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## Law students help secure award

**Law students at Northumbria University, Newcastle, have helped win a prestigious national award with their voluntary assistance to support those facing the courts alone.**

Northumbria Law School has been working with a national charity called *Support Through Court* which helps thousands of people every year in the UK who face court proceedings alone, while they go through a divorce, seek custody of their children, or face eviction from their home. Its work has just been recognised by winning the Small and Medium Sized Enterprise [\(SME\) News award](#) in the Best Legal Support Volunteers 2020 category.

[Support Through Court](#) has around 800 volunteers providing a free service across England and Wales, offering support and guidance through the client journey, including before, during and after court hearings. Students from Northumbria Law School are an important part of this volunteer workforce.

Northumbria is acknowledged as having one of the most active and pioneering student law offices, where final year law students undertake a range of placements/activities(?), including pro bono work on behalf of real clients. In the past 10 years they have represented more than 2,500 clients recovering over £1.5 million. While *Support Through Court* does not offer legal advice or representation, the students are invaluable in contributing many hours of emotional and procedural support to people who often have nowhere else to turn. The Student Law Office also runs a number of charity events including an annual quiz as part of Pro-Bono Week to help raise money for their services.

In addition, students on the bar course at Northumbria Law School have the opportunity to undertake a module, where they volunteer for a minimum of 36 hours with *Support Through Court*, whilst also undertaking skills development at the university.

Commenting on the success Natalie Robson, from Support Through Court in Newcastle, said: “We are thrilled that the hard work, passion and dedication of our volunteers has been publicly acknowledged. This is also wonderful recognition of the work of Northumbria’s students and of our partnership with Northumbria Law School.”

Paul McKeown, Director of the Student Law Office at Northumbria, added: “We have been involved with the Newcastle branch of *Support Through Court* since its very start back in 2014, so we are delighted to be part of this success. The increase in cuts to legal aid over recent years has meant that thousands more people face the civil and family courts alone. Their access to justice is limited by how overwhelming the legal system can be to those who have never faced it before, and many struggle to represent themselves effectively in court.”

The legal industry plays a significant role in the UK economy, and the SME News Legal Awards recognise and spotlight the very best that this innovative and competitive industry has to offer.

For more information on help from Northumbria Law School and the Student Law Office please visit [www.northumbria.ac.uk/law](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/law)

**TEXT TO DONATE**



**SUPPORT THROUGH COURT**

**TEXT: SUPPORTNEWC to 70085**  
*to donate £10 to people facing court alone  
in Newcastle*

Texts cost £10 + your standard rate message  
you must be 16 years or over and have the bill payers permission  
by texting to donate you automatically opt-in to charity marketing calls/texts  
for full terms and conditions go to: <http://bit.ly/poutexttodonate>.

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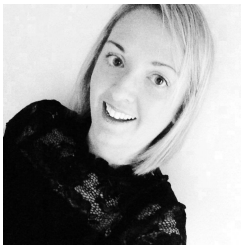
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