

# Legacy Family Court Foundation Receives Grant from Texas Bar Foundation

The **Texas Bar Foundation** awarded Legacy Family Court Foundation a \$12,500 grant award to support its mission and goal to raise funds and awareness for effective court advocacy on behalf of the Legacy Family Civil Specialty Court program in Dallas County.

The Legacy Family Court Foundation's project supports the court's role in the effective recovery, rehabilitation and reunification of families, whose children have been removed from their homes and separated from their parents because of the parent's alcohol or substance-abuse addiction. This grant will facilitate parents' recovery from addictions, instill long term sobriety, decrease number of displaced children, and increase family reunification in safer, healthier environments, the foundation said in a release.

Since its inception in 1965, the Texas Bar Foundation has awarded more than \$20 million in grants to law-related programs. Supported by members of the State Bar of Texas, the Texas Bar Foundation is the nation's largest charitable funded bar foundation.

The Legacy Family Court program is a voluntary, 18-month program and represents an intensive, collaborative effort to support families with alcohol or substance addiction issues through their recovery process. It is designed for parents who have a genuine desire to become clean and sober, long term. As such, participants in the Legacy Family Court program must complete substance abuse treatment and maintain sobriety from all forms of alcohol and non-prescribed drugs. Through regular meetings with the court and the Legacy Family Court team

members, they will be provided support, services, encouragement and every possible advantage while facing the unique and difficult challenges of learning to live in recovery. For their part, they must be willing to do what is necessary to help themselves and their children. Honesty and willingness are key. Participants are frequently and randomly drug tested for compliance.

Senior Judge Tena Callahan, co-founder of the Court's program, states: "Parents in crises love their children, but the lie of their addiction prevents them from acting in their child's best interest. Legacy Family Court works with these parents to alleviate the crises and place the love of their children back at the forefront of their behavior. And that is a game changer – for the parents, their children, and this community. We are very happy to receive this funding from the Texas Bar Foundation, which allows the Court's program to continue providing services to support the parents in their recovery and rehabilitation from alcohol, substance abuse or dependency and to assist in creating a stable life and a safe environment for their children and their family reunification."

The Texas Bar Foundation is the largest charitably funded bar foundation in the nation. Membership is composed of the most elite Texas attorneys. The Foundation's members are nominated because of their dedication to the administration of justice and high professional standing among their peers.

For five decades, the Texas Bar Foundation has helped organizations to:

- \* Educate the public about their rights and responsibilities under the law
- \* Provide legal services to the poor
- \* Assist those who turn to the legal system for protection.

Grants are made possible by the generosity of the Fellows of

the Texas Bar Foundation and charitable gifts from individuals and law firms across the state. The Texas Bar Foundation and its members are committed to its mission: Advancing justice in Texas by providing opportunities to support the rule of law in Texas, especially for programs that relate to legal assistance for the underserved, the administration of justice, ethics in the legal profession, the encouragement of legal research, publications and forums, and education of the third branch of government..

The **Legacy Family Court Foundation** was created by a dedicated group of Dallas area judges, lawyers and interested business leaders to develop the non-adversarial program to support parents with alcohol or substance abuse issues and reunite them with their children who have been removed from their homes and separated from their parents as a result of the parent's addiction issues.

This Foundation solicits public and private grants and donations to provide funding to the Court to ultimately sustain the Court's existence. Adult participants (parents), once selected and invited in the program, volunteer to participate in this 15 to 18 month alternative program in Dallas County, which utilizes a team based approach and operates under the Ten Key Components of Drug Courts. The Court is a specialized drug court administered through the 302<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District Court. The Court's purpose is to provide parent(s), facing parental rights termination by the Child Protective Services (CPS), with a unique opportunity within the Civil Courts process, outside of the Criminal Courts process, to establish and sustain lasting recovery from substance addiction. Through their successful completion of the Court's program and services, the parent(s) have the opportunity to reunite with their children and thus lead healthy, productive lives as a family.

