

Essay Competition conducted by Pro Bono

A.Y.2024-25

Pro Bono Essay Competition for First-Year Law Students

Event Overview: The Pro Bono Essay Competition for first-year law students was conducted from 24th November to 28th November 2024. This competition aimed to ignite awareness and discussion among budding legal professionals about the importance of pro bono legal aid and its potential to create a more equitable justice system.

Objective of the Competition: The primary objective of this event was to encourage students to delve into pressing issues surrounding legal aid, particularly in the context of bridging the justice gap, empowering marginalized communities, and addressing challenges in rural areas. It also sought to instill the value of social responsibility and public service in the students at the outset of their legal education.

Topics: Participants were invited to write essays on one of the following thought-provoking topics:

1. **Role of Legal Aid in Bridging the Justice Gap**
2. **Pro Bono Legal Aid: A Tool for Social Empowerment**
3. **Challenges and Opportunities in Delivering Pro Bono Legal Aid in Rural Areas**

These topics were carefully curated to encourage critical thinking and innovative solutions to prevalent issues in the realm of legal aid and access to justice.

Participation and Evaluation: The competition saw enthusiastic participation from first-year law students across various batches. Each participant was required to submit an original essay, not exceeding 1500 words, by the deadline of 28th November 2024. Essays were evaluated on the following criteria:

- Originality and creativity
- Relevance to the topic
- Clarity and coherence
- Depth of analysis and research
- Practical applicability of ideas proposed

Winners: The winners of the competition were announced on 30th November 2024. The top three essays were recognized for their outstanding content and insightful perspectives. The winners are as follows:

1. **Ketaki Patil** - First Prize
 - Topic: *Role of Legal Aid in Bridging the Justice Gap*

- Highlights: Ketaki's essay stood out for its in-depth analysis of the existing justice gap and the role of legal aid clinics in addressing systemic inequalities. Her use of real-life case studies added significant weight to her arguments.
- 2. **Saish Navandar** - Second Prize
 - Topic: *Pro Bono Legal Aid: A Tool for Social Empowerment*
 - Highlights: Saish's essay emphasized the transformative power of legal aid in uplifting marginalized communities. His innovative suggestions for expanding pro bono initiatives were highly appreciated.
- 3. **Adeeth Gaikwad** - Third Prize
 - Topic: *Challenges and Opportunities in Delivering Pro Bono Legal Aid in Rural Areas*
 - Highlights: Adeeth's essay provided a balanced view of the logistical and infrastructural challenges faced in rural legal aid delivery, while also highlighting potential technological and community-based solutions.

Judge – **The Competition was judged by Asst Prof. Sandip Borse.** Sir with his immense experience in the field of Academics, especially Sociology judged the Essays and marked them on 50.

Impact and Conclusion: The Pro Bono Essay Competition was a resounding success, achieving its goal of fostering awareness and advocacy for pro bono legal aid among law students. The event not only showcased the analytical and creative capabilities of the participants but also underscored the need for sustained efforts in promoting legal aid services for underserved communities.