



Bulletin

Community Building with Attorney Resources • July 2002

Vinson and Elkins Lawyer Helps South Texas Organization with Revitalization Efforts

As a first-year associate at **Vinson & Elkins, L.L.P.** (V&E), **Xavier Peña** didn't expect to handle many cases on his own. Yet, just two months after he received his law license, he was heading from Houston to his hometown on the South Texas border to meet with **Robert Calvillo**, the executive director of his new client, the **Community Development Corporation of South Texas** (CDCST), a nonprofit organization that builds affordable housing in low-income South Texas neighborhoods. Texas C-BAR referred CDCST to Peña, who provided research to the nonprofit on tax increment reinvestment zones that would promote additional affordable housing and economic development in low-income communities.



C-BAR Volunteer Xavier Peña

CDCST is a nonprofit with a small staff and little money to spare for legal advice. "Our needs on the border are great, but our wallets are small," said Calvillo. "Thanks to Xavier's assistance, we hope to be able to utilize a new tool to create housing opportunities for low-income families."

As a Texas C-BAR volunteer, Peña not only had the opportunity to develop a professional relationship with a CEO, but he also had the opportunity to use his legal skills on an issue that made a difference in people's daily lives—and in a community where he grew up. Peña reflected on his pro bono work: "In addition to gaining invaluable work experience, it has been especially gratifying to work with a nonprofit that is helping people in my hometown." 🏠

Save the Date: October 16th Texas C-BAR Second Anniversary Block Party and Community Builder Awards

Mark your calendars now for Texas C-BAR's Second Anniversary Block Party on Wednesday, October 16, 2002, from 5:30-7:30 in the Third Ward neighborhood of Houston. We will be recognizing our pro bono attorneys and numerous supporters who have partnered with us to offer critical legal services to low-income communities across the state. We will also be presenting our annual Community Builder awards to honor four attorneys and law firms who have made outstanding pro bono contributions to Texas C-BAR's clients. Invitations will be sent out in September, or look on our website for the latest information: www.texasbar.org.

We have a lot to celebrate, including the delivery of legal services to more than 100 nonprofits across the state. Please bring your family and friends. We look forward to seeing you at the block party on the 16th. 🎉

Texas C-BAR Serves 100th Client: Sweet Union Development Commission

On a farm-to-market road between Crockett and Lufkin, in Cherokee County, lies the small community of Sweet Union. Founded in 1865 by slaves freed from the Wiley Thompson plantation, the descendants of those families are determined to preserve Sweet Union's history and improve the quality of the lives of its residents.

The community has enormous needs. The population is aging. Jobs, clinics, schools, and other services are all located more than 20 miles away. At least 20 percent of the people in the area live below the poverty line. Many residents live in substandard houses, and some lack indoor plumbing and safe electrical outlets. Even safe drinking water is a luxury: many of the water wells in the community are contaminated.

To address these needs, the community has formed a new nonprofit, the Sweet Union Development Commission (SUDC), which recently became Texas C-BAR's 100th client. Both former residents and descendants of long-time residents have been active with SUDC. Board President Charles Thomas, for example, follows in the footsteps of his great great grandfather, Nelson Jones, who named the

community. (His grandfather held a patent for the first tube-less tire. Another resident of Sweet Union invented the recipe for Cream of Wheat. Local history says it is his picture on the Cream of Wheat box today.)

Tom Keltner and **Rebecca Williams**, with the Dallas office of **Baker Botts L.L.P.**, are donating time and expertise through Texas C-BAR to help SUDC obtain its tax-exempt status from the IRS. "Without the contributions of Tom and Rebecca, the vital efforts of SUDC to transform a neglected community would be side-tracked trying to figure out confusing legal requirements and IRS forms," said Heather Way, Texas C-BAR's Director.

The SUDC has already helped residents add bathrooms, repair wobbly porches, and test drinking water wells. In the upcoming years, the nonprofit plans to build housing and another meeting place on five acres of land that will be donated to SUDC. Once SUDC qualifies as a tax-exempt organization, it can apply for funding for its planned housing and community development activities.

"We have always helped each other. If a barn burned, the community built it again," said Board Member Reavus Taylor. And with the help of SUDC, the residents will have another legacy they can be proud of: a safe, healthy, and thriving community where the roots run deep and proud. 🏡



Wanda Thomas recruiting members for SUDC.




Ida Bean in front of her home that SUDC will rehabilitate.

© Alan Pogue 2002

© Alan Pogue 2002

Texas C-BAR Resource Center: Updates

The Texas C-BAR Resource Center, at www.texasbar.org, has added a new folder on Community Development Financial Institutions. This folder includes sample lending documents, a loan application, and useful resources and links.

