

CSR firm of the year

WINNER

Reed Smith Richards Butler



(L-R) Michael Skrein, Chris Marshall, Alex Moorehead and Jeyda Star of Reed Smith Richards Butler with *Legal Business* editor James Baxter

Chris Marshall

Pro bono on a global scale

Reed Smith Richards Butler is a firm that takes its corporate social responsibility extremely seriously. Indeed, far from being an afterthought, CSR is made central to the whole firm and is undertaken by a number of dedicated teams. The firm has a CSR committee, chaired by partner Michael Skrein, and includes the London managing partner, Reed Smith's worldwide chief strategy officer and representatives of the pro bono and community, green, and diversity and inclusion initiatives.

It is Reed Smith Richards Butler's pro bono manager Chris Marshall who wins particular recognition, however. He has played a central role in the newly established group Advocates for International Development (A4ID), chairing the board of trustees, managing the core team, and overseeing A4ID's trade practice. A4ID was launched by the Attorney General in October 2006 and is now a leader in the provision of international pro bono.

A4ID works with lawyers on a global basis. It connects members of the legal profession from a range of top-rated City law firms and their global offices, chambers and academic institutions to provide legal advice and assistance to developing countries and development NGOs. Reed Smith Richards Butler, and Chris Marshall in particular, play a key role alongside top City law firms, including most of the Magic Circle and leading US players. A4ID's headquarters is situated in the same offices as the firm at Beaufort House in London.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

CLIFFORD CHANCE

Cathy Jones

Clifford Chance's Cathy Jones has taken centre stage in ensuring that the firm lends a high degree of co-ordination, time and resources to capital punishment case work and international aid initiatives, as well as direct support to ten London boroughs. In addition, the firm undertakes far-reaching community, pro bono and environmental activities. It supports

well-deserved endorsement from Business in the Community (BITC)'s Community Index, an in-depth benchmarking management tool developed to challenge leading businesses and promote responsible business practice.

EVERSHEDS

Steven Butts

Eversheds was the first law firm to publicly undertake BITC's Community Index, which allows firms to benchmark their community impacts. The firm has been praised by BITC for setting a precedent that other firms are now following. It is widely recognised as one of the best firms for career opportunities for women. Eversheds has also created a director of diversity, Caroline Wilson, with the express intention of increasing the number of minorities at the firm.

RUSSELL-COOKE

John Gould

Putney-headquartered firm Russell-Cooke was a new entrant to the *Legal Business 100* in 2007. Despite the impressive rate at which the firm is increasing revenues, it has proved itself to be not entirely profits driven, and has backed this up by setting aside 10% of turnover for legal aid work. Nicola O'Connor, who works within the firm's criminal litigation department, has recently concluded a landmark case that has seen a murder conviction overturned. The firm also has the highest ratio of female partners (36%) of any firm in the *LB100*.

Chris Marshall wins particular recognition for his role in the newly established group Advocates for International Development.

maximum volunteering among members of the firm and gave a total of 34,873 hours of free legal help to disadvantaged people and community groups in London last year.

DLA PIPER

Elaine Radford

DLA Piper has made a full-blooded commitment to CSR, evidenced by a total of 150,000 hours invested between July 2006 and June 2007. As a standard point of entry, the firm supports communities worldwide through free legal advice clinics. DLA Piper has won

PRESENTED BY
LEGAL BUSINESS

Legal Business has taken a strong interest in pushing forward the corporate social responsibility (CSR) agenda, as reflected in widespread coverage across our news sections and agenda-setting features. We welcome the increasing commitment to CSR among the UK's leading commercial law firms, which are acknowledging the need to balance profits and principles. This award recognises those firms that have distinguished themselves by best achieving this.

We strongly believe that those firms that are investing in pro bono initiatives – projects aimed at benefiting the community, environment and the workplace – as well as committing themselves to responsible client selection, deserve recognition for doing so.

We would like to thank all firms for the variety of submissions received for this award, a category in just its second year, but which looks set to remain a permanent fixture in our awards line-up.

Submissions for the 2009 Legal Business Awards will open in October 2008, and we look forward to hearing what CSR initiatives firms introduce over the next 12 months.

<http://awards.legalbusiness.co.uk>

