

To The Editor:

We grew up thinking of America as the wealthiest country on earth, but the truth is that one of every 8 Americans lives in poverty, unable to pay for the basic necessities of life- food, shelter, clothing.

We have created programs to provide those basic needs to our poorer neighbors, but too often, those of limited means lose the advantage of those programs because they don't have lawyers to unlock those benefits. In every aspect of their lives, 80% of the legal needs of the poor are unmet.

The pro bono assistance of America's lawyers is often the only thing standing between our nation's poor and hunger, homelessness, violence, and abuse. During National Pro Bono Week, October 25-31, let's recognize the selfless people who provide free legal help to the poor as strands in the safety net that protects our neighbors who are in greatest need of help.