



Bulletin

Texas Community Building with Attorney Resources • February 2007

Texas C-BAR Volunteers Strengthen Children's Advocacy in Texas

"Many people have worked very hard to make CASA a reality in Parker County," recalled Steven Keck, executive director of CASA of Parker County. Texas C-BAR volunteer attorneys from **Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP** were just a few of those people, but Texas C-BAR has helped more CASAs than just the one in Parker County.



Judge Don Chrestman of Parker County swears in two new CASA volunteers, Jeri Conklin (left) and Kathy Smart (right). Photo by Steven Keck.

For the past four years Texas C-BAR has collaborated with a statewide network of court appointed advocates for neglected and abused children. Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates speak out for children whose custody and care is in dispute in the court system. "Children represented by CASA are more likely to receive the services and resources they need, to meet regularly with a court representative, to have fewer changes in placements, and are less likely to re-enter the court system once their case is dismissed," explained Keck. Texas CASA is part of the National CASA program, which has over 900 branches in local communities across the country. In the state of Texas, there are 61 active CASA programs that coordinate and train numerous vol-

unteers to help children caught up in the system.

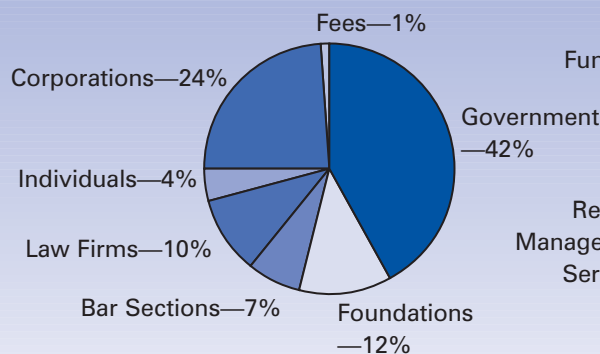
Texas C-BAR volunteers have accepted fifteen cases for nine different Texas CASA affiliates during the last four years. At first Texas C-BAR referred requests for legal assistance to volunteer attorneys on a case-by-case basis. Soon after, though, attorney D'Ann Johnson, Texas C-BAR's legal services director, and Andrea Sparks, program director of Texas CASA, met to organized a more standardized approach to meet CASA's legal needs. This broad collaboration between Texas C-BAR and Texas CASA has strengthened the CASA network with the support and legal expertise of some of the best transactional attorneys in Texas.

The cases have been many and varied, ranging from **Baker Botts L.L.P.** attorneys' review of the employee procedures for Children's Advocacy Center of Comal County, to the **UT Community Development Clinic's** creation of a template Form 1023 for new CASA organizations. Other cases involved the incorporation of the new CASA for Kids of Austin, Waller & Washington Counties by volunteers from **Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP** or the drafting of articles, bylaws and organizational documents for CASA of Central Texas, Incorporated done by volunteers from **ERM Southwest**.

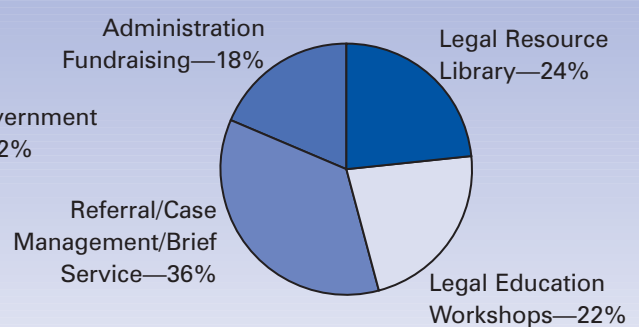
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2006 Financial Profile

Income Distribution



Allocation of Resources



The merger between CASA of Bell County and Children's Advocacy Center of Central Texas in Coryell County, so ably facilitated by **Jones Day and Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP**, "presented some unique and challenging issues," according to Akin Gump attorneys Nina Orendain and Kevin Rice. But, they said, "We thoroughly enjoyed working with the wonderful people at Children's Advocacy Center of Central Texas and CASA of Bell County, Inc. Assisting these two great organizations to pool their scarce resources by merging their operations and continuing their missions under one roof was a rewarding experience." The case proved to be rewarding not only in what they achieved but also in the collaboration that allowed them to achieve it. Orendain and Rice shared the kudos, saying, "Thanks to the assistance of CASA and CACCT's staff, and Sally Crawford and Catherine Traylor at Jones Day, everything went well."

This appreciation was returned as Michelle Farrell, executive director of Children's Advocacy Center of Central Texas, says, "I was quite impressed with the professionalism and dedication of the lawyers involved. They were thorough in their process, were available, and very patient with requests and questions. The merger may not have been completed without the legal representation they provided." However, with this assistance, the merger was not only made possible but a painless transition and win-win outcome for both organizations.

It is a terrifying prospect to consider the number of children that struggle through the abuse and neglect of their parents and then face the process of the legal system that often cannot hear the small voices of children. "With all the instability children endure in the child protection system, CASA volunteers are often the most consistent and stable adults in their lives," Keck said. The relationship between C-BAR and the CASAs is remarkably stable as we continue to try to meet all myriad needs of these children. Starting with the first CASA case matter taken nearly four years ago, Texas C-BAR and our volunteer attorneys have created a relationship with CASA that continues to expand. Our newest initiative, created after a statewide conference on foster youth organized through Texas CASA, the Center for Public Policy Priorities, the Department of Family and Protective Services, Texas Network of Youth Services, Baptist Child and Family Services, Casey Family Services, Foster Care Alumni of America, and the Casey Foundation, is called "On Their Own: A Foster Youth Justice Program." This new project will focus on creating legal resources for former and current foster youth, to meet the needs of unwanted, abused or neglected children even as they age out of state supported services.

