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Allan Brotsky, 1920-2015

Golden Gate University mourns the death of Allan Brotsky, a beloved member of the faculty of the School of Law for almost three decades. Professor Brotsky died at the age of 95 in November 2015. In his honor, Golden Gate University has established the Allan Brotsky Pro Bono Award, given annually to students who continue Brotsky's commitment to pro bono legal work in the public interest.

Prior to teaching at Golden Gate, Brotsky had a distinguished career as a labor and constitutional law attorney. From 1947 through the 1950s, he and his colleagues represented individuals and organizations whose constitutional rights were challenged, including unions that the Congress of Industrial Organizations (now part of the AFL-CIO) sought to expel as being dominated by communists, state college and university professors who were discharged for refusing to sign loyalty oaths, longshoremen who were deemed subversive by unnamed informers, and many others. In the 1960s, Allan worked to integrate previously segregated unions and workplaces and, as the Vietnam war escalated, defended

draft resisters and protestors. In 1967, he and his colleagues defended the Black Panther Party, Angela Davis, and Daniel Ellsberg.

Throughout his career, Brotsky championed access to good legal counsel for all who needed it, regardless of their ability to pay. Among the many pro bono matters in which he defended clients are cases involving the electoral process, the rights of conscientious objectors, warrantless wiretapping, immigration cases, and representation of indigent clients in personal cases. Many of his legal strategies, particularly in immigration cases, involved novel constitutional arguments that were later vindicated by the United States Supreme Court.

Brotsky and Muriel, his wife of 67 years, loved to travel and attend opera, symphony, and theater performances with their circle of close friends. Muriel died in 2014. Brotsky is survived by his children, Ellen, Daniel, and China.

Donations in Allan's memory may be directed to the Golden Gate University School of Law and to the Allan and Muriel Brotsky Pro Bono Award.