

2018 Earl G. Harrison Community Service Award

Charles F. Harlow



Charles F. Harlow, an associate in the Litigation Services Department, is being honored by the Firm with the 2018 Earl G. Harrison Community Service Award. This award recognizes a Firm attorney or staff member who demonstrates an unfailing commitment to helping others and who has set an example for others to follow with regard to volunteering and giving back to the community.

Harlow exemplifies Schnader's commitment to public service. His tireless efforts over the years as a leader in his church and in the San Francisco community have touched and improved many lives. He serves as a "Stake President" for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or Mormon Church, overseeing as a volunteer leader the 6 congregations totaling 3,500 members in San Francisco's East Bay area. Harlow spends many dozens of hours each month supervising and supporting initiatives to help disadvantaged individuals and families in the broader community through addiction recovery programs, personal finance and other self-reliance initiatives, pathway to college programs, vocational training, blood drives, meals for women's shelters, and refugee assistance programs. "Chuck's selfless involvement within the San Francisco community serves as a model inspiring us all to roll up our sleeves and give back," said Stephen A. Fogdall, Chair of the Firm's Pro Bono Committee and Chair of the Financial Services Litigation Practice Group.

Q: Why did you decide to take the Stake President role?

A: Stake President is a non-paid position with significant responsibilities, which came to me by invitation from the church's worldwide headquarters. I did not seek it, but I have always been involved in the San Francisco community and my church. In addition to overseeing the operations and finances of dozens of community programs and hundreds of volunteers, I also provide counseling and training on spiritual and church leadership matters to members and lay leaders within the region.

Q: Which activities impacted you the most?

A: One of the core tenets of my faith is caring for and helping those around us. All of the charitable activities have had a big effect on me, but the most personally inspiring work was volunteering at a women's shelter. I served homemade meals, which is such a simple thing but it helped me to truly understand the challenges that many vulnerable and marginalized people face. I realized that even the simplest acts of service to others can make a huge difference and encourage another person to not give up hope.

Q: What got you started?

A: As a child, my parents were very involved in their community through their church. I grew up participating with these activities, and eventually I grew to love it. As I got older, I decided to continue this family tradition, dedicating free time to helping others. Now my children participate with me. It fills me with pride to see them develop such a generous attitude about helping others and getting involved with our community.

Q: Were there small activities that prepared you for a bigger leadership role?

A: Each individual experience and small volunteer role is valuable by itself, but also helped to prepare me for bigger leadership positions. I still feel like I gain far more than I give. As Stake Leader, I take great pride in mentoring others to challenge themselves to do more and take on bigger responsibilities.

Q: How do you think your community involvement can inspire others?

A: I hope everyone will think about volunteering and helping their community. Deep community involvement is impactful both for personal growth and for making a genuine difference for others in need.