



TO: Texas Judges Hearing Child Protective Services Cases

FROM: Hon. John Specia (ret.), Jurist in Residence, Office of Court Administration

DATE: February 2010

RE: Opportunities in 2010

Greetings fellow judges! For this installment of our Jurist in Residence letter series, I want to pass along information about several exciting opportunities brought to you and attorneys who appear before you by the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families (Children's Commission). This is my second communication, giving you current and compelling information you may find useful for hearing your CPS docket. If you have any questions or topics that you would like to see covered, please let me know at jurist@courts.state.tx.us.

Trial Skills Training for Attorneys – Do you have a promising litigator in your jurisdiction who can benefit from trial skills training? Stay tuned for information about scholarship opportunities to attend National Institute of Trial Advocacy (NITA) training. To recommend an attorney for this outstanding opportunity, please get in touch with Tiffany Roper at 512/463-3182 or tiffany.roper@courts.state.tx.us.

2010 National Child Welfare Law Conference in Austin – Over a hundred scholarships to cover registration fees will be awarded to qualifying Texas attorneys to attend the NACC's annual child welfare conference October 20-23, 2010 in Austin. We expect a huge Texas presence at this educational and informative conference. Go to www.naccchildlaw.org/?page=TexasScholarship for more information.

Scholarships for Advanced Family Law Child Abuse and Neglect Track – Texas attorneys now have the option to attend only the one-day child abuse and neglect track during the weeklong Advanced Family Law Conference. Scholarships are available to cover the registration fees of the one-day track, which will be held August 11, 2010 in San Antonio. Look for more information regarding the scholarships on the Commission website, <http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/children.asp>, in coming months.

Funding for Local Training -- Do you have training issues unique to your jurisdiction? Would you like to bring a nationally recognized speaker to your legal community? Funding may be available to cover some training-related expenses. Contact Tiffany Roper for more information.

Technology – The Task Force on Indigent Defense (TFID) released its annual Request for Applications for courts to use to improve indigent defense systems in criminal and juvenile cases. The Intent to Submit Application deadline is February 26, 2010. Although TFID funding is earmarked for criminal and juvenile cases, courts who hear criminal or juvenile *and* CPS cases may use TFID funds for technology, such as videoconferencing equipment or software for tracking cases, collaterally in child protection cases. To find out more information, please contact TFID at 800/499-0656.