



2015 BRADLEY PRIZES

NOMINATION FORM

Deadline for Submission:
February 6, 2015

Submitted by:

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Submitted to:

Michael W. Grebe
President and CEO
The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, Inc.
1241 North Franklin Place
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Nominations may be e-mailed to
rkrebs@bradleyfdn.org, provided all
information requested on this form is included.

For additional information about the Bradley Prizes nominations contact Dianne Sehler at The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation. Mrs. Sehler can be reached at 414.291.9915 or via e-mail at dsehler@bradleyfdn.org.

NOMINEE INFORMATION:

Name: KEVIN HASSON

Title: FOUNDER OF BECKET FUND
FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Department:

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NOMINEE'S AREA OF EXPERTISE*Select from the following list:*

- ☐ Academia
- ☐ Civic Renewal & Responsibility
- ☒ Civil Rights & Society
- ☐ Conservative Thought
- ☐ Culture
- ☐ Defense & National Security
- ☐ Economics
- ☐ Education Reform
- ☐ Family Values
- ☐ Foreign Affairs
- ☒ Human Rights
- ☐ Journalism
- ☒ Law
- ☐ Philanthropy
- ☒ Religion & Society
- ☐ Social Security Reform
- ☐ Tax Reform
- ☐ Welfare Reform

PLEASE ATTACH A STATEMENT OF NOMINATION SUMMARIZING THE NOMINEE'S CREDENTIALS IN 250 WORDS OR LESS, limiting your additional supporting documentation to a CV, resume or biographical sketch.

REFERENCES: Each nomination must be accompanied by two references able to speak on behalf of the nominee's credentials and background, if necessary. Please provide contact information here.

Name: ROBERT P. GEORGE

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To: Bradley Foundation

From: Mary Ann Glendon

Re: Nomination of Kevin (Seamus) Hasson for 2015 Bradley Prize

Kevin “Seamus” Hasson founded The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty in 1994. Since then, this extraordinary public-interest law firm cum think-tank has protected the free expression of all religious traditions with great effectiveness—in the courts, in the media, and through sponsoring interdisciplinary research and conferences. Along the way, the Becket Fund has won praise from a diverse group of thinkers including Pope John Paul II and Elie Wiesel. Hasson has been the driving force behind the intellectual as well as the litigation-oriented activities of the Becket Fund. A formidable courtroom advocate, he has carried on this work despite the affliction of Parkinson’s disease, most recently winning an important victory for the Pledge of Allegiance in the First Circuit Court of Appeals in December 2010. Over the years he has successfully represented clients from nearly every faith tradition. At the same time, he has buttressed the case for religious liberty through his writings, media appearances, and popular lectures at Oxford, the Vatican, Harvard, BYU, among other venues.

A 1985 magna cum laude graduate of Notre Dame Law School, Kevin J. “Seamus” Hasson has dedicated his career to defending religious freedom. Prior to founding the Becket Fund, he was a lawyer at Williams & Connolly, where he helped represent the U.S. Bishops’ Conference, Catholic University and other clients with religious liberty issues.

For example, Hasson was part of the team that represented the U.S. Catholic Conference and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (the two predecessors to the current U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops) in *U.S.C.C. v. Abortion Rights Mobilization*. In that case, the Supreme Court, and then on remand the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, rebuffed the abortion lobby’s attempt to strike down the Church’s tax-exempt status because of its pro-life activities.

Hasson was also one of the lawyers who successfully defended Catholic University against the famous lawsuit brought by Fr. Charles Curran, who had sued seeking a court order that he be permitted to teach Catholic theology despite the Holy See’s declaration that he was “neither suitable nor eligible” to do so.

While at Williams & Connolly, Hasson also represented the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus, writing and filing a number of amicus briefs before the Supreme Court in cases where the right to life or religious freedom were at stake.

Hasson left Williams & Connolly to found the Becket Fund precisely to defend the religious liberty of all faiths. He incorporated the Becket Fund on December 8, 1993.

Since then, the Becket Fund has enjoyed a win-loss record of approximately 85% litigating on behalf of a broad array of believers (“from Anglicans to Zoroastrians” as

Hasson likes to say) in the service of the principle that religious liberty is the natural right of all. In Hasson's words, "The culture war is not a fight over who God is, it's a fight over who we are."

Most recently, Hasson successfully argued appeals in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco, and the First Circuit in Boston, defending the inclusion of the words "one nation under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance.

In *Rigdon v. Perry*, Hasson represented U.S. Air Force Reserve Chaplain Fr. Vincent Rigdon as the lead plaintiff in a successful challenge to the Clinton Administration's order barring military chaplains from participating in the Catholic Conference's nationwide program of preaching against then-President Clinton's veto of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban.

Other notable cases include the Becket Fund's defense of then 6-year-old Zachary Hood's challenge to his public school teacher's decision forbidding him to read his cartoon *Beginner's Bible* during an open reading period at school; the Becket Fund's representation of the Missionaries of Charity against a Los Angeles bureaucracy bent on shutting down their soup kitchen; and their representation of the Archdiocese of Denver, in a church land-use dispute. Currently the Becket Fund is defending Belmont Abbey College, a school in North Carolina threatened by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for refusing to cover contraception and abortion in its health care coverage.

The Becket Fund has defended the rights of believers overseas as well, working in the successful effort to stop bans on crucifixes in public schools in Italy and clerical attire in public schools in France, for example. The Becket Fund litigated on behalf of a Malaysian convert to Catholicism who sought to have her identity card changed to reflect her faith and demanded the right to marry her Catholic fiancé. It also worked closely with the recently assassinated Catholic Pakistani Minister Shabaz Bhatti. In Sri Lanka, the Becket Fund represented the Teaching Sisters of the Holy Cross in Menzingen. In India it assisted Catholic Churches after the murders in Orissa. In Indonesia it filed an extensive brief against blasphemy laws. In Mexico City, at the request of the Mexico City Archbishop, the Becket Fund, in collaboration with the Knights of Columbus, held a three-day conference with representatives from thirteen countries in the Americas to defend the right of the Church in Mexico to participate in public discourse. In addition, the Becket Fund has a very active presence with full consultative status before the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations where it often collaborates with other nations and non governmental organizations to defend the right to conversion and freedom of expression and conscience.

In defending religious freedom, the Becket Fund has also assisted the dioceses of Wilmington, Denver, Seattle, Bridgeport, San Antonio, Washington, and the Archdiocese of the Military Services. The Becket Fund has defended the Catholic school, Ursuline Academy in Wilmington, Delaware, the Missionaries of Charity in Los Angeles, the Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany, Gannon University, the University of Notre

Dame, Mission San Juan Capistrano, Mission San Jose, San Gabriel Mission, San Buenaventura Mission, Mission Santa Ines, Mission Santa Barbara, California Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions.

Along the way, Hasson has maintained a vigorous program of writing, speaking, and debating in defense of the principle of religious liberty for all. For example, in 1995, the Becket Fund held a conference in Rome, celebrating the 30th Anniversary of *Dignitatis Humanae*. The conference included an audience with Pope John Paul II, during which the Holy Father expressed a “particular word of appreciation to the Becket Fund for its many good efforts on behalf of religious freedom in the United States and around the world.”

Hasson has spoken and debated in many universities, ranging from Notre Dame to Georgetown to Fordham to Harvard, Yale, Stanford, and Oxford. His book, *The Right to Be Wrong*, locates the principles of religious liberty in longstanding American tradition.