

Community Builder Awards

Law Firm:

Hunton & Williams

Attorneys from different offices of **Hunton & Williams LLP** worked together and separately to create three legal guides in a series, to assist homeless populations in Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio. **Delwin Hervey, Scott Matney, Amber Rogers, John Stenger, Yvette Wade, and Jeffrey Walsh** spent nearly 200 hours on these guides, which have all been published.

Jeffrey Walsh describes how, "When Texas C-Bar proposed expanding the Street Smart Guide concept to cover Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio, the lawyers at Hunton & Williams were very happy to help." This project originally started in 2007 when Texas C-BAR part-

nered with Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH) and Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA) to published a legal guide for the homeless population in Austin: *Street Smart Austin: Know Your Rights!* In an easy-to-read format, it describes the specific city ordinances regarding panhandling, loitering and other common legal problems that a homeless individual might face. The success of the Austin guide inspired a series of such guides for different cities. After the publication of these latest three guides from Hunton & Williams, two more are in production for Corpus Christi and El Paso, and we have given permission for a Delaware organization to use Street Smart Dallas as a template for their own guide for the homeless. None of this would have been possible without the enthusiastic assistance of the attorneys from Hunton & Williams LLP.

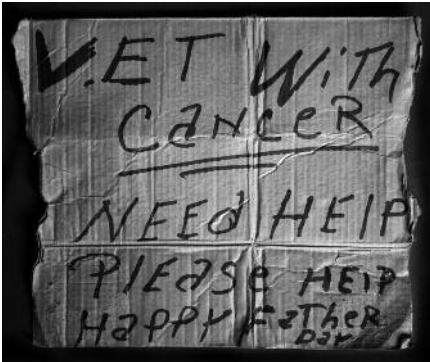
Law Firm, Community Sustainer:

Vinson & Elkins

Vinson & Elkins LLP has been long-term supporter of Texas C-BAR. They have accepted up to fifteen referrals a year for the last nine years and donating more than \$940,000 in service. This year, attorney **Sarah Bremer** volunteered assistance to Austin Green Art, helping them create a subsidiary for-profit organization; attorney **Jason Myers** volunteered to assist the Doris Loving Family Life Center review their corporate documents and help revitalize the organization; and attorney **Jamie Smith** assisted the Houston Asset Building Coalition to gain tax exempt status; just to name a few. The partnership of Texas C-BAR and Vinson & Elkins helped dozens of communities and hundreds of low-income individuals.

The law firm demonstrated particular dedication this year, when one matter expanded far beyond the original referral. Camp Agape Bereavement Camp for Children applied to Texas C-BAR for assistance reviewing a lease agreement. **Jenn Cooley** of Vinson & Elkins

accepted the referral in July of 2007. After reviewing the lease, however, the matter quickly ballooned, first into negotiations with the landlord, and from there into litigation. "It was great to work with such a deserving and appreciative client," Cooley recounted, so rather than return the matter to Texas C-BAR, having accomplished the originally referred review, she asked to



expand the referral to meet the client's further needs. With the expanded referral, **James Lee**, a litigation expert at Vinson & Elkins, took the lead. Lee and Cooley brought together a team of attorneys, including **Allan Yee, Elizabeth Devaney, Paul Martin, Matthew Moran, Matthew Stammel, and Margaret Boren**. These eight attorneys spent nearly 500 hours on this case, time valued at more than \$180,000. The client prevailed in Court and Camp Agape Bereavement Camp for Children was reimbursed the entirety of the money spent developing their landlord's property. "A simple lease issue ended up in litigation. It was only through Texas C-BAR that we could have ever had this kind of representation pro bono." Kim Turk, executive director of Camp Agape Bereavement Camp for Children, described, "Vinson & Elkins were able to recover all of our donated funds for our nonprofit organization!"

Corporation:

Association of Corporate Counsel

To a large extent, Texas C-BAR has difficulty referring cases, especially the potentially complex and thus interesting cases, to attorneys who are on their own, or in departments of only one or two people. The **Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC)** has provided a solution. ACC is brings together teams of attorneys from small corporate legal departments to work in tandem with each other and with attorneys from law firms. These partnerships are a reason for the success of the Corporate Counsel Initiative. The Corporate Counsel Initiative is a program that matches up nonprofits, law firms, and corporate legal departments, allowing the volunteer lawyers to connect with each other as well as with their community. The program has two key objectives – to provide nonprofit organizations with sustained access to legal counsel and to provide rewarding pro bono opportunities to in-house counsel. The initiative achieves these goals by matching nonprofit organizations with attorney teams composed of corporate legal departments and law firms. Together, the team of attorneys agrees to serve as general counsel to the nonprofit for a year. Given the scope of the referrals, these partnerships would not have been able to reach a majority of corporate counsel attorneys were not for ACC. The **Houston chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel ("ACC")** and **Jackson Walker, L.L.P.** work together to accommodate attorneys who work for organizations with small legal departments but who would still like to participate. So far, AAC has created two five-person teams that partner with Jackson & Walker to support Houston Habitat for

Humanity and the PhillipCares Foundation. These partnerships have dealt with everything from negotiating deed restrictions, to reviewing construction contracts, to drafting commercial leases and liability waivers.

