



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF TRIAL LAWYERS SELECTS FORDHAM LAW SCHOOL'S FEERICK CENTER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE DILLEY PRO BONO PROJECT AS 2018 EMIL GUMPERT AWARD RECIPIENT
\$100,000 Grant to Assist with Providing Remote Access to Legal Services for Asylum-Seeking Women with Children in South Texas

NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA (May 7, 2018) - The American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL) has selected the Feerick Center for Social Justice at Fordham Law School as the 2018 Emil Gumpert Award recipient. The Feerick Center is being recognized for providing pro bono legal counsel to asylum-seeking women with children in Dilley, TX along with its partner, the Dilley Pro Bono Project (DPBP).

The Feerick Center will receive a \$100,000 grant and will be honored during a ceremony on May 9, 2018 at Fordham Law School's Lincoln Center campus.

Since 2012, more than 100,000 immigrant mothers and children have sought asylum along the southern U.S. border after fleeing violence in their home countries throughout Central America. In response to the growing need for legal aid and counsel, Fordham Law School's Feerick Center for Social Justice has proposed to collaborate with the Dilley Pro Bono Project, an initiative to enhance and expand access to legal services for asylum-seeking women and their children who are detained at the South Texas Family Residential Center (STFRC) in Dilley, TX.

STFRC is the nation's largest immigration detention facility with a capacity of 2,400 beds. It currently holds approximately 2,200 mothers and children. Since the private prison opened in December 2014, the Dilley Pro Bono Project estimates that approximately 30,000 asylum-seekers and their children have been detained there.

The College selected the Feerick Center to work in partnership with the Dilley Pro Bono Project to further their goal of improving the delivery of social justice. Together, they will develop a model of remote legal assistance that will enhance and expand their ability to meet the challenging legal services needs of the asylum-seeking women and their children at STFRC in Dilley, TX. This program will supplement the on-site efforts by volunteer attorneys and Dilley Pro Bono Project staff – particularly with the “credible fear interview” process, the initial screening in the asylum application process. The new model will:

- Utilize technology to enhance the training and resources available to pro bono attorneys to provide high-quality, remote, limited-scope assistance in the credible fear interview process and related advocacy efforts.
- Create best practices related to remote legal assistance by pro bono attorneys of Dilley Pro Bono Project clients undergoing the credible fear interview process, particularly in light of the increasing linguistic diversity of asylum-seekers detained in STFRC.

- Create best practices through remote legal assistance to better document and track asylum officer practices.

“Since 2012, the numbers of women with children seeking asylum along the southern U.S. border have increased exponentially, and these asylum seekers have a legitimate need for legal services,” said Dora Galactos, Adjunct Professor of Law and Executive Director of the Feerick Center for Social Justice. “On behalf of the Feerick Center and our partners at the Dilley Pro Bono Project, we are deeply grateful to the American College of Trial Lawyers for awarding us with the Emil Gumpert Award and Grant.”

“The work undertaken by the Dilley Pro Bono Project truly captures the spirit of the Emil Gumpert Award and advances the principal of maintaining and improving the administration of justice,” said Samuel H. Franklin, President of the American College of Trial Lawyers. “We are proud to support the tireless and inspiring group of lawyers, volunteers and staff who dedicate their efforts, expertise and compassion towards furthering access to justice.”

About the [Feerick Center for Social Justice](#)

Fordham Law School's Feerick Center for Social Justice works with students, alumni, lawyers, and community volunteers to connect those in need of legal services with the legal resources they cannot afford. The Center trains law students and others to engage in social change efforts. The Feerick Center for Social Justice promotes the rights and addresses the problems facing marginalized and low-income citizens through the creation of strategies to reform policies, educate, and provide assistance to right wrongs.

About the [Dilley Pro Bono Project](#)

The Dilley Pro Bono Project is a collaborative effort among the American Immigration Council (Council), the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC), and Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid Inc. (TRLA) to facilitate access to counsel for women and children detained in Dilley and to advocate for the end of the family detention and a fair process for women and children seeking protection in the United States. The Dilley Pro Bono Project was launched in response to Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) significant expansion of family detention at the South Texas Family Residential Center (STFRC), the largest immigration detention facility in the United States. The Dilley Pro Bono Project provides free legal services to asylum-seeking families who are detained in Dilley, Texas through a volunteer-based model.

About the [Emil Gumpert Award](#)

The Emil Gumpert Award is the highest honor conferred by the College on any organization and was established to recognize programs whose principal purpose is to maintain and improve the administration of justice. The programs considered may be associated with courts, law schools, bar associations or any other organization that provides such a program. This award is made in honor of the late Honorable Emil Gumpert, Chancellor-Founder of the American College of Trial Lawyers. Judge Gumpert, throughout his more than half-century professional career as an eminent trial

lawyer, State Bar president and trial judge, substantially and effectively devoted himself to the administration of justice and to the improvement of trial practice.

About the [American College of Trial Lawyers](#)

The American College of Trial Lawyers is composed of the best of the trial bar from the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico and is widely considered to be the premier professional trial organization in North America. Founded in 1950, the College is an invitation only fellowship. The College thoroughly investigates each nominee for admission and selects only those who have demonstrated the very highest standards of trial advocacy, ethical conduct, integrity, professionalism and collegiality. The College maintains and seeks to improve the standards of trial practice, professionalism, ethics, and the administration of justice through education and public statements on important legal issues relating to its mission. The College strongly supports the independence of the judiciary, trial by jury, respect for the rule of law, access to justice, and fair and just representation of all parties to legal proceedings.

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