Texas Appleseed’s mission is to promote social and economic justice for all Texans by leveraging the skills and resources of volunteer lawyers and other professionals to identify practical solutions to difficult, systemic problems.

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$720,000+
VALUE OF SERVICES DONATED

1,400+
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Texas Appleseed Board Member Allan Van Fleet (at left) testifies before the Houston City Council in December 2013 in support of the unified payday and auto title loan ordinance.
OUR PROJECTS FOR 2013

DISASTER RECOVERY & FAIR HOUSING • PAYDAY & AUTO TITLE LENDING REFORM
SCHOOL DISCIPLINE REFORM • CRIMINAL DISCOVERY REFORM
FOSTER CARE • DIVERSITY LEGAL SCHOLARS
MENTAL HEALTH CODE UPDATE

IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DISASTER RECOVERY & FAIR HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Texas Appleseed’s advocacy is helping low-income families displaced by natural disasters move into safer, healthier neighborhoods with better schools and more job opportunities. We helped the City of Houston develop an innovative plan to use disaster recovery money in three hurricane-damaged areas to create racially and economically integrated neighborhoods. We also worked with authorities in Southeast Texas to move low-income housing into environmentally safer and less racially and economically segregated neighborhoods. Attorneys and economic development practitioners around the country are now learning from our work in Texas through our contribution to the American Bar Association’s book Building Community Resilience Post-Disaster.

PAYDAY & AUTO TITLE LENDING REFORM

Our nonprofit worked closely with cities across the state, including Houston, El Paso and Denton to pass strong local ordinances aimed at ending the cycle of debt for payday and auto title borrowers. We helped lay the groundwork to create market alternatives to high-cost loans, including supporting a statewide initiative, the Community Loan Center — an employer-based affordable loan program offered through local nonprofits.
DISMANTLING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

We worked intensively with policymakers and stakeholders to pass legislation that will keep students out of the courts. One piece of legislation limits the ability of school police to issue tickets, and another eliminates fines and ticketing associated with disrupting class. We also filed a complaint against Bryan ISD with the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education after data and our research revealed racially discriminatory school discipline practices. Similar research revealed violations of students’ constitutional and civil rights in Dallas County’s specialized truancy courts, which led us to file a complaint against the county and four area school districts to the U.S. Department of Justice.

DISCOVERY IN CRIMINAL CASES IN TEXAS

Prior to 2014, prosecutors largely determined whether they wanted to share certain evidence, such as witness statements and police reports, with the defense. In many cases, the defense received incomplete information during the criminal discovery process, and this lack of information led to wrongful convictions. Working with Texas Defender Service, Texas Appleseed conducted extensive research on Texas’ discovery law, and published our findings in Improving Discovery in Criminal Cases in Texas: How Best Practices Contribute to Greater Justice. This report helped lay the foundation for passage of the Michael Morton Act, signed into law in May 2013, which requires prompt and broad disclosure of information held by the prosecution in all criminal cases.
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW
EXTRACTED FROM AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2013

REVENUE

- Contributions & Events: 2%
- Grants: 39%
- Other Income: 59%

TOTAL REVENUE
$1,275,579

EXPENDITURES

- School to Prison: 20%
- Housing/Disaster Recovery: 27%
- Foster Care: 14%
- Payday Lending: 9%
- Other Programs: 8%
- Management & Fundraising: 22%

TOTAL EXPENSES
$1,236,664
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