

EQUAL JUSTICE WORKS®

Helping Lawyers Help Community



Meghan Kempf

**Family Violence
Prevention
Services, Inc.
San Antonio, TX**

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**Texas Access to
Justice Foundation**

Equal Justice Works is the national leader in creating public interest opportunities for law students and lawyers. Collaborating with the nation's leading law schools, law firms, corporate legal departments, and nonprofit organizations, Equal Justice Works offers a continuum of opportunities that provide the training and skills that enable attorneys to provide effective representation to underserved communities and causes. Equal Justice Works is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For additional information about Equal Justice Works, please visit: <http://www.equaljusticeworks.org>.

FELLOWSHIP SUMMARY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Meghan provided legal advocacy to domestic violence victims in Bexar County, Texas, to deter and reduce the growing number of violations of civil family law court orders through direct representation services and the development of a comprehensive community education program.

NEED ADDRESSED BY PROJECT

Meghan provided litigation services to enforce existing court orders for domestic violence victims, ensuring that victims receive promised safety and resources. Additionally, she developed and conducted comprehensive training for local law enforcement, legal professionals, and victims to enable those parties to effectively identify and prevent violations of court orders. The desired outcome is not only to deter violations of court orders regarding domestic violence, but, more importantly, to enable victims and their families to achieve protection and stability.

FELLOWSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

In the past two years, Meghan has:

- Provided full representation to 41 clients, the majority of whom sought protective orders, and enforcement and/or modification of existing civil court orders regarding conservatorship, child support, and property division
- Written more than 50 general advice and counsel letters to educate her clients about Texas family and domestic violence law, as well as other issues
- Established systematic referral relationships with Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid, Inc. and the Crisis Response Team of the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD)
- Developed and presented domestic violence law workshops to various community stakeholders, including SAPD's Special Victims Unit and Crisis Response team
- Co-presented "How to Effectively Represent Victims of Domestic Violence" with Equal Justice Works Fellow Sarah Loeffler at the 2014 Texas Poverty Law Conference
- Taught the weekly know-your-rights class to the residents of the Battered Women and Children's Shelter of Bexar County

POST-FELLOWSHIP PLANS

Now that the Fellowship is complete, Meghan plans to:

- Work as staff counsel for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission in Austin, Texas
- Continue to be involved in pro bono legal clinics and community collaborations