

Ms. Michelle Gersic  
Colorado Bar Association  
1900 Grant Street, Suite 950  
Denver, CO 80203-4336

550 S. Wadsworth Blvd., Suite 100  
Lakewood, Colorado, 80226  
720.214.0794 office  
1866.733.0794 toll free  
720.274.2744 fax  
[www.autismcolorado.org](http://www.autismcolorado.org)

RE: 2010 *Pro Bono* Paralegal of the Year Award

Thank you for the opportunity to recommend Heidi Loeffel for the 2010 bono Paralegal of the Year Award.

Heidi has not only been generous with her own time in direct one-on-one support of people with autism and their families, she has also testified on their behalf at the State Capitol.

Heidi combines her in-depth knowledge of law with her profound passion for justice in service of the most vulnerable people and their families in our state.

Autism affects the entire family. When a child's needs and behavior are so demanding, often a parent can't work and loses any semblance of normalcy in their lives. They are barely surviving the ordeal of autism and truly do not have the time or the strength to fight insurance companies and schools. They are ostracized by their community because of their child's behaviors and feel isolation and despair. Until they meet Heidi.

Heidi's knowledge of their circumstance and enthusiasm on their behalf gives them a sense of relief and hope.

Heidi listens not only with compassion, but with comprehension of complex issues that these families face in trying to access adequate health care for their disabled children. Our families find comfort in her wisdom and good judgment on their behalf. And she fights for them and wins their cases. Because of Heidi, their children not only receive the treatment they deserve, they get better because of that treatment.

And Heidi's interest is rare. The disorder of Autism is so terribly misunderstood by decision-makers in insurance, government, the legislature, the justice system and even by many medical professionals that taking on the problems of a family facing autism is a herculean task.

On behalf of the Autism Society of Colorado and the many families who have received personal support and the thousands helped through her legislative advocacy, thank you for your consideration of Heidi. She is a very, very special person and there is no one that deserves the recognition from this award more than Heidi Loeffel.

Sincerely,



Betty Lehman, Executive Director