

# Evan Berquist Honored by Hennepin County Bar Association for Excellence in Pro Bono Service

**Monday, June 1, 2020**

Minneapolis, June 1, 2020 – Evan Berquist, a member of Cozen O’Connor’s Corporate Practice, has been recognized by the Hennepin County Bar Association (HCBA) with a 2020 Excellence Award for Pro Bono Service. The Excellence Awards honor individual contributions to the profession and the community.

Berquist will be profiled in the July issue of *Hennepin Lawyer* magazine and will receive his award during an upcoming HCBA member event.

The award recognizes Berquist’s work on behalf of First Lutheran Church. The church, together with its partner Listening House, operates a daytime drop-in center for St. Paul’s homeless and disadvantaged individuals.

In 2018, the city passed a zoning ordinance that threatened to shut down the drop-in center. Berquist and the church successfully challenged the ordinance in federal court, and then negotiated a settlement with the city that allowed First Lutheran and Listening House to resume normal operations. The court order and the settlement each protect the rights of religious communities to use their land in accordance with their faith.

In addition to his work for First Lutheran, Berquist coordinates all the pro bono efforts for Cozen O’Connor’s Minneapolis office – totaling over 1,200 hours in 2019. He also serves on the board of directors for New Vision Foundation, a nonprofit that teaches IT skills to disadvantaged youth. He has been pro bono counsel for New Vision since 2015.

“We are proud of Evan and his pro bono work,” said Steve Dickinson, co-chair of Cozen O’Connor’s International Practice, who nominated Berquist for the award. “He has made important, long-lasting contributions to the community. He brings the same sharp legal skills and strong work ethic to pro bono that he does for all of our clients.”

In his practice, Berquist advises clients on transactional matters, with a focus on mergers and acquisitions. He works for clients ranging in size, including startups, middle market companies, private equity investors, and large multinational corporations. He also serves as outside general counsel to a number of emerging or closely held companies. Berquist advises entrepreneurs, investors, and management at each stage of a company’s life cycle, including entity formations, governance, financings, and commercial transactions.

Among Berquist’s other accolades is his recent selection by *Minnesota Lawyer Magazine* as a 2018 “Up & Coming Attorney.” He has also been twice recognized as a “North Star Lawyer” by the Minnesota State Bar Association.

## **About the Hennepin County Bar Association (HCBA) and the Excellence Awards**

The HCBA is the largest of Minnesota’s local bar associations, with a membership of over 8,000, serving the legal profession and the public. In 2017, the HCBA announced its new Excellence Awards program to honor individual members for contributions to the profession and the community. The new Excellence Awards replace the association’s previous awards programs. Up to 12 HCBA Excellence Awards may be awarded in a given bar year, selected from any of the six categories: advancing diversity and inclusion, improving access to justice, providing pro bono service, mentoring in the profession, advancing innovation in the profession, and serving the association/foundation.

## **Related Practice Areas**

- Corporate

## About Cozen O'Connor

Established in 1970, Cozen O'Connor has more than 750 attorneys who help clients manage risk and make better business decisions. The firm counsels clients on their most sophisticated legal matters in all areas of the law, including litigation, corporate, and regulatory law. Representing a broad array of leading global corporations and middle market companies, Cozen O'Connor services its clients' needs through 31 offices across two continents. Cozen O'Connor has dedicated tens of thousands of attorney hours nationwide to pro bono representation of indigent individuals and charitable institutions.