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### ExxonMobil GC Recognized as Good Apple for Promoting In-House Pro Bono Work

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November 7, 2006

ExxonMobil Corp. vice president and general counsel Charles Matthews not only encourages the approximately 460 lawyers in his company's law department to provide pro bono legal services, he also persuades other corporate legal departments to get involved.

"You can't have a fair system of justice if there are people who are shut out," says Matthews, who joined Exxon's law department in 1971 and became the corporation's general counsel in 1995. Matthews became general counsel and vice president of ExxonMobil when the two oil companies merged in 1999.

His extraordinary dedication to providing and promoting pro bono services is the reason Texas Appleseed is awarding Matthews its 2006 J. Chrys Dougherty Good Apple Award on Nov. 9 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Austin.

"He's been instrumental in leveraging corporate companies' talents to further the cause of justice," Rebecca Lightsey, Texas Appleseed's executive director, says of Matthews.

Lightsey says Matthews has made pro bono legal services a part of what attorneys at ExxonMobil do.

"At ExxonMobil, his leadership is why we do pro bono," Peggy Montgomery, ExxonMobil's pro bono chairwoman, says of Matthews. "He considers it our professional obligation as lawyers to give back to the community, and the best way to do that is pro bono."

One of the current Texas Appleseed projects in which ExxonMobil attorneys are involved is the "School-to-Prison Pipeline," which seeks to stop students from dropping out of school and getting entangled first in the juvenile justice



system and eventually in the criminal justice system, Lightsey says. ExxonMobil attorneys conduct interviews and analyze data on school districts' alternative disciplinary programs to determine the role the programs play when students end up in prison, she says.

But it's Matthews' efforts to encourage pro bono involvement by in-house attorneys at other corporations that garnered him the Texas Appleseed award.

In 2004, Matthews formed the 24-member Corporate Counsel Committee of the Texas Access to Justice Commission to encourage lawyers in the corporate world to help meet the legal needs of Texans unable to pay for attorneys' services. The Texas Supreme Court created the commission in 2001.

Matthews says the CCC, in partnership with the Texas Chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel, has sponsored programs in Austin, Dallas and Houston to make attorneys aware of poor Texans' need for legal services and the services that corporate counsel can render.

As a result of the CCC's efforts, corporations that had not been involved in pro bono efforts are now involved, and corporations that provided pro bono services in the past have stepped up their efforts, says Montgomery, who serves on the CCC's operating committee.

"What I've tried to do is highlight the need and identify the challenges and start getting this ball rolling," Matthews says.