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FVAP rounds out 2015 with major wins



FVAP is celebrating a very successful 2015, including a year-end total of 9 new published cases and three new legal victories in December.

Our three successful cases in December addressed a wide range of problems facing domestic abuse survivors. In the first two cases (*McIntyre v. Minkey*, Dec. 15; and *Rodriguez v. Menjivar*, Dec. 16), we **secured our clients' rights to restraining orders to keep them safe**, overturning the trial court decisions that denied them protection, in part because the abuse they feared was not physical. *McIntyre v. Minkey* also held that a warning from a trial court judge is not a suitable substitute for a restraining order, and *Rodriguez v. Menjivar* held that denying a restraining order based on the length of time that has passed since abuse occurred is not, and has never been, acceptable. Thanks to **Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett; Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher**; and the **Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice** for co-counseling these cases.

The third case, *Noergaard v. Noergaard* (Dec. 16), was a contentious case involving international child abduction from Denmark and allegations of domestic violence. The case says that in instances involving international child abduction by one parent, if a child faces “grave risk” of harm if returned to the other parent in the home country, the trial court must consider evidence of abuse when making its decision. Also, if there is evidence that the status quo in the home country was abusive, speedy return to that country should not be the goal of California courts. FVAP filed a friend-of-the-court brief and presented oral argument, and we're thrilled with this result. Read an [in-depth article](#) about this case from Bloomberg BNA, which features extensive quotes from [FVAP Advisory Board member and Director of the Hague Domestic Violence Project Sudha Shetty](#). Thank you to **O'Melveny & Myers** for co-counseling this case.

In addition to these important legal victories, [FVAP's 2015 cases](#) will help thousands of domestic abuse survivors throughout California by setting important new legal precedent that prioritizes the safety of survivors and their children. We have already begun training members of the legal community on this new case law, including six California judges.

We are very optimistic about what 2016 will bring!

Leading the campaign for verbatim court records in CA



On Feb. 8, FVAP's Director of Programs Jennafer Dorfman Wagner testified before the **Commission on the Future of California's Court System** about the importance of keeping verbatim records of trial court proceedings, and about the serious due-process and access-to-justice problems that arise for CA domestic violence survivors because more than half of California's 58 counties do not provide trial court reporters.

Without court reporters, there is usually no record at all of court proceedings. Without a record, it is often impossible for low-income domestic violence survivors to appeal court decisions that leave them and their children in danger of abuse.

This issue is crucial not only to our clients, but also to FVAP's ability to continue building a body of case law that ensures California law puts the safety of abuse survivors and their children first.

In addition to testifying, FVAP submitted a letter to the Commission on behalf of 20 other local, state, and national legal aid and domestic violence organizations. To read the letter and learn more about this problem, [click here](#).

Court record issue heads to the CA Supreme Court

FVAP also played a role in the CA Supreme Court's decision to hear *Jameson v. Desta*, a case that demonstrates the need for verbatim court records for low-income people. We submitted a friend-of-the-court letter urging the Supreme Court to take this case and stressing its importance for domestic violence survivors and children throughout California. The CA Supreme Court receives thousands of requests for review every year and accepts fewer than 5% of them, so this is a significant victory.

Thanks to the many organizations who co-signed our letter to the Supreme Court, including domestic violence and legal aid organizations across California.



[Banding Together to End Domestic Violence: 4th annual battle of the bands to rock San Francisco, Los Angeles this summer](#)

For the fourth summer in a row, attorneys from California's top law firms and tech companies will band together with colleagues to strum and drum their way to rock-star victory at [FVAP's Battle of the Bands](#) events in San Francisco and Los Angeles. This year's events will take place on **June 15 at 1015 Folsom in San Francisco**, and **July 14 at El Rey Theater in Los Angeles**.

[Banding Together to End Domestic Violence](#) is FVAP's largest fundraiser every year, selling upwards of 1,000 tickets in each city and raising over \$150,000 for California domestic violence survivors.

Get involved: Sponsoring this event is a unique marketing opportunity — more than 30 law firms attend with their summer associates, as well as corporate representatives, law students, nonprofit and legal aid organizations, and passionate music fans. [Click here to download a Sponsorship Packet](#) with more information, and for a list of last year's list of sponsors, [visit the event website](#).

Are you and your colleagues rock stars in disguise? We are still accepting band applications. [Download the Band Application Packet](#) for more information.

Add this event to your firm's summer associate calendar! These events have been very popular with summer associate programs for the past three years. For more information, email jeagle@fvaplaw.org.

Come to the show to support FVAP! We can't wait to see you at the events of the summer. To volunteer at this event, email jeagle@fvaplaw.org



Save the date: Silicon Valley happy hour

Join FVAP on **March 31** for a happy hour at **Vaso Azzurro Ristorante in Mountain View**. We invite all of our supporters to attend for an update on our work, and to meet other FVAP supporters, staff, and Board members. We also invite you to bring a friend or colleague who would be interested in learning about FVAP. Wine, cocktails, and Northern Italian cuisine will be available for purchase. Thank you to Vaso Azzurro for generously sponsoring this event!

News from our Board of Directors

We are proud to announce the election of the new President and Chair of our [Board of Directors](#), [Drew Davis](#). Drew is a Partner at Folger Levin LLP in San Francisco. His election follows the completion of a very successful term for FVAP's first Board President and Chair, [Caroline Mitchell](#). Everyone at FVAP is extremely grateful to Caroline for her dedicated, passionate service to FVAP's mission. Also elected as Vice President was Board member [Stacey Wexler](#), Legal Director at Google, Inc. Congratulations, Drew and Stacey!

The Board of Directors also proudly welcomed its newest member in January, [Allan Marks](#), Partner at Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP in Los Angeles. Allan is consistently ranked as one of the world's leading project finance lawyers by *Chambers Global*, *IFLR* and *Legal500*, and he looks forward to advancing FVAP's mission and continuing to expand our Southern California services and outreach.

We would also like to thank Pamela Ostroff for serving on our Board of Directors for the past 3 years. Pamela, Senior Corporate Counsel of Pandora Media, Inc., completed her Board term in January.

FVAP in the community



February has been an eventful month for us!

(Clockwise from the top left) Volunteers and attendees give a thumbs-up for FVAP at our Feb. 20 documentary screening of "No Way Out But One" at Oakland City Church;

FVAP staff with Oakland Raiders' running back Taiwan Jones at the NFL's Unsung Heroes luncheon celebrating domestic violence organizations at Super Bowl City on Feb. 4;

FVAP [Advisory Board](#) member Ann Fallon and Board member [Brittany Tyler](#) with [New Leadership Council](#) Chair Maria Garrett (center), who co-paneled a discussion after our Feb. 20 documentary screening;

The cast of the Vagina Monologues production by the Women of Color Collective at U.C. Berkeley School of Law on Feb. 19, the proceeds of which were generously donated to FVAP. We can't thank the WOCC enough for its continuing support of FVAP and CA domestic violence survivors.

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