

*[September, 2010]
Access to Justice Award Ceremony
New York, EE.UU.*

I would like to thank the Cyrus Vance Center for this award, on behalf of not only Fundación Pro Bono, its staff and its board of Directors, but especially on behalf of all the Chilean law firms and individual lawyers that have collaborated in making this beautiful project become a reality.

As you may be aware, we are celebrating this year our 10th anniversary. They have been ten years of hard work, some frustrations but basically great satisfactions.

Being here has been for me like a flashback of all these years. I see here a lot of faces whose contribution has been vital to the success of our project. Represented here are our founders—Francisco Orrego, also the first President—, the first member of our staff—Pilar Aspillaga, now in our board of directors—, our current staff—Marcela Fajardo, Carolina Contreras, Francisca Urroz—, who take the burden of the day-to-day operation. But I also see many people that from this country gave us a tremendous support in our beginnings and continue to do so: The Tinker Foundation, which believed in our project probably even before we did; The New York City Bar, which through the Cyrus Vance Center has been a fundamental lever to the promotion of Pro Bono throughout the Latin American region—Antonia Stolper, Todd Crider, Joan Vermulen and Elise Colomer—; Columbia University School of Law; many NY and DC law firms that generously have shared their pro bono experience to the benefit of Chilean firms.

Our mission in Fundación Pro Bono is not only to collaborate in the equal access to justice, but also to raise the ethical standards of our legal profession. We have come to realize that as our countries move to being part of the developed world, the lack of equal access to justice is more patent and even more unacceptable.

That is why we strongly believe that these ten years, although successful as they may be seen, are only the first steps towards a more deep and important objective.

That is why we continue working with law firms, NGOs, law schools, bar associations and other pro bono institutions through our region, so that in 10 more years we can proudly say that pro bono is a practice embedded in our legal culture.

Thank you once again and I hope we can continue working together.

Pablo Guerrero V.
Presidente Fundación Pro Bono