



A Farewell, and Heartfelt Thank You



Dr. Nancy Feyl Chavkin

As we begin the 24th year of the Title IV-E grant this fall, it is a good time to reflect on the history of Title IV-E at Texas State University and acknowledge contributions to the program. As you may know, Dr. Nancy Feyl Chavkin retired in August 2017, after over 30 years of service with Texas State. As a co-founder of the Title IV-E program and Director of the program for the last 23 years, Dr. Chavkin has been an integral and indispensable part of the Title IV-E program at Texas State University.

Dr. Chavkin and Dr. Karen Brown started the Title IV-E program at Texas State University in 1995, and Dr. Chavkin has served as the program Director since that time. In addition to being a tremendous leader and a staunch advocate for children and families and the Title IV-E program, Dr. Chavkin served as the Director of the

Center for Applied Interdisciplinary Research and is the author of several books and over a hundred publications related to children and families, program evaluation, community partnerships, and child welfare. At one time, she served as the Director of the Richter Research Institute in the School of Social Work, and she has received numerous awards for Excellence in Scholarship, Teaching, and Research, including the Presidential Award for Excellence. Dr. Chavkin is a Regents' Professor, a Minnie Stevens Piper Professor, and has been named a University Distinguished Professor. During her time at Texas State University, she has mentored countless faculty members, staff, and students, and has served as a leader and mentor in the Title IV-E community at large.

Dr. Chavkin, we want to send you a heartfelt THANK YOU for your tireless work on the Title IV-E

project and your relentless commitment to children and families. Much of the success of this program is directly related to your hard work and dedication. Your work on behalf of children and families and the child welfare workforce is greatly appreciated. You will be missed!



Martha Wildberger, LCSW
Title IV-E Grant Director

Rhonda Smith, LMSW-IPR
Title IV-E Grant Specialist

Michele Bauman
Title IV-E Grant Coordinator



Michele Bauman, Rhonda Smith, and Martha Wildberger

*"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."
- Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Celebrating 25 Years of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

The Dave Thomas Foundation established a vision in 1992 to ensure every child has a permanent and loving family. Their belief that family is the birthright of every child and that every child is adoptable continues to live on through their commitments. The Foundation has had several accomplishments over the past 25 years. They have:

- Co-founded National Adoption Day
- Continued and expanded their Adoption-Friendly Workplace campaign which encourages adoption benefits in the workplace
- Launched aggressive messages through social and traditional media to dispel myths and misperceptions while advancing success stories.



One of their largest accomplishments is starting up Wendy's Wonderful Kids program in 2004 which provides grants to adoption agencies to hire specially-trained adoption recruiters. These professionals focus on finding permanent families that will provide a loving home for those youth that are at-risk for aging-out of foster care. To this day, they support over 270 recruiters and more than 7,000 children that have been adopted or

are in the process of being adopted. However, their work is far from being done. This past January, they set out a mission to expand their Wendy's Wonderful Kids program to every state and find loving and permanent homes for 60,000 children over the next 12 years. They do not want to see the overwhelming rate of youth who leave the foster system without a family that they deserve.

The foundation provides support and resources for many things adoption-related. Please visit their website at <https://davethomasfoundation.org> to access these resources and/or give your own support.



A Time to Celebrate!

Texas State has a long history of partnerships with DFPS in the San Antonio and Austin areas, but we were only fairly recently able to forge a partnership with CPS in Regions 1,2, and 9 with our online MSW program. **Antonia (Toni) Rayos** was the very first CPS employee from this area of the state to start the program in August 2014, and **Gabriela Zapata** started the program in January 2016 as an Advanced Standing student. Toni and Gabriela are both graduating from the program in December, and we couldn't be more proud. Here's what Toni and Gabriela had to say:



Toni Rayos

Toni: "I have been employed with the Department for eight and half years. I have held a position within the Kinship Unit for the past four years. Initially, I debated the idea of go-

ing back to school, but when the agency sent out the email about the Title IV-E program, I knew this was an opportunity I could not pass up. During the course of the program there were several times I wanted to quit, as balancing out a personal life, a work life and a student life was challenging. I'm happy that I had the support to encourage me to keep pushing through. Texas State University is a wonderful school. My professors and classmates were sympathetic, understanding, and supportive. I am honored that I will be receiving my master's degree from Texas State University. I'm proud to have completed this program and I would recommend and encourage other Child Protective Workers to pursue this wonderful opportunity."

Gabriela: "I am an Adoption worker in Region 9/10. I have been with the agency for a little over 3.5 years. When I began working for the agency I looked into the

Title IV-E program and felt that it was some-

thing that was calling my name. The MSW program was completely online so it was very convenient with my work schedule. The MSW courses were manageable and informative. When I began my internship I found it a little difficult to balance work life and home life with the additional hours needed, but felt very supported at work as well as at home. I will add that in the middle of obtaining my MSW I sold my house, bought a new one, got married, and had a baby. After I had my son, I thought about pausing my education, but I took the leap and continued on and I am so glad that I did. I truly feel like more people should take advantage of the opportunity to earn a Master's degree that is paid for through the Title IV-E program."



Gabriela Zapata



Title IV-E staff currently work out of the Swinney House on the Texas State University-San Marcos campus.

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Congrats & Welcome

Rebecca Salinas started her field placement at CPS

in San Antonio in August 2017, and will graduate with her MSW this December. Congratulations, Rebecca!

In August 2017, we welcomed four CPS employees to the stipend program: **Jerome Ramirez** and **Briana Dugas** from Region 8 (San Antonio area), and **Bonnie Rushing** and **Beatriz Salazar** from Region 7 (Austin area). These employees are participating in the part-time

online MSW program while continuing in their full-time positions at CPS.

We are also excited to welcome three new BSW stipend recipients to the program, who are all scheduled to start their final field placements at CPS in January 2018: **Anh Nguyen** and **Alayna Mackey** (Austin area), and **Cassandra Apolinar** (San Antonio area). Welcome to the Title IV-E program!



Upcoming Trainings

Title IV-E Ethics Training for CPS Staff:

Austin - 14000 Summit Drive, Suite 100, Austin, Texas 78728

Thursday, 2/15/18
9:00 a.m.- 12:15 p.m.

San Antonio—3635 SE Military Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78223

Tuesday, 1/23/18
1:30 p.m.—4:45 p.m.
OR
Wednesday, 1/24/18
9:00 a.m.- 12:15 p.m.

Temple - 4501 South General Bruce Drive, Temple, Texas 76502

Wednesday, 2/14/18
9:00 a.m.- 12:15 p.m.

The Impact of Loss and Separation for CPS Staff and Foster/Adoptive Parents:

Saturday, February 10, 2018

Morning session (9:00 a.m.- 12:15 p.m.) OR Afternoon session (1:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.)
San Antonio DFPS office (3635 SE Military Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78223)

To register for the workshops or if you have questions, send an email to: Trainings4E@txstate.edu. Attendees earn 3.0 CEUs for each training.

What's happening?

We would love to know what our Title IV-E Alumni are up to! If you have exciting career news to share, please send it to mw38@txstate.edu and it may be included in an upcoming news-letter.