Individual:

Virginia Swindell of Baker Botts

Virginia Swindell of Baker Botts is a new volunteer attorney for us, who took her first case for Texas C-BAR this last April. She drafted a privacy policy for a statewide database of homeless persons and then revised it to the specifications needed by the Texas Homeless Network. "[She was] knowledgeable, personable, and very willing to go out of their way. Mrs. Swindell handled this situation promptly with great service," Edria Fleming of Texas Homeless Network wrote. "[Swindell was] an experienced qualified attorney [... who gave] the support and information I needed to make this project a success. Texas Homeless Network could have not gotten our HMIS project off the ground without this support." After completing this work, Swindell immediately accepted another case, this time for Housing & Community Services. Her enthusiasm for the work she does as well as the dedication and detailed review she gives to it, have made her an exemplary volunteer and we hope to continue working with her.

Individual:

Tyree Collier of Thompson & Knight LLP

Tyree Collier of Thompson & Knight LLP is rare among our volunteers for having experience with both community development nonprofits and with religious nonprofits. When Texas C-BAR received an application from Munger Place United Methodist Church, we went immediately to Collier for assistance. "We went through several planning sessions and the Church ultimately determined that their existing foundation was appropriate for their plans," Collier explained. "We obtained letters from the national United Methodist organization confirming both the church entity and the foundation entity are exempt under Section 501(c)(3) as members of the national United Methodist organization's group exemption." Ernest McMillan of Munger Place United Methodist Church was ecstatic with the outcome, "Texas C-BAR provided a crucial service to the community. Non-profit organizations benefit greatly with improved capacities to serve thanks to Texas C-BAR. Thanks!! Ernest." We could not have provided this service without Collier's assistance and expertise.

Texas C-BAR's Supporters:

July 25, 2008 – December 9, 2008

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Legal Resource Library Updates

From 7/25/08 – 12/9/08

Texas C-BAR has published a new guide, available in both hardcopy and online,

- **Zoning in Austin: A Guide for Individuals, Small Businesses, and Nonprofits.**

Texas C-BAR published three additional Street Smart Guides, detailing the legal rights of homeless populations in Dallas, Houston and San Antonio:

- **Street Smart Dallas: Know Your Rights!**
- **Street Smart Houston: Know Your Rights**
- **Street Smart San Antonio: Know Your Rights!**

The Dallas and Houston guides were both sponsored by **ExxonMobil Corporation**. The San Antonio guide along with the previously published Austin guide were both sponsored by **NuStar Energy**.

Texas C-BAR also updated and published new versions of disaster recovery brochures in response to Hurricane Ike, dealing with:

- **Employment Issues**
- **Insurance Questions**
- **Renter Rights**
- **Homeowner Rights**
- **Immigration Issues**
- *** Rights Of Survivors When a Family Member Dies**

These documents are all available online at http://www.texasbar.org/legal_library/

Legal Assistance to Microenterprises Project has posted on the website a legal resource for **Protecting Your Work Against Copyright Infringement**. LAMP has also added set of [model sample documents](#):

- **Cease and Desist Letter**
- **Copyright Settlement Agreement**
- **Job Description Form**
- **Reference Check Checklist**
- **Employment Reference Phone Script**
- **Discipline Documentation Form**
- **Termination Meeting Checklist**
- **General Release for Employment Termination**
- **Employee Exit Interview Form**
- **Independent Contractor Agreement**

These documents and more are available online at <http://lamp.texasbar.org>.

Texas C-BAR Welcomes New and Returning Attorney Volunteers

From 7/25/08 – 12/9/08

Michael Barton, *Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP*
Sonya Bible, *Law Office of Sonya J. Bible*
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Jennifer Bligh, *Valero Energy Corporation*
Michael Bolton, *DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary LLP*
William Bos, *Vinson & Elkins LLP*
Geoffrey Brow, *Dell Inc.*
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Todd Chen, *Thompson & Knight LLP*
Shannon Conway, *Patton Boggs LLP*
Amanda Edwards, *Vinson & Elkins LLP*
Christopher Farley, *Thompson & Knight LLP*
Anders Gibson, *Thompson & Knight LLP*
Hillary Holmes, *Baker Botts L.L.P.*
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Jeremy Kennedy, *DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary LLP*
Maria Kim, *Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP*
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Delisle Warden, *Hunton & Williams LLP*
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About Texas C-BAR

Texas Community Building with Attorney Resources (Texas C-BAR) is a statewide business pro bono project that provides nonprofits with the legal tools they need to enhance the quality of life in Texas communities. Legal Assistance Microenterprises Project (LAMP) provides legal assistance to very small business owners. As a special project of Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, Texas C-BAR currently partners with law firms and corporations throughout Texas to help nonprofits better the lives of thousands of low-income families throughout the state. For more information about Texas C-BAR, LAMP, or to participate in our pro bono program, please contact Texas C-BAR.

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