

## Giving HOPE to a Child Through Pro Bono Services

Due to many social issues prevalent in our country today, there has been a noticeable trend of more grandparents requesting and gaining custody of their grandchildren.

Recently, a retired couple came to Legal Aid for assistance regarding their six year-old granddaughter. Due to their own daughter's history of drug use and incarceration, the couple filed for custody of the child, who had already lived with them half of her life. Now that the child is school age, our clients wanted their granddaughter to have a stable home.

The case was accepted by a volunteer attorney. Although both biological parents were duly and properly cited, they did not appear in court and wholly made default. Our clients were awarded sole managing conservatorship of the child, with the parents having only supervised visitation.

Without the aid of a sympathetic pro bono attorney, the child's future would be questionable and with little hope of being reared by grandparents who love and care about her.

Help Legal Aid close the justice gap...

## BAR ASSOCIATION PARTNERSHIPS

- ABILENE**
  - Abilene Bar Association
  - Brown County Bar Association
- AMARILLO**
  - Amarillo Area Bar Association
- DALLAS**
  - Dallas Asian-American Bar Association
  - Dallas Association of Young Lawyers
  - Dallas Bar Association
  - Dallas Hispanic Bar Association
  - J. L. Turner Legal Association
- DENTON**
  - Denton Bar Association
- FORT WORTH**
  - Arlington Bar Association
  - Black Women Lawyers Association
  - Erath County Bar Association
  - Fort Worth-Tarrant County Young Lawyers
  - Johnson County Bar Association
  - Mexican American Bar Association
  - Northeast Tarrant County Bar Association
  - Palo Pinto County Bar Association
  - Parker County Bar Association
  - Tarrant County Bar Association
  - Tarrant County Black Bar Association
  - Tarrant County Debtors Bar Association
- Lubbock**
  - Lubbock County Bar Association
  - Lubbock County Women Lawyers
  - Lubbock County Young Lawyers
  - Lubbock Criminal Defense Lawyers
  - Mexican American Bar Association
  - South Plains Family Law Association
  - South Plains Trial Lawyers Association
  - West Texas Bankruptcy Bar Association
- McKINNEY**
  - Collin County Bar Association
  - Collin County Young Lawyers
  - Fannin County Bar Association
  - Frisco Bar Association
  - Grayson County Bar Association
  - Grayson County Young Lawyers
  - Hunt County Bar Association
  - Plano Bar Association
  - Rockwall County Bar Association
- MIDLAND**
  - Midland County Bar Association
  - Midland County Young Lawyers
- ODESSA**
  - Ector County Bar Association
  - Ector County Young Lawyers
- PLAINVIEW**
  - Plainview Bar Association
- SAN ANGELO**
  - Tom Green County Bar Association
- WAXAHACHIE**
  - Ellis County Bar Association
  - Kaufman County Bar Association
- WICHITA FALLS**
  - Wichita County Bar Association

# Dare to Care



“We are all committed to ensuring that justice is available to all Texans, including those who can't afford to hire lawyers.”

...former Justice Deborah Hankinson  
Texas Supreme Court



Legal Aid of North West Texas  
Equal Justice Volunteer Program

[www.lanwt.org](http://www.lanwt.org)



## Together we can make a Difference

### 1 Purpose

**Legal Aid of Northwest Texas' (LANWT) Equal Justice Volunteer Program (EJVP)** covers 114 counties with branch offices in Abilene, Amarillo, Dallas, Denton, Fort Worth, Lubbock, McKinney, Midland, Odessa, Plainview, San Angelo, Waxahachie, Weatherford, and Wichita Falls.

EJVP has a strong, well-supported and durable program that recruits private attorneys, corporate counsels, and professionals to collectively address the civil legal matters of low income individuals and families. Our partnerships help to ensure low income people have equitable access to legal services including self-help, legal education, brief services, advice, and litigated representation.

Volunteer attorneys are needed to accept pro bono civil law cases, act as mentors and co-counselors, volunteer as presenters at substantive law training events, serve on speaker panels, provide assistance to pro se litigants, and participate on local pro bono advisory boards.

Private Attorney Involvement is an integral component of the LANWT delivery system that facilitates high quality, economical, and effective provision of civil legal assistance to eligible clients.

### 2 Who We Serve & Type of Cases

**Free** civil legal assistance is provided to low-income individuals and families that meet the eligibility guidelines. The LANWT Board of Directors have prioritize the type of cases to which the program's limited resources will be devoted. They include:

- **Public Benefits:** Social Security, SSI Disability, and denials for Food Stamps and unemployment compensation benefits.
- **Consumer:** Deceptive trade practice, wrongful repossessions, home improvement fraud, contract disputes, bankruptcies.
- **Housing Issues:** From tenant-landlord disputes to real estate, problems involving individual rights, unlawful terminations, and discrimination matters.
- **Family Law:** Dissolutions of marriage with domestic violence, protective orders, child support, and custody matters.
- **Health Law:** Denial of Medicare or Medicaid benefits, denial of indigent care benefits.
- **Other civil matters:** Issues affecting the elderly and children, education problems, wills, probate, and community economic development.

