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# Pro Bono Team’s Work Leads to Important Precedent

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Carmelo [not his real name] fled his home country to escape persecution from local authorities and gang members. Since coming to the U.S., he has persevered through years of immigration detention—including prolonged isolation and even deportation in the midst of his appeal. But Carmelo and his Gibson Dunn pro bono legal team have been leaders in seeking justice not only in his case but for others like him who face persecution and torture abroad and are subject to lengthy detention during their search for protection in the U.S. Now their work has led to an important precedent from a federal appeals court that will apply in all immigration cases within its jurisdiction. The Fourth Circuit’s opinion reaffirmed that people who fear returning to their countries of origin because they will be persecuted due to their family ties are eligible for asylum and other protections. It also acknowledged that immigration judges must meaningfully review all the evidence of the risk of torture before them, including people’s past experiences of torture by police and “country conditions evidence” that shows the likelihood of gang and government-sponsored violence in other countries. In addition to the federal court appeal, our pro bono team worked alongside Carmelo through a trial, three agency appeals, and other proceedings seeking mandamus, habeas, and bond. The Fourth Circuit praised the team’s dedication and determination in its opinion: “In his administrative proceedings and on appeal, [the asylum seeker] has been ably represented pro bono by lawyers with the firm of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher. [C]ounsel have performed admirably, and we are appreciative of their fine service.” Our Washington, D.C. pro bono team included partners David Debold and Naima Farrell and associates Jessica Wagner, Tommy McCormac, Cate McCaffrey, Sam Whipple, and Austin Donohue. *This narrative courtesy of the Capital Area Immigrants’ Rights (CAIR) Coalition, which asked Gibson Dunn to take on Carmelo’s case.*

### Related People

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