



JOB POSTING: Staff Attorney, Harlingen, Texas Office

Title: Staff Attorney, Harlingen, Texas Office
Supervised by: Harlingen, Texas Supervising Attorney
Status: Salary, Exempt
Updated: October 2014

The Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights invites applications for the position of Harlingen Texas Staff Attorney to be based in Harlingen/Brownsville, Texas. The Young Center is dedicated to promoting the best interests—safety and well-being—of unaccompanied and separated immigrant children in the United States. The immediate focus of the Young Center's work is to serve as Child Advocate (guardian *ad litem* in immigration proceedings) for unaccompanied and separated children pursuant to the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) and the 2013 Violence Against Women Act. The Young Center is at the forefront of best interests advocacy for unaccompanied immigrant children and is the only organization in the country overseeing the work of independent Child Advocates for children in immigration detention pursuant to the TVPRA.

The Staff Attorney position is a unique opportunity for an attorney to engage in written and oral advocacy on behalf of children in removal proceedings. The Staff Attorney will draft and submit best interests recommendations in immigration court, before asylum offices, to public interest attorneys, to the *pro bono* bar, and to the three federal agencies (DHS, HHS and DOJ) with responsibility for unaccompanied children in the United States. In Texas, the Staff Attorney will work directly with detained children (as young as a few months and up to 18 years old) to advocate for their best interests with respect to their custody, conditions of release, and their immigration proceedings. The Staff Attorney will recruit, train and supervise bilingual and bicultural volunteer Child Advocates—teachers, law students, social workers, community members—who will work one-on-one with children. The Young Center team is a passionate and collegial group of professionals—attorneys, social workers and administrative staff—committed to ensuring that children receive the full protection of federal immigration law, domestic child welfare law and international human rights law.

Duties and Responsibilities: The Staff Attorney's primary responsibilities will be to:

1. Supervise volunteer Child Advocates for the Young Center Child Advocate program serving children in federal custody in Harlingen, Brownsville, Weslaco and Los Fresnos, Texas.
2. Serve as Child Advocate for unaccompanied children Recruit, train and supervise bilingual volunteers serving as Child Advocates.
3. Draft and submit best interests briefs to immigration judges, asylum officers, attorneys, and federal agencies, applying federal, state and international law.
4. Accompany children and their Child Advocates to Immigration Court, as well as state juvenile and family court.
5. Coordinate with stakeholders serving children in Harlingen, Brownsville, Weslaco and Los Fresnos, Texas.



Minimum Requirements:

1. J.D. and appropriate authorization to practice law.
2. At least one year of experience practicing law.
3. Excellent written and oral advocacy skills.
4. A commitment to public interest work.
5. Proficiency in Spanish, including the ability to speak with children in Spanish and to communicate over the telephone in Spanish with children, family members, and others.
6. Ability to take initiative, to work collaboratively, and an enthusiasm for working with volunteers.
7. Passion, tenacity and optimism for the issues affecting immigrant children and their families.
8. A driver's license and car are necessary for traveling to shelter facilities in and around Harlingen, Brownsville, Weslaco and Los Fresnos, Texas.

The Young Center, a project of Tides Center, is an "at-will" and equal opportunity employer. Applicants and employees shall not be discriminated against because of race, religion, sex, national origin, ethnicity, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender (including pregnancy and gender expression) identity, color, marital status, veteran status, medical condition, or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law or ordinance. Reasonable accommodation will be made so that qualified disabled applicants may participate in the application process. Please advise Tides in writing of special needs at the time of application.

Job offer is conditioned on clearance of fingerprint criminal background check, child abuse and neglect check (CANTS) and tuberculosis test.

Salary is commensurate with experience. The Young Center is a project of the Tides Center, a non-profit organization. The Young Center/Tides Center provides excellent benefits including health/dental/vision insurance, a flexible spending account for medical and dependent care, vacation, and sick leave.

Review of candidates will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Please email a cover letter, resume, three references and a writing sample to jobs@TheYoungCenter.org **and include the title "Harlingen Staff Attorney" in the subject line.** To learn more about the Young Center's work, please visit www.TheYoungCenter.org.