### 3 How to Volunteer

Pro Bono participation SAVES lives by addressing the civil needs of low-income people, collaborative partnerships with bar associations, private attorneys, lay advocates, and the business community. To volunteer and/or financially support our "access to justice" campaigns, contact your local Legal Aid's branch office EJVP Coordinator or visit our website at [www.lanwt.org](http://www.lanwt.org) to complete the enrollment registration form.

#### Equal Justice Volunteer Program Leadership Team

<b>Abilene</b>	<b>Guadalupe Elizondo</b>	<b>325-677-8591</b>
<b>Amarillo</b>	<b>Luisa Vigil</b>	<b>806-373-6808</b>
<b>Dallas</b>	<b>Michelle Alden</b>	<b>214-748-1234</b>
<b>Denton</b>	<b>Glenda Hill</b>	<b>940-383-1406</b>
<b>Fort Worth</b>	<b>Ellena Simmons</b>	<b>817-336-3943</b>
<b>Lubbock</b>	<b>Nancy Mojica</b>	<b>806-763-4557</b>
<b>McKinney</b>	<b>Jan Kearney</b>	<b>972-542-9405</b>
<b>Midland</b>	<b>Pete Fierro</b>	<b>432-686-0647</b>
<b>NAACP</b>	<b>Rosa Turner</b>	<b>817-332-8919</b>
<b>Odessa</b>	<b>Dorothy Holguin</b>	<b>432-332-1207</b>
<b>Plainview</b>	<b>Sylvia Chavez</b>	<b>806-293-8491</b>
<b>San Angelo</b>	<b>Tonnie Robbins</b>	<b>325-653-6982</b>
<b>Waxahachie</b>	<b>Trish Walker</b>	<b>972-923-3344</b>
<b>Wichita Falls</b>	<b>Linda Gomez</b>	<b>940-723-5542</b>
<b>Central Office</b>	<b>Kathy D. Duncan</b>	<b>817-649-4759</b>

### 4 Support Benefits for Volunteering

Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas can help you do pro bono work in the most effective way thus ensuring your work achieves maximum impact in representing our clients. To help support attorneys willing to accept a pro bono case, **we offer:**

- Malpractice insurance at no cost for the duration of the case;
- Sample pleadings/forms;
- Paralegals, Legal Assistants perform casework tasks for attorneys;
- Court Reporters donate time for depositions on pro bono cases;
- Lay volunteers render technical assistance to pro bono attorneys;
- Reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses;
- Case maintenance, time records to track donated hours;
- Free accredited MCLE training opportunities, and
- Services to off-set costs of pro bono representation such as Lexis-Nexis, extraordinary litigation expenses, and secretarial support.

**State Bar of Texas** support benefits available to volunteer attorneys who accept pro bono cases include:

- Tuition Scholarship to reward pro bono involvement;
- Pro Bono Mentors Program where lawyers can earn up to 5 MCLE credits;
- Pro Bono College Membership for contributing at least 75 pro bono hours;
- Annual Pro Bono Awards recognition for outstanding services, and
- Statewide Advocate Website contains resources and library of materials for volunteer attorneys located at:

[www.TexasLawyersHelp.org](http://www.TexasLawyersHelp.org)

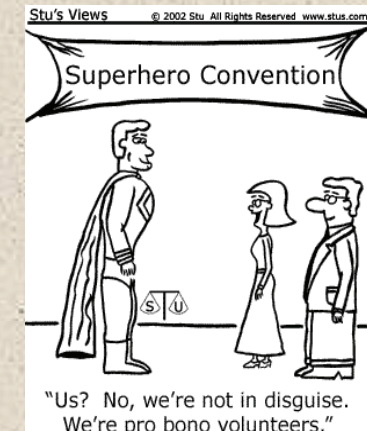
## Volunteer Your Skills—

### Do it Pro Bono

Everyday potential clients walk through the door of one of Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas 14 branch offices requesting legal assistance. Legal Aid's staff attorneys simply cannot meet the huge demand for help in civil matters. This is why "pro bono" participation is an integral part of Legal Aid's effort to provide high quality civil legal assistance to eligible clients.

#### Why Do Pro Bono?

- ⇒ **Creates a positive change** – Using your talent as a tangible contribution helps people with limited means to obtain representation in the judicial system.
- ⇒ **Effective way to use your time** – We have a variety of pro bono opportunities and provide all the resources and support you need to volunteer on structured projects.
- ⇒ **Avenue to grow your skills** – Free CLE Training Opportunities are offered to enhance practice skills in civil legal matters.
- ⇒ **Meet colleagues who support access to justice for the poor** – Our outreach activities offer a chance to network with others in the legal community who are interested in resource sharing that provide a broad-range of pro bono assistance to eligible clients.



**Be a REAL Superhero...  
for LEGAL AID**  
Volunteer your Time and Talent