

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Crowell & Moring's *David v. Signal* Team Named "Trial Team of the Year" by Public Justice**

**Washington, D.C. – July 15, 2015:** Crowell & Moring LLP is proud to announce that the *David v. Signal* case team has received the 2015 "Trial Team of the Year Award" from Public Justice, a public interest law firm. New York partner Alan Howard and counsel Chiemi Suzuki were recognized along with co-counsel for their *pro bono* work, which obtained a \$14 million judgment for five victims in what is the largest human trafficking trial in history. The team was recognized at Public Justice's Annual Gala and Awards Dinner on July 13 in Montreal.

The award recognizes attorneys who made the greatest contribution to the public interest within the past year by trying or settling a precedent-setting, socially significant case. Additional members of the trial team include: Daniel Werner, Naomi Tsu, Kristi L. Graunke, Meredith B. Stewart and Anjali J. Nair of the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) Atlanta and New Orleans offices; Chandra Bhatnagar, formerly of the American Civil Liberties Union in New York; Ivy O. Suriyopas and Dahsong Kim of the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund in New York; Joseph Bjarnson of Sahn Ward Coschignano & Baker in Uniondale, N.Y.; Tracie Washington of the Louisiana Justice Institute in New Orleans; and Amal Bouhabib and Hugh Daniel Sandler, formerly of Crowell & Moring in New York.

"We congratulate our colleagues and all of the attorneys on the *David v. Signal* case who continue to work so diligently across many organizations for the sake of their clients. They have championed the rights of the victims of human trafficking everywhere and set an important precedent going forward," said Edwin Baum, partner and head of Crowell & Moring's New York office.

### **About *David v. Signal***

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Signal International, a Mississippi shipbuilding company, used the government's H-2B guest worker program to import nearly 500 men from India to work to repair damaged oil rigs and related facilities. The workers each paid the labor recruiters and a lawyer between \$10,000 and \$20,000 or more in recruitment fees and other costs after recruiters promised jobs, green cards, and permanent U.S. residency for them and their families. When the men arrived at Signal shipyards in Pascagoula, Mississippi, they discovered that they would not receive the green cards or permanent residency that had been promised. Signal also forced them each to pay \$1,050 per month to live in isolated, guarded labor camps where as many as 24 men shared a space the size of a double-wide trailer.

After a four-week trial, the jury found Signal guilty of engaging in labor trafficking, fraud, racketeering, and discrimination. The jury also found that one of the five plaintiffs was a victim of false imprisonment and retaliation.

Alan Howard is chairman of the board of the Southern Poverty Law Center, which is leading the matter.

To read the full case study of Crowell & Moring's work on *David v. Signal*, please [click here](#).

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