The Resource Center is continually updated to provide current and useful information and documents for nonprofits and volunteer lawyers. Please let us know if there is any information you would like to see posted in the Resource Center. 



Upcoming Legal Workshops for Nonprofits



**Nonprofit Legal
Compliance Training**
September 11, 2002,
Houston
Co-Sponsored with LISC

**Nonprofit Legal
Compliance Training**
September 26, 2002,
El Paso
Co-Sponsored with
El Paso Collaborative

Nonprofit Legal Institute
November 5, 2002,
Houston
Co-Sponsored with
United Way

**Clearing Title: How to
Make the Law Work
for You**
January 24, 2003,
Houston
Co-Sponsored with LISC

Seating is limited and
reservations are recom-
mended. For more
information, log onto
www.texasbar.org, or
call 512 447-7707 x 379.

Texas C-BAR Welcomes New and Returning Attorney Volunteers

(April 1, 2002, to July 1, 2002)

Jason Barnes–*Patton Boggs*
Bill Bingham–*McGinnis, Lochridge & Kilgore*
Gary Bond–*Winstead, Sechrest & Minick*
Diana Borden–*Graves, Dougherty, Hearon & Moody*
John Broude–*Broude, Smith & Jennings*
Rose Chiego–*Thompson & Knight*
Will Dibrell–*Graves, Dougherty, Hearon & Moody*
Clifton Dugas–*Baker Botts*
Stephen Gill–*Vinson & Elkins*
Dave Gohlke–*Skadden Arps*
Jim Gordon–*Winstead, Sechrest & Minick*
Bruce Hallmark–*Kemp Smith*
Susan Halsey–*Jackson Walker*
Jett Hanna
Brian Henchey–*Baker Botts*
Christi Hollingsworth–*Thompson & Knight*
Don Jones–*Graves, Dougherty, Hearon & Moody*
Mark Jones–*Bracewell & Patterson*
Rayna Jones–*Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison*
Mary Keeney–*Graves, Dougherty, Hearon & Moody*
Steve Lindsey–*Baker Botts*
Terry McDonald–*McGinnis, Lochridge & Kilgore*
Sarah McLean–*Thompson & Knight*
Matthew Meese–*Locke Liddell & Sapp*
Bruce Merwin–*Haynes & Boone*
Mark Mouritsen–*Dell Computer Corporation*
Truong Nguyen–*Weil, Gotshal & Manges*
Luke Pedersen–*Baker Botts*
Virginia Ramirez–*Jackson Walker*
Jennifer Rangel–*Locke Liddell & Sapp*
Rob Shearer–*Weil, Gotshal & Manges*
Michael Smith
Harold Taylor–*Vinson & Elkins*
David Tomek–*Vinson & Elkins*
Tim Tuggey–*Loeffler, Jonas & Tuggey*
Michael Whellan–*Graves, Dougherty, Hearon & Moody*
Kirk White–*Baker Botts*
Rebecca Williams–*Baker Botts*
Janet Wright–*Dell Computer Corporation*

About Texas C-Bar

Texas Community Building with Attorney Resources (Texas C-BAR) is a statewide business law pro bono project which provides community-based nonprofits with the legal tools they need to succeed in transforming distressed neighborhoods into healthy communities. Texas C-BAR was founded in 2000 as a special project of Legal Aid of Central Texas. Texas C-BAR currently partners with more than 25 of the state's largest 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:

phone: 512/447-7707, ext. 370

fax: 512/447-3940

email: txcbar@lact.org

web: www.texascbar.org

Texas C-BAR Board Of Directors

Cynthia Bast
Locke Liddell & Sapp, LLP

Genora Boykins
Reliant Resources, Inc.

Gary Brown
Conoco

Tim Johnson
Krafsur, Gordon & Mott

Michael Li
Baker Botts, LLP

Bryce Linsenmayer
Haynes & Boone, LLP

Mark Malveaux
McCall, Parkhurst & Horton, LLP

Frances Leos Martinez
McAuley Institute

Rudy Mata
Delgado, Acosta, Braden & Jones

J. Reymundo Ocañas
Texas Association of CDCs

Debbie Ramirez
Vinson & Elkins

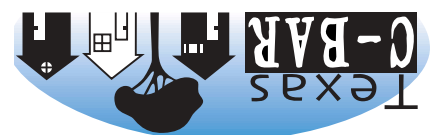
Steven Tyndall
Brobeck Phleger & Harrison, LLP

Tim Tuggey
Loeffler, Jones & Tuggey, LLP

Doc Watson
Bracewell & Patterson

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

web: www.texascbar.org
email: txcbar@lact.org
fax: 512/447-3940
phone: 512/447-7707, ext. 370
Austin, Texas 78704
2201 Post Road, Suite 104



Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Austin, Texas
Permit No. 2837