



Bulletin

Texas Community Building with Attorney Resources • August 2004

Lawyer Spotlight:


Raising the Bar: King & Spalding LLP Attorney Shows the Way



Morgan Sheinberg Warren, King & Spalding LLP


Most lawyers work long hours but Morgan Sheinberg Warren of King & Spalding in Houston stretches her time to help nonprofits improve the lives of low-income families in Texas. She gives the gift that only lawyers can give, her legal expertise, to help start-up nonprofits throughout the state. One nascent organization, Pharr Community Outreach Project/Shalom sought to create an organization to provide literacy and parenting classes to families in Pharr, a small Texas border town. Morgan quickly volunteered for the case, guiding the client through the incorporation and tax exemption process with a spirit that gives lawyers a good name. In the words of Carole Lahti, Pharr Community/Shalom's secretary-treasurer, Morgan, "not only (handled) everything efficiently, (she) made it easy to understand what needed to be done... (her) warm, friendly personality turned what seemed like a chore into a pleasant task." She also helped Grant CDC in Austin to determine the best organizational structure to operate—a multi-family housing program and a charter school, and helped to form the Santa Maria Bluetown Family Learning Center, which offers lifeskills programs for at-risk youth.

Morgan has represented 12 Texas C-BAR clients and, in 2003, Morgan earned our Community Builder Award, which recognized her as the volunteer attorney who worked or provid-

ed support on the most number of cases. Morgan's commitment to Texas C-BAR extends beyond taking individual case referrals. She often mentors young associates on other Texas C-BAR cases and she serves as Texas C-BAR's contact at her firm as well as assisting with other C-BAR committees. Morgan exemplifies the heart of Texas C-BAR's program—linking the much-needed legal expertise of attorneys with Texas nonprofits working to improve the lives of low-income Texans. 

Summers for C-BAR

What do pizza and pro bono law have in common? This summer 11 law firms in Houston held "Summers for C-BAR" pizza parties for their summer associates to increase awareness of transactional pro bono opportunities through Texas C-BAR. Response was tremendous, and over 175 summer associates and current attorneys participated in the events. The following law firms took part in the event: Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP; Andrews Kurth LLP; Bracewell & Patterson, L.L.P.; Gardere Wynne Sewell LLP; Haynes and Boone, LLP; King & Spalding LLP; Locke Liddell & Sapp, LLP; Thompson & Knight, LLP; Vinson & Elkins L.L.P.; Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP; and Winstead Sechrest & Minick P.C.

Special thanks to the members of the Texas C-BAR steering committee, especially to co-chairs Wendy Salinas of Vinson & Elkins L.L.P. and Morgan Sheinberg Warren of King & Spalding LLP. Other committee members included Jennifer Jacobs of Bracewell & Patterson, L.L.P.; Sarah McLean of Thompson & Knight, LLP; and Rob Shearer of Baker & Hostetler LLP. 

Next Stage Party

New C-BAR Director, Frances Leos Martinez, shares her vision with the crowd.



Dean of the University of Texas Law School, Bill Powers, congratulates Heather K. Way on her vision and energy as the founder of Texas C-BAR.

Cynthia Bast recognizes Will Dibrell with Graves, Dougherty, Hearon & Moody, P.C. as a Texas C-BAR Pro Bono Partner.



Texas C-BAR clients, Karen Paup of Texas Low Income Housing Information Service and Gilson Westbrook of St. John Colony Neighborhood Association, chat at Doña Emilia's restaurant.



Elliott Naishtat and Alegria Oliverez converse at the Next Stage Party.



Cynthia Bast recognizes Michael Li with Baker Botts L.L.P. as the first Pro Bono Pioneer.



Frances Leos Martinez shares a light moment with Dean Powers.

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Texas C-BAR Legal Resource Library Update

Does your organization hold bake sales or an annual banquet? Make sure you are in legal compliance in the new memo under Nonprofit Management/Legal Requirements. Economic Development nonprofits should check out the legal requirements for a mobile food vendor under Economic Development/Microenterprise. If you have employees who may be called into military service, look under the Employees, Volunteers, and Independent Contractors/Managing Employees link for employer obligations to military personnel.

A new Texas C-BAR publication, "Clearing Title to Land: A Guide for Nonprofits in Texas" will soon be available in print and in the Legal Resource Library. This publication was made possible by the generous contributions of the Enterprise Foundation, Hexter Fair Title Company, Travis County Bar Real Property Section, Houston Bar Association Real Estate Law Section, and the Dallas Bar Association Real Property Section.

Texas C-BAR Welcomes Summer Interns

Callaway Aimone is a senior Finance major at the University of Texas. At Texas C-BAR he assisted with statistical research about low-income residents' housing needs and prepared documentation about mobile food vending regulations.

Anna Maria Mendez is a first year law student at the University of Texas. She has assisted with research about how nonprofits can legally raise funds through food sales and nonprofit employers' legal obligations to returning veterans.

Texas C-BAR Welcomes New and Returning Attorney Volunteers

4/16/04 - 7/15/0

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Special Thanks to Texas C-BAR's Recent Donors

Pro Bono Pioneers and Partners Blaze the Trail To Texas C-BAR's Future.

By Frances Leos Martinez, Director

Now in its fourth year, Texas C-BAR is headed onto the next stage of organizational development. Our goal, moving forward, is to strengthen Texas C-BAR and build on our record of superior service. To help us accomplish these goals, a very special circle of donors, our Pro Bono Pioneers and Partners, have made a leadership level pledge for their annual gift to Texas C-BAR over the next three years. We gratefully acknowledge the importance of their contribution, which will ensure that Texas nonprofits serving low-income communities have the legal resources they need for many years to come.

Our founding Pro Bono Pioneers and Partners are:

Will Dibrell
Michael Li
Frank Oliver
Peter Schenkkan
Charlene Vanlier Heydinger

We would also like to thank Texas C-BAR's other recent donors:

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About Texas C-BAR

Texas Community Building with Attorney Resources (Texas C-BAR) is a statewide business pro bono project which provides community-based nonprofits with the legal tools they need to succeed in transforming distressed neighborhoods into healthy communities. As a special project of Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (formerly Texas Rural Legal Aid), Texas C-BAR currently partners with more than 59 law firms and corporations to help nonprofits build communities and ultimately better the lives of thousands of low-income families throughout the state. For more information about Texas C-BAR, or to participate in our pro bono program, please contact the staff of Texas C-BAR at:

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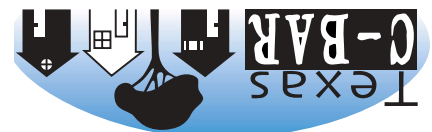
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