
Hughes Hubbard & Reed

Hughes Hubbard's Criminal Trial Program Still Going Strong

News & Events | Pro Bono

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As the pro bono Criminal Trial Program (CTP) enters its seventh year, Hughes Hubbard & Reed attorneys continue to vigorously advocate for criminal defendants in court and in negotiations with prosecutors, developing skills while often achieving extraordinary outcomes.

In the past six months alone, the CTP has persuaded prosecutors and the court to agree to favorable plea offers in three cases, prepared for two trials and numerous evidentiary hearings, worked on two appeals, and continued to represent a client through a rehabilitation program in the Manhattan Mental Health Court. Through these cases, and more than 40 other matters since the program's inception in 2006, Hughes Hubbard associates, counsel, partners, summer associates, interns and paralegals have enjoyed the unique opportunity to experience all of the elements of a criminal case and learn firsthand what successful courtroom advocacy entails.

In one recent case, a Hughes Hubbard team including Michael Rodriguez, Nalini Gupta and Sigrid Jernudd represented a 17-year-old facing charges of attempted murder and up to 25 years in prison if convicted. Citing the client's youth and various challenges the prosecution might face at trial, the team successfully persuaded the prosecution to dismiss the attempted murder charge and to offer the client a plea to the lesser charge of assault, with only four years of incarceration.

Another team including Eleni Theodosiou, Collette Parris, Michael Lignos and Ramy Ibrahim worked closely with investigative teams from both Kroll and Confidential Security & Investigations on behalf of a client charged with armed robbery. The client faced up to 15 years in prison, but the team persuaded the prosecution to dismiss the armed robbery charge and offer a plea to a reduced charge of robbery without a weapon and a sentence of two years of incarceration.

Representing a client charged with a highly publicized gunpoint robbery of a Gristedes grocery store, Steven G. Edwards, Pavlos Petrovas, Jernudd and Ibrahim rigorously prepared for a jury trial. In the face of overwhelming evidence against the client and the risk that he might soon face a second indictment for another robbery, the team persuaded the prosecutor to accept a deal sentencing the client to only five years. The client faced up to 25

years if convicted of one of the robberies. At the client's sentencing, Judge Michael Obus, the chief administrative judge for the criminal division of the New York County Supreme Court, said this was an extraordinary outcome that the defense team achieved and praised the ongoing efforts of Hughes Hubbard and the CTP to ensure the best possible results for all of their clients.

Currently, a CTP team including Rodriguez, Gupta and Alexandra Shookhoff is preparing for trial in defense of a client charged with multiple counts of assault, robbery and burglary.

In addition, two CTP teams continue to represent their clients through the appellate process. Andrew Midgett and Quan Trinh represent a client whom a CTP team most recently defended at a jury trial in April 2012. Though acquitted of the top two counts of felony assault, the client was convicted of two remaining charges of assault and possession of a weapon. The team will prepare his appellate brief in the coming months. Jordan Pace and Jeremy Turk represented a client in a jury trial in December 2010, after which the client was convicted of robbery and sentenced to eight years in prison. On June 6, Pace argued the client's appeal before the First Department of New York State's Appellate Division.

Christine Lamsvelt continues to represent a client whose case was transferred to the Manhattan Mental Health Court. After nearly a year and a half of successful participation in court-mandated mental health treatment, the client was scheduled to graduate from the program in June. In May, Gabrielle Genauer and Amina Hassan took on representation of the CTP's newest client who was accused of a burglary.

The CTP is one of the only pro bono criminal defense programs in New York. Citing the program's successes, Judge Obus has continued to appoint Hughes Hubbard to represent new clients. So far in 2013, the CTP has represented eight clients with 17 associates participating in the program.

Related People



Amina Hassan



Sigrid Jernudd