

# Juvenile Law Section

STATE BAR OF TEXAS



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### OFFICERS & COUNCIL MEMBERS

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*Immediate Past Chair*

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Elizabeth Henneke,  
*Secretary*

Kaci Singer, *Meetings &  
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Jana Jones

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John Gauntt

Jenna Malsbary

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## Outgoing Chair's Message

2022 has been an incredible year for our Section and the youth, families, and communities we serve. This February, over 200 of us gathered in San Antonio for the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Robert O. Dawson Juvenile Law Conference at our first in-person event since the start of the pandemic. I want to thank all of the Council for their work to make it a success, especially our incoming Chair Cyndi Porter Gore for her leadership chairing the conference, and Kaci Singer, whose tireless work behind the scenes is essential for our conferences to happen and keeps all of us on the Council moving forward.

At this year's conference, our Section unanimously adopted its equity statement, reaffirming our Section's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and culminating months of work by the Council's Equity Committee.

During the last two years, we've seen both the potential and challenges of virtual court hearings for the youth we serve, their families, our communities, and the juvenile justice system as a whole. As we've worked through these challenges, I've continued to be impressed by the composition of our section, representing all parts of the juvenile justice system—probation officers, defense counsel, prosecutors, the judiciary, state agencies—and its collegiality in working together to find the best solutions for the youth and communities we serve.

As we enter a new Bar year, I look forward to seeing our Section, its members, and the Section's Chair and Council members continue their outstanding work.

-William "Bill" Cox, Immediate Past Chair



Visit us online at

[www.juvenilelaw.org](http://www.juvenilelaw.org)

Follow us on Twitter/Instagram: @TXJuvenileLaw

Facebook Group: Juvenile Law Section

Facebook Page: @juvenilelawsectionpage

## Congratulations and Thank You to Judge Lisa K. Jarrett, Recipient of the 2022 Robert O. Dawson Visionary Leadership Award

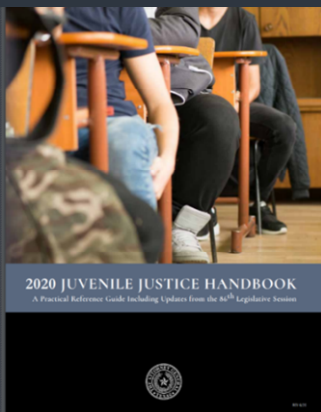


After a year of virtual meetings and conferences, it was great to welcome the juvenile law community for the 35th Annual Robert O. Dawson Juvenile Law Institute in San Antonio. This year we honored Judge Lisa K. Jarrett with the Robert Dawson Visionary Leadership Award.

Judge Jarrett is currently serving as the chair of the Texas Juvenile Justice Board, having been appointed to the Board in 2017. She has been the judge of 436<sup>th</sup> District Court since 2009, is board certified in juvenile law, and has served as both a prosecutor and defense attorney in adult and juvenile matters. In addition to her regular duties, Judge Jarrett has started a Family Enrichment Docket, focused on alternatives for juveniles with a history of family violence, and a Crossover Docket, which provides for juveniles who have both juvenile justice system and CPS involvement. She serves as Chair of the Bexar County Juvenile Board and is a frequent lecturer on juvenile law topics. She is a member of Friends of Communities in Schools, co-chair of the Community Justice Project, and a fellow of both the San Antonio Bar Foundation and the Texas Bar Foundation. The Juvenile Law Section thanks Judge Jarrett for her dedication and years of service to the juvenile justice system and the children it serves.

### Juvenile Law Resources

- [www.juvenilelaw.org](http://www.juvenilelaw.org)
- TJJD Legal Help Desk
  - Email: [legalhelp@tjjd.texas.gov](mailto:legalhelp@tjjd.texas.gov)
- 2020 Juvenile Justice Handbook  
<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/divisions/juvenile-justice/JuvenileJusticeHandbook.pdf>
- Texas Juvenile Law 9<sup>th</sup> Edition,  
<https://www2.tjjd.texas.gov/publications/legal/texas-juvenile-law-9.pdf>



### Juvenile Law Section Adopts Equity Statement at 2022 Annual Meeting

The Juvenile Law Section met on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, for its annual meeting and election of officers and Council members. At the meeting, the Section approved an equity statement that was drafted by a committee of Council members, including Terrance Windham, Maggie Ellis, Jenna Malsbary, and Elizabeth Henneke. After months of working together and with the State Bar, the Council proposed the following language, which was approved by the Section.

