National surveys tell us that Americans place lawyers at the bottom of the barrel when it comes to ethical standards and contributions to society.

In a December, 2016 Gallup poll, only 18% of respondents rated attorneys highly on ethics and honesty, while 37% ranked them as “low” or “very low.” This was in stark contrast to positive ratings for nurses (84%), doctors (65%) and engineers (65%), and only slightly higher than car salesmen and members of Congress!

We know better! Our membership in the PBCBA is an implied contract for public service to the community. And we practice what we preach.

Many people know that our members often volunteer to call attention to discriminatory practices and stand up for the rights of those who cannot speak for themselves. But it’s a well-kept secret how much we help in a myriad of other ways: For example, tutoring at neighborhood schools, providing meals to needy families, coaching kids’ sports, sitting on non-profit boards, and even serving in local and legislative office.

To raise public awareness of attorney volunteerism, the PBCBA is launching an educational campaign called “You’ve Been Served!”

The purpose of this campaign is two-fold:

• To encourage volunteerism and reward our members who have had the greatest impact on our community; and
• To enhance perception that lawyers make the world a better place, both inside and outside the courtroom.

Our “You’ve Been Served!” plan includes aggressively cultivating media attention, partnering with charitable/civic organizations to identify ways we can help, scheduling PBCBA members to tell our stories to local schools and community groups, and honoring our volunteers at special events.

We’re all in this together, and we need you on the team. Here’s how to get involved.

• Learn more about “You’ve Been Served!” at http://www.palmbeachbar.org/ybs and sign up as a community volunteer or speaker.
• Nominate a fellow PBCBA member for outstanding service by emailing ybs@palmbeachbar.org with the person’s name, contact information, and your reasons for nominating him or her.