Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid
PRIVATE ATTORNEY INVOLVEMENT

PRO BONO WEEK RECAP

TRLA celebrated National Pro Bono Week, October 20–25, 2019, with a number of activities throughout its service area. In addition to paying recognition to pro bono attorneys at the local level, TRLA collaborated with area bar associations to sponsor a number of Legal Clinics including an expungement Clinic at the Social Justice Night Court in Laredo and a Community Justice Clinic in El Paso. TRLA also provided free CLE to pro bono attorneys in Corpus Christi, Edinburg, and Laredo.

A highlight of the week’s festivities included a keynote address by Chief Justice Nathan Hecht of the Supreme Court of Texas, “Achieving Full Access to Justice,” at a meeting co-sponsored by TRLA and the Corpus Christi Bar Association.

PRIVATE ATTORNEY INVOLVEMENT

An important part of TRLA’s civil delivery is its Private Attorney Involvement (PAI) component which marshals assistance from the private bar, the judiciary, and area law schools.

Last year, over 1,500 PAI clients were assisted by volunteer firms, attorneys, law students, judges and court staff in cases involving family law, disaster relief, wills, expunctions, and consumer issues.

WE’RE LOOKING FOR PRO BONO HELP WITH:

- Uncontested Divorces, Guardianships
- Contested Family Law cases with Domestic Violence
- Simple Wills
- Title Clearing
- Veterans Case Referrals
- Assisted Pro Se Clinics
- Document Prep (TODDs, Estate Planning Docs)
- Large\Regional Law Firm Clinic Sponsorship
- Non-Profit Formation & Governance, and Review of Commercial Leases

Thank you, current Pro Bono Superstars:

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<th>Cameron County:</th>
<th>Corpus Christi area:</th>
<th>El Paso:</th>
<th>Hidalgo County:</th>
<th>Laredo/Webb County:</th>
<th>Disaster Assistance:</th>
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<td>Maria Linda Gonzalez</td>
<td>Kristina Fernandez</td>
<td>Jessica Kludt</td>
<td>Catherine Curtis</td>
<td>Richard Gonzalez</td>
<td>St. Mary’s School of Law</td>
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<td>Victoria Mendoza</td>
<td>Epi Yasssi</td>
<td>Robert Sandoval</td>
<td>Julian Rodriguez</td>
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<td>Juan Pequeño</td>
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FOR MORE INFO ABOUT PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

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SPECIAL MENTION

The TRLA PAI Team would also like to recognize San Antonio solo practitioner Sara Dysart, a Board Certified Real Estate Attorney and a member of the Texas Bar Foundation.

Sara has mediated a number of contract for deed cases for TRLA either for free or for a very low charge. For a recent mediation, our attorney insisted on Sara taking some payment for her mediation services and she relented by charging only $250 per side! Sara even includes a provision in the mediation agreement that she will mediate any disputes about the agreement. Sara is a true champion of low income Texans seeking a safe and secure home of their own.

TRLA Staff Attorney Hannah Cramer was awarded the Texas Access to Justice Commission 2019 Law Student Pro Bono Award. This award recognizes a law student whose pro bono work has made a significant impact on the community and reflects a passion for advocating on behalf of under served populations.

CORPUS CHRISTI PROCLAMATION DECLARATION

The Corpus Christi City Council issued a Proclamation on October 15th recognizing National Pro Bono Week. Pictured are Mayor Joe McComb, members of the City Council, TRLA Pro Bono Coordinator Maria Martinez, and TRLA Social Worker Myda Gonzalez.

ABOUT TRLA

Founded in 1970 to represent Texas farmworkers, TRLA has grown into the nation’s third largest legal aid provider and the largest in Texas. TRLA provides free civil legal services to residents in 68 Southwest Texas counties, and represents migrant and seasonal farm workers throughout the state and in six other southern states. TRLA also operates public defender programs that serve at least 10 Texas counties, representing low-income and indigent people accused of felonies, misdemeanors, and juvenile crimes. TRLA serves about 23,000 clients each year. However, more than 2.6 million residents of Southwest Texas are considered eligible for TRLA services, a ratio of almost 21,000 potential clients per legal aid lawyer. As a result, thousands of low-income Texans still lack access to civil legal representation.

TRLA civil attorneys specialize in more than 45 practice areas, including family, employment, foreclosure, bankruptcy, subsidized housing, farmworker, civil rights, and environmental law. TRLA serves its clientele through its Mercedes headquarters and branch offices throughout Southwest Texas. Its Southern Migrant Legal Services (SMLS) office in Nashville, Tenn., serves migrant farm workers in that state and five others: Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas.