

## Legal Hospice of Texas Receives Special Grant for Labor/Employment Cases

On September 9, 2009, Legal Hospice of Texas was notified that it was awarded a special grant of \$15,500 in cy pres funds administered by the Texas Access to Justice Foundation. The funds are for services to be provided between September 1, 2009 and August 31, 2010. The award is to supplement the agency's work of representing low-income workers diagnosed with a terminal illness or HIV disease.

Three Texas attorneys, Jeff Rasansky of Dallas, Michael C. Smith of Marshall, and Jeremi K. Young of Amarillo, were responsible for seeing that the cy pres funds were awarded to TAJF to help bolster legal aid in Texas. Cy pres awards are residual funds from a class action or other proceeding that cannot be distributed to class members or the intended beneficiaries for a variety of reasons. Throughout the country, cy pres awards (ranging from thousands to millions of dollars) have been utilized to fund vital civil legal services. Other cy pres funds have been used to support a major initiative aimed at increasing legal resources available online at [www.TexasLawHelp.org](http://www.TexasLawHelp.org). TAJF partnered with the Travis County Law Library to develop legal information and self-help forms related to issues facing low-income Texas, as we as implement a broad-based public education campaign statewide.

Attorneys who are involved in a class action case and are unable to distribute all the funds are encouraged to consider the Texas Access to Justice Foundation as a cy pres recipient. When a cy pres award is channeled to the Foundation, the funds are used in a manner consistent with the intent of the award, such as that being used to fund labor and employment related cases at Legal Hospice of Texas

### Update on Services Provided

In the first nine months of this award cycle, Legal Hospice of Texas has assisted with 29 employment cases supported by this grant. We opened 21 new employment cases and closed 29 cases. The clients represented were residents of Dallas, Tarrant, Denton, and Collin counties. The casework included representation to successfully appeal the denial of unemployment benefits (2 cases), representation of clients claiming workplace discrimination based on the disabilities (2 cases), advocacy to obtain needed workplace accommodations (11 cases), and advice & counsel regarding workplace disability issues (14 cases).