

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE *of* LAW

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**FLORIDA BAR FOUNDATION AWARDS CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER
TWO GRANTS TO PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICES TO POOR CHILDREN**

TALLAHASSEE—The Florida Bar Foundation has awarded the Children's Advocacy Center at the Florida State University College of Law two grants totaling \$145,000 to carry on work on behalf of children in the areas of special education and health care and domestic violence and family law.

The Florida Bar Foundation's gift includes a \$120,000 Children's Legal Services Grant and a \$25,000 Law School Civil Clinic Grant. The Foundation is the leading organization funding legal assistance for poor children in Florida.

"The Children's Advocacy Center is honored to be awarded this recent grant from the Florida Bar Foundation," said Paolo Annino, co-director of the CAC with Professor Ruth Stone. "It is through the vision and leadership of The Florida Bar Foundation that foster children have a bed to sleep in tonight, that severely disabled children are receiving necessary medical services and that special education students are obtaining the educational services they need to do well in school."

The center, which is divided into the Children's Section and the Domestic Violence/Family Law Advocacy Section, is home to one of the nation's leading legal

internship programs. Its mission is to instill in law students a sense of professional responsibility toward poor children and to create a pool of future lawyers trained and motivated to do pro bono work for children. In 2005, the Clinical Legal Education Association presented the center with its Excellence in Public Interest Award.

Students are certified by the Florida Supreme Court to practice law as interns and, under the supervision of a clinical professor, are responsible for all facets of cases to which they are assigned. Their clients are referred by the Refuge House, the Tallahassee Bar Association Legal Aid Office and Legal Services of North Florida. Among their clients are children with disabilities, children involved in custody disputes and in foster care, and those who have been denied proper medical care.

“The students at the Children’s Advocacy Center are committed to the ideals of the Foundation in not only providing children legal protection but in providing an opportunity for children to flourish,” Annino said. “This grant reflects the long hours and creative work of the dedicated second and third Law students at the Children’s Advocacy Center who are committed to helping poor children in our community.”

Said Dean Don Weidner: “In times that are very lean for law school clinics, Florida State’s Children’s Advocacy Center would not be attracting significant resources from a discerning source such as The Florida Bar Foundation unless they were doing a really great job.”

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