



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 24, 2019

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Statewide Leadership Program Kicks off with 25 Young Lawyers

AUSTIN – On Monday, Future Indigent Defense Leaders (FIDL) announced its inaugural class of 25 mentors and 25 mentees. A joint venture of the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association (TCDLA), the Harris County Public Defender's Office (HPDO), and the Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC), FIDL is a first-of-its-kind statewide mentoring program focused on creating the next generation of public defense leaders and advocates.

Mentors and mentees underwent a rigorous application and interview process, beating out scores of other attorneys statewide. FIDL participation includes three years' training and mentoring through Gideon's Promise, an award-winning public defense leadership institute; TCDLA membership, training, and benefits; and local training and mentorship.

To see the full list of new lawyers and mentors, please view the attachment to this release. The FIDL class will head to their first Gideon's Promise training in Atlanta, Georgia, in August 2019.

About TCDLA

The purpose of TCDLA is to protect and ensure by rule of law those individual rights guaranteed by the Texas and Federal Constitutions in criminal cases; to resist the constant efforts which are now being made to curtail such rights; to encourage cooperation between lawyers engaged in the furtherance of such objectives through educational programs and other assistance; and through such cooperation, education and assistance to promote justice and the common good. For more information, visit www.tcdla.com.

About HPDO

The Harris County Public Defender's Office is a team of professionals who represent indigent persons in the misdemeanor, felony, juvenile and appellate courts of Harris County. Clients receive zealous representation from the combined experience of lawyers, investigators, social workers, and administrative staff. For more information, visit www.harriscountypublicdefender.org.

About TIDC

The Texas Indigent Defense Commission provides financial and technical support to counties to develop and maintain quality, cost-effective indigent defense systems that meet the needs of local communities and the requirements of the Constitution and state law. More information is available at www.tidc.texas.gov.



Mentor-Mentee Pairs

Mentors Mentees	
El Paso	
Chris Hernandez	William Ahee
Rio Grande Valley	
Abner Burnett	Jose Ozuna
Joseph Moreno	Tanairi Alcaraz
Rene Flores	Ashley Mariscal
Calixtro Villareal	Loura Proske
Michelle Ochoa	Jeremy Habash
Dallas-Fort Worth	
Shauna Stein	Kathleen Cameron
Patty Tress	A. Stillmon Baker
John H. Smith	Sam Bavafa
Don Hase	Teresa McGonagill
Houston	
Brandon Ball	Zakiya Carter
Victoria Erfesoglou	Mona Kermani
Damon Parrish II	Afshin Zand
Monique Sparks	Jasmine Bond
Dana Williams	Annie Marion
Danny Easterling	Matthew Hefti
Lubbock	
Chris Blevins	Rocky Ramirez
Rusty Gunter	Troy Nicholson
Donnie Yandell	Mitchell Williams
Phil Wischkaemper	Rachel Etheridge
Laurie Key	Sara Rice
Hill Country	
Clay Steadman	Ted Wenske
Jessica Canter	Amber Macias
Katy Dyer	Karly Jo Dixon
Chris Roberts	Tycha Kimbrough