The State Bar of Texas Juvenile Law Section affirms that diversity, equity, and inclusion are core components of furthering our purpose and the objectives of the State Bar of Texas, which include assuring all persons equal access to justice, promoting diversity in the administration of justice and the practice of law, and enabling State Bar members to better serve their clients and the public. We hold that diversity embraces power and that equity and inclusion unleash it. We believe that combating systemic and implicit biases strengthens our section and our profession. The primary pillars of an equitable and inclusive environment are recognizing and respecting the diversity of persons, life experiences, beliefs, and viewpoints.

By recognizing the power of diversity, we create an environment that treats all individuals with dignity and respect and strengthens our profession. In furtherance of improving the quality of legal services to clients and the public, we are committed to fostering diversity and inclusion in our membership and to promoting equitable treatment within the vulnerable population we serve. This ultimately will build and maintain the public's trust in the legal profession and the judicial process as a whole.

Thank you to all of the Section members who provided input to create this powerful statement and to the practitioners who seek to put its words into action every day.

# Save the Date for the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Juvenile Law Conference in Horseshoe Bay

February 19-22, 2023

**\*As more information becomes available, it will be added to [www.juvenilelawconference.com](http://www.juvenilelawconference.com)\***



## **Texas Lawyers for Children Free 15-hour Trauma Training Program**

Texas Lawyers for Children (TLC) is excited to announce that their Legal Professional Trauma Training Program is now available for free online. You can access all 15 hours of the trauma training through the [Legal Professional Trauma Training Portal](#) or through the online center's home page, located at [www.TexasLawyersforChildren.org](http://www.TexasLawyersforChildren.org). The training is free for Texas judges and attorneys who handle child protection, juvenile justice, domestic violence and/or family law cases.

## Gault Center Selects Thomas as Regional Co-Director and Texas-based LSJA as South Central Host Site



Through a competitive application process, Nydia D. Thomas, Attorney and Director of Training for the Lone Star Justice Alliance (LSJA), was named Co-Director of The Gault Center (formerly the National Juvenile Defender Center) South-Central Region and will serve on its National Advisory Board. LSJA has also been named the host site for The Gault Center South Central Region which includes Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, and Missouri.

The Gault Center and its Regional Centers promote justice for all children by ensuring excellence in youth defense. Regional Centers coordinate activities in their states, including training for youth defenders and justice system stakeholders; local, state, and national policy advocacy; and outreach to strengthen, grow, and diversify the youth defense community.

Three LSJA attorneys, Elizabeth Henneke, Yulise Reaves Waters, and Nydia Thomas, are trained in the Gault Center's Youth Advocacy Defenders Program (formerly JTIP), a comprehensive trial advocacy training program for youth defense attorneys. Regional Centers pursue this work while promoting specialization in youth defense, applying adolescent development and racial justice frameworks, and emphasizing the expressed interests and rights of youth.

## Texas Juvenile Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Law Bench Book

In 2021, the [Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health](#) released the second edition of the [Texas Juvenile Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Law Bench Book](#), commonly known as the "Juvenile Bench Book." The Juvenile Bench Book follows the [Sequential Intercept Model](#) and identifies the points at which children and youth can be diverted from the juvenile justice system and into community-based services. In addition to the relevant juvenile mental health law, the bench book contains detailed sections on fitness to proceed and lack of responsibility, practice tips, and guidance on reducing disproportionality in the juvenile system. All print copies of the bench book have been distributed, but digital copies can be downloaded [here](#) or accessed for free on the LawBox app, available for Apple and Android devices.

## 5th Annual Judicial Summit on Mental Health

The Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health will host its [5th Annual Judicial Summit on Mental Health](#) on November 2-4, 2022, at Great Wolf Lodge in Grapevine, Texas. In-person capacity for the Summit is limited. Those who are unable to attend in person can register for the livestream option. The Summit will include opportunities to connect with colleagues, obtain new resources, and engage in learning sessions designed to be inspiring yet practical. Participants will receive tools to help navigate the complex mental health laws. Conference registration is free, although attendees are responsible for their own travel expenses.

This year's Summit features a focus on Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Programs, a Mental Health Court "Stump the Experts" Q&A session, and an entire day of programming dedicated to children's mental health topics. CLE, TCOLE, and CEU approval are pending. For more information or to register, click [here](#)!