benefit of all. It helps legal teams sign up for pro bono opportunities, enables coordinators to track the lawyers’ work, and which [sic] captures some of the stories and impact that the lawyers are making through their efforts.” <https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/paladin-2> Paladin was founded in 2015 and is headquartered in New York, USA.

On August 3, 2022, I had a lengthy telephone conversation with Paladin’s Chief Growth Officer, Ben Feldman. Although Paladin’s paying members include law firms and legal aid organizations looking for matching, organization, and technological management of pro bono cases, Ben and I started working on conceiving an idea about how to integrate IAM’s pro bono interests into their international operation. Ben was due to get back to me after consulting with colleagues, but I have not heard from him as of today.

If this approach does not take shape in the next 2-3 weeks, I will develop a Plan B, or use the prior approach to get this year’s pro bono efforts off the ground.

In addition, IAM President Steve Paul, and Members Greg Derin, Judith Meyers, and Gig Kyriacou, have all generously provided assistance in getting my efforts underway. I will work with Gig and Greg Derin to begin the process with a potential new case that Gig has identified.

