

CORI A. HASH NAMED OUTSTANDING YOUNG LAWYER BY THE FAYETTE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

The good news is that something great can and does come out of Texas! The 2007 Fayette County Bar Association Outstanding Young Lawyer is reason for all of us to celebrate.

She is a 2004 graduate of the University of Texas Law School and is admitted to practice in Texas and Kentucky. She received a B.A. from the University of Texas in 1998 in Plan II Honors and Latin American Studies and is fluent in Spanish. Between undergraduate school and law school she spent nine months with the U. S. Peace Corps with service in Zimbabwe. During law school she did public service work with Texas Rural Legal Aid, Women Empowered Against Violence, Inc. in Washington, DC, and the Political Asylum Project in Austin, TX.

She arrived in Lexington, KY, in September 2004 as an Equal Justice Works Fellow to continue her public interest legal work through the Office of Kentucky Legal Services Programs, Inc. and Maxwell Street Legal Clinic. In August 2006, when the Fellowship ended, she remained to continue this work in Central Kentucky.

To describe what she has accomplished in 2 years and 7 months is a challenge. She has had a significant positive impact on central Kentucky, on the immigrant and refugee community, and on the practice of immigration law. She has built working relationships with a myriad of existing agencies, participated in civic organizations, conducted numerous trainings for other attorneys, volunteers and the general public, and created and implemented a host of advocacy efforts.

She has provided significant direct legal services to low income clients. During her tenure as the only full-time employee at Maxwell Street, the Legal Clinic has served approximately 1100 clients with more than 1600 legal matters. In addition to the many cases of family-based immigration and refugee adjustment of status, that she handles personally, she has taken responsibility for significant areas of practice never offered at the Clinic before her arrival. Three brief examples: an asylum case for a young man from Haiti, who had been tortured in the prisons of his home country; recovery of \$90,000 in unpaid wages for a group of Hispanic males who had worked for six months without pay on a Woodford County horse farm; and a U visa (for victims of crime) for a young man from Mexico, who had been the victim of a brutal sexual assault in this country.

As soon as she arrived in Lexington, she began to make contact with and **build working relationships with other agencies** serving her clients, including the Cardinal Valley Center (CVC), the four Legal Aid agencies in Kentucky, the Kentucky Labor Cabinet, the Kentucky and the Lexington-Fayette County Human Rights Commissions, the Legal Clinic at the University of Kentucky College of Law, the US CIS and US ICE

offices in Louisville, Kentucky Refugee Ministries, Southern Migrant Legal Services, Kentucky Domestic Violence Association, Bluegrass Rape Crisis Center, Blue Grass Fair Housing Council, Access to Justice Foundation, Children's Law Center, and the Catholic Conference of Kentucky. **She has clearly demonstrated the value of networking and collaboration to ensure that her clients are best served.**

She has worked generously as an effective trainer and presenter on issues involving Immigration Law. She has assisted with classes at UK Law School and Sullivan University, and made presentations to the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Council, the Kentucky Department of Public Advocacy, the Migrant Network Coalition's Being-Up-To-Date series, the Hispanic/Latino Police Academy in Richmond, at a statewide conference on Title VI compliance, the YMCA's Men's Club, Bluegrass Technical College's College Experience Camp, the Migrant Head Start program, the Tennessee/Kentucky Latino Health Conference, Lexington CEO Roundtable, Cardinal Valley Neighborhood Association, a Fayette County Bar Association CLE, and the KDVA's Certification Training for shelter program staff.

For these two and a half years she has been an outstanding advocate for immigrant and refugee rights. Through her teaching and training she provides factual, enlightening and inspiring advocacy. Additionally, she has written articles for the Lexington Herald-Leader and LaVoz on immigration issues; testified before Kentucky legislative committees on immigration-related proposed legislation; helped organize and implement numerous community-wide events focusing on immigration issues; and provided written analyses of proposed federal and state legislation affecting immigrants. She has been active in and has served on the Boards of the Migrant Network Coalition and the Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. She helped plan and organize the first-ever Immigrants & Refugees' Rights Advocacy Day in Frankfort on February 21, 2007, and was a key member of a team that secured passage this year of a Kentucky anti-human trafficking statute. On April 18 (two weeks ago), she was in Washington, DC, working on behalf of comprehensive immigration reform at the federal level. She was a key organizer of and participant in Solidarity Sunday, two days ago here in Lexington, for refugees and immigrants. And day after tomorrow she will play a major role in an educational event for immigrants.

This young woman has the energy of a four-year-old, the creativity of an artist, the tenacity of a Rottweiler, a deep core of compassion for humanity and an abiding commitment to justice – a wonderful combination in a young lawyer! I am so pleased to present to you the 2007 Fayette County Bar Association Outstanding Young Lawyer, Cori Hash.