

## APPLESEED: RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

The sharp increase in the number of immigration cases in the United States has overwhelmed the immigration court system. In response to this crisis, several Latham & Watkins offices worked with Appleseed—a nonprofit network of 16 public interest justice centers—to investigate and assess the immigration court system, resulting in an in-depth report complete with innovative recommendations for crucial reform. Supported by both anecdotal and statistical evidence, the report lays out many practical solutions, vetted by leading authorities, to many of the significant issues uncovered by the team's substantive investigation.

Starting in early 2008, Latham attorneys in Chicago, Washington, D.C., New York and Los Angeles interviewed more than 100 stakeholders across the United States—individuals who have actual day-to-day experience in the immigration court system—including private practitioners, nonprofit organizations and academics, as well as immigration judges, the Chairman of the Board of Immigration Appeals and other government officials. The interviews were conducted in two rounds over a 15-month period using a structured questionnaire that included both broad and targeted questions. Trained court observers also attended more than 100 hours of immigration hearings, reporting on issues relating to procedures and outcomes.

The Latham team prepared a detailed report on its findings, with a series of action items to enhance the legitimacy, accuracy and efficiency of the immigration court system. In December 2008, leaders of the Appleseed Project met with then-President-Elect Barack Obama's transition team to introduce some of the proposed recommendations.

Retired partner **Jim Rogers** in our Washington, D.C. office led and inspired the nation-wide Latham team. Associates **Daniel Glad** in Washington, D.C., **Dennis Craythorn** and **Seth Goldstein** in New York and **Tanya Nair** in Chicago, working closely with members of our client's board, served as the report's lead authors and national coordinators. Local teams were led by counsel **Jennifer Hein** and associates **Benjamin Vinocour** and **Megan Zini** in Washington, D.C., partner **John Giouroukakis** and associates **Dennis Craythorn** and **Seth Goldstein** in New York, partner **Doug Freedman** and associates **Tanya Nair** and **Kevin Agnew** in Chicago and associate **Shanaira Udwadia** in Los Angeles. Latham lawyers across four offices worked on this project, and a number of summer associates assisted with the interviews. In addition, the firm's graphic design team and document processing personnel from Williams Lea donated their time and services to help prepare and produce the report, bringing the total Latham team to approximately 100 lawyers and staff. The report, issued in June 2009, details the methodology, findings and recommendations of the investigation, serving as an important research and advocacy tool for needed reforms. ■

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES AWARDS AND ACCOLADES AWARDS AND ACCOLADES



(Left to right) Appleseed Executive Director Betsy Cavendish, Board member Richard Ketchum, retired partner and Board Co-Chair Jim Rogers and New York Appleseed Director Jennifer Ching at the "Engaging a Network for Change" event in New York City.

### Latham & Watkins Honored as 'Law Firm of the Year'

In recognition of the firm's extensive efforts to help improve the immigration court system, Latham & Watkins was honored as Appleseed's "Law Firm of the Year" at the organization's "Raising the Pro Bono Bar" event in Washington, D.C. in October 2009. In addition, retired partner **Jim Rogers** was individually honored for his leadership on the project and his service as Co-Chair of Appleseed's Board of Directors. The firm was also honored by Appleseed and the New York Appleseed Advisory Council as a "Pro Bono Partner" at the organization's "Engaging a Network for Change" event in New York City in June 2009. ■