



For Immediate Release

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Texas Bar Foundation Awards \$12,000 to Texas Advocacy Project for Technology Updates for Virtual Legal Services for Domestic Violence Survivors

AUSTIN, TX – The Texas Bar Foundation will invest \$12,000 in Texas Advocacy Project to perform technology updates for virtual legal services or “tele-law” for domestic violence survivors. This funding will allow Texas Advocacy Project to adapt to the changing landscape of survivor services and continue to provide critical, life-saving free legal services for survivors, virtually.

With support from the Texas Bar Foundation, Texas Advocacy Project has been using cutting-edge technologies since 2007, when they first launched their Virtual Legal Clinics (VLC’s). Since its inception, the VLC has allowed survivors and advocates in shelters to use proprietary software to video conference with a Texas Advocacy Project attorney, for free.

Legal remedies work and are key to ending abuse. A woman with a protective order is 80% less likely to be re-victimized. Low-income victims of abuse face many obstacles when trying to leave their abusers, primarily a lack of access to attorneys. Accessing virtual legal services or “tele-law” is critical in rural, underserved areas and during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

This initiative will:

- Provide legal assistance to poor and disadvantaged victims
- Expand virtual legal services to domestic violence survivors
- Add additional features such as web chat and SMS text

About Texas Bar Foundation

Since its inception in 1965, the Texas Bar Foundation has awarded more than \$21 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 charitably-funded bar foundation.

About Texas Advocacy Project

The mission of Texas Advocacy Project, Inc. (“Project”) is to empower the public and survivors of domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking in Texas through free legal services, access to the justice system, and education and prevention. Last year the Project served 4,738 clients, impacting the lives of 10,659 survivors and their children. In addition to free legal services, the Project provided free trainings and education to 5,515 judges, prosecutors, crime victim services personnel, legal advocates, medical professionals, universities, and students across Texas. If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence and need free legal help call 1-800-374-HOPE or www.TexasAdvocacyProject.org.

Heather Bellino, CEO of Texas Advocacy Project is available for press interviews over Zoom or phone.

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Contact: Jeremy Rathke, Vice President of Development & Communications
512-225-9594 jrathke@texasadvocacyproject.org