

Biography of Interviewer Barbara Kagan

Barbara Kagan, now retired, practiced law in the District of Columbia upon receiving her law degree from Cornell University. After serving in a number of federal government agencies, she established her own law practice, representing individuals and companies in both civil and criminal matters. In 1992, she accepted the newly created position of Public Service Counsel at Steptoe & Johnson, becoming one of the very first attorneys in the country, and only the second in D.C., to lead a law firm pro bono program on a full-time basis. She was tasked with building a robust and effective firmwide pro bono program that would advance the public interest, while also matching the varying skills and interests of the firm's attorneys both in the U.S. and abroad. As Public Service Counsel, Ms. Kagan identified, assessed, and accepted pro bono cases, ranging from representations of individual clients in an array of substantive areas to large matters with significant local, national, and international import, and created several signature projects. Additionally, she regularly supervised and co-counseled with Steptoe associates and partners and served as lead attorney in a variety of cases. Ms. Kagan also served as the firm's liaison with numerous public interest organizations and served on many of their boards. She has authored articles and papers addressing issues related to pro bono practice.