We look forward to many years of further collaboration and further growth between the CASAs of Texas, Texas C-BAR, and all of the many enthusiastic and talented pro bono attorneys who volunteer their services for the betterment of the communities around us.

Legal Resources Library Update

Legal Assistance to Microenterprises Project (LAMP) now has its own webpage at <http://lamp.texasbar.org/> featuring **five legal resources**, available in both **English and Spanish**:

You've Got Yourself a Deal! Contract Issues for Small Business
¡Estamos de Acuerdo! Temas Legales de Contratos para Pequeñas Empresas

Got Kids? Laws Affecting Home-based Daycares
Tiene Niños? Leyes que afectan guarderías basadas en el hogar

Lessees, Lessors, and Life Lessons Commercial Lease
Issues for Small Businesses

La Empresa Inquilina: Temas Legales de Contratos de
Arrendamiento Comerciales para Pequeñas Empresas

Basic Steps to Starting Your Small Business Restaurant
Pasos Basicos para Empezar su Pequeño Negocio: Restaurant

It's Time to Pay the Piper! Tax Issues for Small Businesses
Pagando Impuestos para Pequeñas Empresas

Also available are **ten model documents** and **more than fifty links** to other webpages useful for small businesses. Volunteer lawyers are needed to develop more resources for microentrepreneurs.

Thanks to Texas C-BAR's Supporters:

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2007 Legal Workshop Calendar

The following is a list of Texas C-BAR and LAMP's workshops scheduled for February through April 2007. This list may be updated as new workshops are scheduled. For more information about any of these workshops or to request a workshop in your area, call (512) 374-2760, or email info@texasctbar.org

Texas C-BAR Workshops

Nonprofit Legal Compliance and Risk Management

March 19, 2007 – San Antonio

UTSA Center for Policy Studies

For more information contact Sandra Gonzales at (210) 458-2691.

Nonprofit Legal Compliance and Risk Management

May 16, 2007 – Amarillo

Amarillo Area Foundation Nonprofit Service Center

For more information contact Katharyn Wiegand at (806) 376-4521

Legal Issues in Managing Volunteers

May 23, 2007—Tyler

This workshop provides new information on the slippery slope of fundraising, new laws affecting donations of household items, and copyright issues. This workshop is cosponsored by Nonprofit Development Center of United Way of Tyler / Smith County and DOVIA, Directors of Volunteers in Agencies. For more information contact Vicki Harvey at vharvey@uwtyler.org or (903) 581-6376, ext. 211.

Legal Issues in Working With Volunteers

May 23, 2007—Tyler

Learn how legal issues impact volunteer screening and operations. This workshop will show the best practices for working with volunteers and the related risk management. This workshop is cosponsored by Nonprofit Development Center of United Way of Tyler / Smith County and DOVIA, Directors of Volunteers in Agencies. For more information contact Vicki Harvey at vharvey@uwtyler.org or (903) 581-6376, ext. 211.

LAMP Workshops

Legal Issue Spotting for Texas Microentrepreneurs

February 14, 2007 - Austin

This workshop is sponsored by BigAustin. For more information, contact Gavin Wilson at (512) 928-8010, ext.112 or see www.bigaustin.org.

Tax Law for Small Businesses

February 27, 2007 – Edinberg and Harlingen

This workshop is the second of six workshops for small businesses scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of every month from January through June. For more information, contact Esperanza Perez of the Small Business Development Center at UT Pan American: (956) 292-7535.

Texas C-BAR Welcomes New and Returning Attorney Volunteers

From 10/21/06 – 1/21/07

Mike Aiken, *Patton Boggs LLP*

Cynthia Bast, *Locke Liddell & Sapp, LLP*

Surinder Bhathal, *King & Spalding LLP*

Brandy Copley, *King & Spalding LLP*

Ashley Dixon, *Hughes & Luce, LLP*

Christopher Farley, *Baker & Hostetler LLP*

Justin Ferguson, *Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP*

Edward Gilman, *Andrews & Kurth*

James Gordon, *Winstead Sechrest & Minick P.C.*

Aisha Hagen, *Winstead Sechrest & Minick P.C.*

Daniel Jauchen, *Baker Botts L.L.P.*

Morgan Kerridge, *Balestri & Associates*

Buena Vista Lyons, *Andrews & Kurth*

D. Terrence McDonald, *McGinnis,*

Lochridge & Kilgore L.L.P.

Scott Mellon, *Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP*

Stephen Moll, *Gardere Wynne Sewell, LLP*

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Veronica Roper, *Akin Gump Strauss*

Hauer & Feld LLP

Thad Schaefer, *Patton Boggs LLP*

Cheri Thomas, *Baker Botts L.L.P.*

Maria Vargas, *King & Spalding LLP*

University of Texas School of Law Community Development Clinic:

Heather Way, *Supervising Attorney*

Priya Adhinarayanan, *Student Attorney*

Mary Dear, *Student Attorney*

Aliaquanda Derrick, *Student Attorney*

Jonathan Hoff, *Student Attorney*

Rebecca Horwitz, *Student Attorney*

Happy Rahman, *Student Attorney*

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 succeed in transforming distressed neighborhoods into healthy communities. Legal Assistance to 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 more than 70 law firms and corporations 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 at:

4920 N. IH-35, Austin, Texas 78751

phone: (512) 374-2710 or (800) 369-9270, ext. 2710

fax: (512) 447-3940

email: info@texas sbar.org

web: www.texas sbar.org

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