



## News From Texas Advocacy Project

### Accenture Presents the Black and White Ball

Please join us along with Honorary Chair, Senator Kirk Watson, as we celebrate the Project's 25th Anniversary! We have rechristened our annual benefit: *The Black and White Ball* presented by Accenture, October 19, 2007 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Austin. Expect an evening of wonderful food prepared by Four Seasons Chef, Elmar Prambis with music provided by Austin's own Lucky Strikes. Hundreds of dazzling items will be on the auction block, including a trip to Telluride, jewelry, art and more. "Swag" provided by our generous supporters at Luna. Please visit <http://www.texasadvocacyproject.org/> and click on events to purchase tickets and for sponsorship opportunities.

### Case Highlight From the Project

Here at the project we often work with clients who are facing staggering obstacles in their lives. One such client is \*Emily. At the age of 13 Emily's father forced her to marry in order to avoid paying child support. Her husband kept her in a virtual prison throughout her childhood not allowing her to go to school, or be in public alone. Their relationship was characterized by violence and control. Finally, at the age of 40, Emily decided it was time to get help. She came to our organization desperate to get a protective order that would allow her the safety and time to get away from her batterer.

Unfortunately Emily lived in a part of Texas with a history of making things difficult for women in her position. Judges in the area would not hear Emily's case unless she had an attorney, even though they were required by law to do so.

This is where the Project stepped in. We took Emily's case and won her a protective order, requiring her batterer to stay away. We also represented Emily in her divorce proceedings, so that Emily could get free of the situation and start a new life. We are also currently monitoring the situation in this county and contemplating further action.

This is how the Project works in the lives of Texans. We are committed to ensuring victims of domestic violence have a right to represent themselves and to be empowered to change their lives.

\*Name changed to protect the confidentiality of our client.

### Teen Justice Initiative Receives Key Funding

The Ronya and George Kozmetsky Foundation (RGK Foundation) has made a major investment in the Project! We recently received a grant from RGK Foundation which will allow our Teen Justice Initiative to

**FAMILY VIOLENCE LEGAL LINE**  
800-374-HOPE (STATEWIDE)  
512-476-5770 (IN AUSTIN)

**FAMILY LAW HOTLINE**  
800-777-FAIR (STATEWIDE)  
512-476-1866 (IN AUSTIN)

**SEXUAL ASSAULT LEGAL HOTLINE**  
800-296-SAFE (STATEWIDE)  
512-476-9290 (IN AUSTIN)

**TECHNICAL ADVOCACY HOTLINE**  
888-325-SAFE (STATEWIDE)  
512-476-5386 (IN AUSTIN)

expand its programming throughout 10 additional counties. The Teen Justice Initiative addresses the unique legal issues involving dating violence and minors by providing legal advice and representation for protective orders as well as education about prevention. In a recent study, the Texas Council on Family Violence reported that 75% of young Texans ages 16-24 have either personally experienced dating violence or know someone who has, and that *half* of Texas teens and young adults report having personally experienced violence. That rate is significantly higher than the national average of one in three. This study reaffirmed the need for programs to educate young people about how to recognize dating violence, how the problem can escalate from emotional abuse to physical abuse, and how to get out of the relationship safely. The goal of the Teen Justice Initiative is to increase access for young people to services relating to dating violence by increasing the number of professional presentations offered to attorneys and local legal systems; building relationships with personnel from schools, shelters and other youth-related organizations; and providing effective legal representation to victims. Texas Advocacy Project thanks the RGK Foundation for supporting us in this endeavor.

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