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## **Harrisonburg Attorneys Honored for Pro Bono Work**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HARRISONBURG, VA (October 16, 2014) – Four local attorneys have been recognized for their extraordinary pro bono work done on behalf of Blue Ridge Legal Services (BRLS), the Valley’s non-profit legal aid society.

The individuals honored were Grant Penrod, Esq., Jacob Penrod, Esq., and Laura Evick, Esq., all of Hoover Penrod Law Firm, and Michael Beckler, Esq., a solo practitioner.

John Whitfield, BRLS executive director, presented the awards during the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Bar Association’s annual Professionalism Seminar held October 8, 2014. “Looking across the room, there are so many attorneys here who have generously donated their services to help make access to justice a reality for our low-income clients,” said Whitfield. “But these four attorneys have stood out during the past year with truly significant contributions to the pro bono program and their clients.”

Since 1982, BRLS and the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Bar Association have collaborated in this pro bono referral program to provide free legal services to financially disadvantaged members in the area. Last year, the bar handled 170 pro bono cases for local low-income families. Over the last 2 years, 85% percent of the bar’s firms and solo practitioners were involved in pro bono representation on behalf of BRLS.

Over the last three decades, this bar’s pro bono program has garnered statewide and national acclaim, including the national Legal Services Corporation’s Rural Pro Bono Attorneys of the Year Award in 1993, the Virginia State Bar’s Lewis Powell Pro Bono Award in 1998 and 2014, the American Bar Association’s prestigious Harrison Tweed Award in 1995 and a Pro Bono Service Award from the Legal Services Corporation in 2011.

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Blue Ridge Legal Services, Inc., founded in 1977, is a nonprofit charitable law firm providing free legal assistance in civil matters of critical importance to low-income residents of the Shenandoah Valley and Roanoke Valley through staff and volunteer attorneys. They are a partner agency of United Way.