

# Community outreach – benefit your firm by benefitting others

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Your law practice is not an island in the middle of the ocean. You are a service provider in the middle of a community. Whether, you are in a big city high rise or a small town strip mall, your firm relies on the community for clients and cases. For various reasons, reaching out to the people of your locality can prove extremely beneficial. It gives you the opportunity to offer much needed assistance, while also building your reputation and presence within the community.

## Reaching Out

I bet your community offers numerous opportunities for outreach. If you aren't sure where to start, take advantage of some of the local social services programs. Call your local social services agency to inquire about areas of need. The United Way or local nonprofit agencies can also provide valuable insight.

Once you decide where to spend your firm's efforts, decide what outreach best fits the need and your practice's capabilities. There are a number of options for consideration:

- Sponsoring a community event
- Making a financial donation
- Offering pro bono services
- Volunteering with a social agency
- Host a community event at the office
- Start a much needed dialogue

With any of these options, you can create an opportunity to give back and help members of your law firm's community. It feels good to give back. Your

skill, money, or simple interest can make a great difference in someone's life.

If that isn't enough reason, there are also some selfish, but still legitimate reasons to share your firm's resources.

## **The Benefits**

Community involvement gives your law practice a name. For most people in the community, your firm is just another business on the corner. With outreach, you personalize your practice and create relationships with potential clients. Consumers buy from businesses they like. But before they can like you, they must first get to know you. When people see your involvement with the community, they may feel connected to your practice and seek out your services when they have legal needs. Your efforts can also lead to valuable relationships with community leaders, people with influence who can regularly refer your services.

I know modesty is virtue, but don't hesitate to let the world know of your efforts. Use your social media platforms to announce the event and invite current clients. Take pictures and post them to your facebook page or website. The purpose is not to brag, but it is to show current and potential clients your commitment to the community as a legal professional.

Community outreach is a great way for your law practice to give back, while also creating some valuable marketing opportunities. There's a world outside of your office. Go outside and get involved.

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## **About Erika Winston:**

*Erika Winston is a Virginia based writer with a passion for all things legal. As a former domestic relations attorney, she understands the challenge of determining the best fee structure for your practice. Erika is a regular contributor to [TimeSolv](#) and a variety of other publications.*