

WELCOMING THE FJC'S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dr. Deborah L. Valdez, Ed.D., Executive Director of the Bexar County Family Justice Center.

While the management team at the Bexar County Family Justice Center remains the same, there has been a transition in Executive Directors. Dr. Deborah L. Valdez, Ed.D. joined the Bexar County Family Justice Center (BCFJC) on October 31, 2011, replacing Meera Ballal who has served the center since 2007. Prior to coming to the center, Dr. Valdez spent 33 years in Public education as both a teacher and administrator. For the past five years, she has served as an adjunct professor in graduate studies at Texas A&M University San Antonio. Change is challenging in all aspects of life, but Dr. Valdez and Ms. Ballal are committed to making this change in command as seamless as possible. The victims of domestic violence and their children, whom we serve,

must continue to feel secure in the fact that BCFJC and it's partners throughout Bexar County will be there to help them even in this period of change. The on-site partners and advocates serving victims of domestic violence and their families are extraordinarily talented individuals with a clear sense of mission. This collaboration and dedication has been strong and consistent since the opening of the BCFJC in 2005. As the new Executive Director, Dr. Valdez looks forward to working alongside each and every one of them to restore hope, dignity, strength and success to the victims of domestic violence in Bexar County, always mindful of our mission: *Assisting victims in their journey from survivor to thriver.*

Everyone at the BCFJC wishes Ms. Ballal well on her continued life's journey. Her husband, Dr. Seenu Reddy, M.D. has accepted an exciting new position in the Nashville area! We know her family in Tennessee is very excited about her and her family coming home, however; she will be missed in San Antonio. Dr. Valdez has pledged to maintain the high standards of care that have been provided by the BCFJC.



WWW.BCFJC.ORG

IN THIS ISSUE...

A Cinderella Gala

A National Expert Presents on Strangulation

December Training at the FJC

DONATING FOR HOPE



Anna Lopez, Maria Falcon, and Linda Canizales participate at the Festival of Trees.

The **Hyatt Regency Hill Country Resort and Spa** is sponsoring a "Festival of Trees" competition. In an effort to collect food for the **San Antonio Food Bank** and secure \$1500.00 to be used to begin a scholarship for teens, we are soliciting food donations from anyone interested in aiding us. This program would support dance and art classes for teens from the Victim's Empowerment Counseling Program, led by Maria Falcon of Family Service Association. **Starting**

immediately, we will be collecting the non-perishable food items at the BCFJC and will delivering them to the Hyatt Regency Hill Country Resort and Spa.

HOMELESS POPULATION IN SAN ANTONIO

The BCFJC wants to thank our partners, The **Christus Santa Rosa Health Systems** for sponsoring, and **Haven for Hope** for presenting, an informative CME program entitled "The Homeless Population in San Antonio: Social Justice, Advocacy, and Ethical Issues," presented on Tuesday, November 11. Scott Ackerson of Haven for Hope provided the audience with a review of the overall make-up of the homeless population in San Antonio, a lively discussion concerning the ethical issues associated with the hospitalization and medical management of the homeless, and ways in which to identify advocacy resources that are available for medical management of the homeless in our community. He went on to discuss the paradigm shift that is occurring throughout the country from providing crisis management only to providing a therapeutic approach to the underlying causes of homelessness and the issues surrounding sustainability.

A CINDERELLA GALA



Martha Nuñez, Aida Santos, Janeth Zamora, and Brianna Antu attend the Cinderella Gala.

At an event sponsored by the Cinderella Ministry, four women who are participants in the Spanish Victims Empowerment Group – VEG conducted by Ms. Maria Falcon of the Family Service Association in partnership with the Bexar County Family Justice Center were selected to attend the special formal gala. Ms. Sonia Marnon, founder of the Cinderella Ministry and Ms. Inez Rodriguez, the Cinderella Gala event coordinator, stated that the purpose of the event is to provide women from the

community that would not be afforded an opportunity to attend a special formal gala event due to their life situations, such as being a victim of domestic violence just such an occasion. They continued that this was a faith based ministry that wanted the ladies to experience the true love of God.

Two of the women chosen from the Spanish Empowerment Group had these experiences to share: Aida Santos experienced tears of joy as she shared her experience at the Cinderella Gala and stated, “I felt like a princess. I have never worn a long formal dress and it was so nice to have a young teen walk us all individually from the entrance of the venue to our seats. I felt so special.” Martha Nunez, another of the participants stated, “I was so happy to be there and every one at the Cinderella Gala event treated us like we were very special. There was a sit-down dinner, music and it was highly spiritual and peaceful.” She also wanted to thank another VEG participant for providing transportation for Aida and her.

Congratulations to these participants! We look forward to being a part of this event next year. The Cinderella Ministry has already extended an invitation to participate.

DECEMBER TRAINING

The Bexar County
Family Justice Center
presents
Preparing a Supporting
Affidavit for an
Ex Parte Hearing

December 9TH, 2011
11:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

Presenter:

Richard Loza, Attorney,
Texas RioGrande Legal Aid

**This training is for
staff and partners
of the BCFJC only.**

**BCFJC BOARD ROOM
903 W. MARTIN
BUILDING C, 2ND FLOOR
UHS - ROBERT B.
GREEN CAMPUS**

DR. DEAN HAWLEY PRESENTS



Dr. Dean Hawley, M.D., a national expert on strangulation and domestic violence injuries presents to FJC Partners.

On November 2nd, 2011, Dr. Dean Hawley, Professor of Pathology at Indiana University School of Medicine, a national expert on strangulation and domestic violence injuries, presented to The Bexar County Family Justice Center Partners on, “Medical Evidence of the Primary Aggressor in Domestic Violence Assaults,” and “Medical Evidence of Strangulation Assault” during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Dr. Hawley discussed how to recognize injuries on an individual that links the cause of that injury to a domestic violence incident. He also covered blunt force injuries as well as venous obstruction in the neck, pinpoint hemorrhages (petechiae), conjunctiva of the eyes, deep internal organ injuries, curvilinear abrasions, substance abuse and depression. Prosecutors, law enforcement, counselors and advocates were in full attendance and enjoyed the very informative training that was open only to BCFJC partners.

BEXAR COUNTY FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**BEXAR COUNTY FAMILY
JUSTICE CENTER**

903 W. Martin, Second Floor
San Antonio, Texas 78207
(210) 208-6800

Christine Prescott
President

Honorable Susan D. Reed
President-Elect

Leanne Kelly
Treasurer

Dennis Martinez
Secretary

Brenda Allen
Member

Jane Bockus
Member

Debbie Gonzalez
Member

Barbara Knapik
Member

Cynthia Mitchell
Member

Charmaine Moorehead
Member

Norma Reyes
Member

Deborah L. Valdez
Executive Director

Debbie Ledoux
Advisory Member

Tanji Patton
Advisory Member

Sarah M. Buel
Advisory Member

Tracy Wolff
Advisory Member