



Bexar County Family Justice Center Newsletter

May 2008

Letter from the Director...

Dear Partners and Friends,

As Spring is warming into Summer, how quickly time has flown by from my transition from Director of Legal Services and Community Liaison to Executive Director. As Executive Director, I visited many of your centers and have thoroughly enjoyed learning, in detail, more about the comprehensive services you offer. I hope this interaction will forge even stronger partnerships, and, together, we can offer more in depth services to victims of domestic violence in our community.

I am also excited to announce several members of the original Family Justice Center team have taken new positions. Deborah C. Parrott, previously Supervisor of Protective Order Advocates, is now coordinating services with all of our on and off site partners as Operations Manager. Deb has worked in the field of domestic violence for over thirty years and is a wealth of information in a variety of areas, especially, community resources for victims of domestic violence. Rebecca Perez, formerly a protective order advocate, is serving as our Office Manager. Rebecca recently completed her MPA from University of Texas at San Antonio and is managing our Federal grants, our office and me! She, along with my new assistant, Nancy Valdez, are a great support and serve as huge assets to our team. Please feel free to contact these ladies if you need anything involving the Center. We are here to support you, so together, we can serve victims of domestic violence.

Also, our Board of Directors continues to grow. Please welcome Debbie Gonzalez, General Manager of the Sheraton Gunter Hotel, and Debbie LeDoux, a former Bexar County Assistant District Attorney and community activist.

I thank you, as well as my dedicated staff, for all that you do for victims of domestic violence in San Antonio. As Margaret Mead said, *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."* I am proud to stand with all of you as we continue this journey.

Sincerely,

Meera Ballal
Executive Director

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FJC Welcomes Partner New Additions

District Attorney's Office

Rachel Martinez
PO Supervisor
Tina Hartmann
PO Attorney
Marilisa Jannsen
PO Attorney
Yvonne P. Ramirez
PO Advocate
Adrianna Guel
PO Advocate

Child Protective Services

David Shirley
Investigator

San Antonio Police Department

Yolanda Casas
Detective
Eileen Garza
Caseworker
Irma Jaramillo
Caseworker

Upcoming Training...

What: The Face of Domestic Violence
When: Thursday, May 22, 2008
Where: FJC 2nd Floor, Board Room
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Given By: Maria S. Falcon, Family Service Association

Lo Bello donates to the Family Justice Center



For the second year, the women of Lo Bello de San Antonio donated to the Family Justice Center. Lo Bello is a group of professional and business women within the community who work very hard to collect funds for charitable causes. This year, Lo Bello made a donation of \$2,500. The previous year, the Family Justice Center received a donation of \$2,000. We are very thankful to the women of Lo Bello for their contribution to the Family Justice Center and for all of their hard work to raise money for all of the charitable causes within our community.

FJC receives the Orsinger Foundation & Spurs Foundation Grants

The *Dream Center* component of the Family Justice Center strives to assist victims of domestic violence in the journey from survivor to thriver. There are many victims who have lost their hopes and dreams due to the struggles of domestic violence. The *Dream Center* works with these victims to ease their transition to independence, whether it is through assistance with housing/shelter, medical, food, and/or education. We are very fortunate to have this component and even more so for the volunteers who work with these victims. Special thanks to Jaclyn Davidson, Laura Vaughn and Debbie Thompson, as well as the many other volunteers and interns who have worked in the *Dream Center* with these victims. Without all of your help, this component would not be possible.

Much has been made possible through the receipt of the Genevieve and Ward Orsinger Foundation and the Spurs Foundation Grants. The Orsinger Foundation awarded the Family Justice Center a grant in the amount of \$25,000 for emergency funds such as medical/dental-exams, prescriptions; housing-emergency relocation, moving; and much more. With the \$3,000 Spurs Foundation Grant, the *Dream Center* moved to its new location (the former Castro Conference Room) providing a larger and more comfortable working area.

We would like to express our sincere and heartfelt thanks to both the Genevieve and Ward Orsinger Foundation and the Spurs Foundation for their generous contributions. Thank You.

Partner Spotlight Nominations

Do you have a member of your staff, a co-worker, an intern or a

About our facilitator...

Maria S. Falcon currently works at Family Service Association as the Manager for Behavioral Health Services Program. She has her Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling, is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), and a Board Approved LPC Supervisor.

Maria is also a commissioned Pastor at New Life Ministries of San Antonio, is the founder of the Latinas Organized against Violence (LOaV), which is composed of Church Leaders with a mission to help end domestic violence.

Maria has participated in the development of the 52 State Guidelines for the Violence Intervention Program in Texas.

She serves as Chair for the Latina Task Force, at the Texas Council on Family Violence in Austin, and she's participated in the production of the Spanish film called *Un Nuevo Amanecer* (A New Dawn), which is a resource available to latina victims of domestic violence.

Maria also developed the Deputy Mobile Outreach Team (DMOT), which is currently serving individuals with mental health illness in our community.

We welcome Maria S. Falcon and would like to thank her in advance for her service (s).

Future Trainings

To encourage partner involvement, the Family Justice Center would like to invite you to host our next mini-training session. If you are interested, please contact Deborah Parrott, Operations Manager, at dparrott@bexar.org or (210) 208-6816.

volunteer who is having an impact at the Family Justice Center? There are many "Unsung Heroes" who are both paid and not paid who are going well beyond their expected duties.

Please help us award these individuals. Monthly nominations will be taken. Please submit nomination information, to include: Name, Agency, Job Title, length of service, and a brief description why this individual should be our "Partner Spotlight." Nominations should be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on 2nd Friday of every month.

If you would like to make a nomination or for further information please contact: Rebecca Perez, Officer Supervisor at rtrinidad@bexar.org or Nancy Valdez, Office Assistant, at Nancy.Valdez@bexar.org.

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