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State Bar Uses FVAP Report to Train Family Law Attorneys Statewide

The **State Bar of California** has included FVAP's groundbreaking [report](#) on the top challenges domestic violence survivors face in California civil courts in its **official 2017 "Family Law Essentials" training materials**, which is being used to train attorneys throughout the state.

[FVAP's report](#) summarizes our innovative 2016 survey, which was the **first of its kind to poll domestic violence service providers statewide about the top legal challenges faced by survivors in civil courts** in each region of California.

We are grateful that family law attorneys throughout the state will be trained on these important issues and alerted to the common challenges survivors face in courts. FVAP is honored that our report is being used in this far-reaching training program.

To learn more about the issues revealed by FVAP's survey, check out the latest issue of the State Bar's [Family Law News magazine](#), which prominently features an [article](#) by FVAP

**THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA
THE FAMILY LAW SECTION**

FAMILY LAW ESSENTIALS 2017
Bridging the Well:
Ethics and Practice in Family Law Today

Costa Mesa
Monday, March 27, 2017
Whittier School of Law

Oakland
Monday, April 3, 2017
State Building

San Diego
Monday, April 10, 2017
University of
San Diego

Sacramento
Monday, April 17, 2017
Lincoln School
of Law

Santa Barbara
Monday, June 26, 2017
Santa Barbara
School of Law

Legal Director Nancy K.D. Lemon and Director of Programs Jennafer Dorfman Wagner, entitled “**Family Violence Appellate Project Finds Many Family Law Judicial Officers Fail to Respond Appropriately in Domestic Violence Cases.**” [Click here](#) to read the article.



All Donations Doubled for Child Abuse Prevention Month

FVAP's Board of Directors will [match all donations](#) now through May 16 for Child Abuse Prevention Month, and in honor of **FVAP's 5-year anniversary**.

Donate today, and your gift will have double the impact.

DOUBLE MY DONATION

Over the past 5 years, FVAP's work has resulted in **24 new published domestic violence cases** in California. The results have been significant, helping thousands of abuse survivors and children throughout the state.

By appealing and publishing cases that prioritize the safety and well-being of California kids and survivors, FVAP is setting new statewide legal precedent with a larger goal in mind: **ending the inter-generational cycle of abuse and trauma** by keeping kids out of abusive homes. Children are far less likely to grow up to become abusers themselves if they live in safe and healthy environments, free from abuse.

In this way, FVAP aims to **build a better California for the next generation**, one case at a time.

Support our groundbreaking work today, and [your gift will go twice as far](#). Thanks to our Board members for sponsoring this generous matching donation.

FVAP Urges CA Supreme Court to Protect Immigrant Children

Case exposes problems with Juvenile Immigration Status requirements for DV survivors

FVAP led a coalition, along with **U.C. Irvine School of Law Domestic Violence Clinic**, to file an amicus (friend-of-the-court) brief last week in an important California Supreme Court case involving domestic violence, juvenile immigration status, and child custody. (*In re Bianka M.*)

This case involves **a minor who is seeking Special Immigration Juvenile (SIJ) Status**, a federal immigration status created by Congress to provide protection to **undocumented, unaccompanied children who enter the United States after experiencing parental abuse, neglect, or abandonment.**

Bianka, the unaccompanied minor in this case, came from Honduras to the United States at age 13. Bianka alleged that her purported father abandoned her before she was born and physically abused her mother while she was pregnant with Bianka, including beating her with a machete.

Bianka requested that her mother be granted sole custody of her in California. The lower courts denied her requests, finding that because Bianka's purported father was in Honduras, Bianka or her mother would have to solicit cooperation from him so that the California court could exercise jurisdiction over him.

In our amicus brief to the CA Supreme Court, which we co-counseled with **Mayer Brown, LLP**, we discuss how this decision, if allowed to stand, would broadly impact the **ability of abused, neglected, and abandoned children to obtain SIJ Status findings necessary for them to escape abuse.** The lower court's ruling places children of abused parents and survivors of abuse in the **dangerous position of having to bargain with the abusive parent** to cooperate in order to be protected against being released back into the abusive parent's care. **This contradicts fundamental principles of California's family and domestic violence laws**, which make the child's interests paramount and require courts to mitigate (rather than enhance) the abuser's power over a survivor of domestic violence, whether it is the parent or child.

A decision in the case is expected later this year – stay tuned.



Banding Together to End Domestic Violence

Tickets & sponsorship now available for FVAP's 5th annual battle-of-the-bands fundraiser

FVAP's annual attorney [battle-of-the-bands](#) fundraiser will return this summer to rock Los Angeles and San Francisco for the 5th time.

Save the dates: **June 14** in San Francisco, and **July 13** in Los Angeles.

Come. Sponsor. Play.

3 ways you can Band Together with FVAP to help end domestic violence in California

Come. Get your tickets now to receive an **early-bird discount**. [Click here](#) for San Francisco tickets, or [here](#) for Los Angeles tickets.

Sponsor. Event sponsors reach a highly desirable demographic of attorneys and decision-makers from California's biggest law firms while having a memorable, fun night out with co-workers. [Sponsoring this event](#) tells the world that your company/firm **cares about issues affecting your community**, and wants to give back. Event sponsorship is very affordable compared to most fundraisers, and all proceeds directly support FVAP's life-saving work.

Many thanks to our Hall of Fame event sponsors, **Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein** and **Mayer Brown LLP**.

Play. There is one spot left for a band in our lineup for [San Francisco](#), and one spot left in [Los Angeles](#). If the attorneys in your office are rock stars in disguise, [apply today!](#) Or contact jeagle@fvaplaw.org for more information.

For more event information, visit fvapbotb.com.

New DV Appellate Project in Indiana

A new domestic violence appellate project is in the process of launching in the state of Indiana, called [Appellate Justice Project for Domestic Violence Survivors](#).

FVAP helped to incubate and mentor the founders of this new nonprofit over the past few months. Like FVAP, AJPDVS was founded by law students who were shocked by the egregious number of Indiana custody cases that ended with an abusive parent getting partial or full child custody.

Please join us in supporting the **Appellate Justice Project for Domestic Violence Survivors** and encouraging their important, life saving work!



FVAP Staff Attorney Cathy Ongiri met with an aide from Senator Dianne Feinstein's office last month to discuss the needs of Bay Area domestic violence survivors. Thanks to Sen. Feinstein for hearing our concerns, and to our ally organizations in attendance: Family Violence Law Center, the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence, Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse, Asian Women's Shelter, YWCA Silicon Valley, Ruby's Place, and Monarch Services.

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