

ANNOUNCEMENT

Napoleon Beazley Defender Award

The Southwest Juvenile Defender Center (SWJDC), a program of the Center for Children, Law & Policy at the University of Houston Law Center, is accepting applications for the seventh annual Napoleon Beazley Defender Award. The award recognizes the efforts of a graduating law student who is committed to working on behalf of the defense of children in our region: Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah. The award will be presented at our annual Zealous Advocacy Conference on May 16, 2014.

SWJDC works to bring together juvenile defenders, mental health professionals, educators, legislators and other juvenile justice professionals in Texas, Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah. We view the representation of children as a holistic paradigm and encourage the zealous advocacy of children whether in schools, delinquency centers, dependency situations or as unaccompanied minors in the immigration system. To meet this goal SWJDC provides training to individuals working on behalf of children, the services of a social worker to help attorneys representing children, technical assistance to defenders across the region, publications, community outreach, and other resources for children and families.

Napoleon Beazley was executed in Texas for a crime he committed when he was seventeen. He believed that the death penalty was morally wrong and that children deserved second chances. When asked about his upcoming execution, Napoleon responded by saying "I want something positive to come out of this no matter what happens to me. To me that is important, and that is what I'm focused on." The United States Supreme Court concluded in *Roper v. Simmons* that the death penalty for juveniles was unconstitutional, but it was too late for Napoleon. This award honors his memory and the work he believed needed to be done.

Applicants must be law students who graduated during the 2013-14 academic year, registered to take the bar in one of the states mentioned above, and planning to practice in some area of children and the law. Applications must include a resume, two letters of recommendation, and an essay of no more than 500 words that states why the applicant should receive the award. All applications will be reviewed by the Napoleon Beazley Defender Award Committee and must be received by April 18, 2014 by 5:00 PM. No late or incomplete applications will be considered. Applications may be sent by mail or e-mail to:

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