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Subject: little update (okay, bragging) from Travis County

Pam and Charlie,

I wanted to tell you about the new projects in the Travis County Law Library.

1. We've arranged with the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) to provide free mediation services for family law self-represented litigants. (We hand the patron a voucher. The patron arranges the appointment through the mediation coordinator.) If an agreement is reached, the patron can then get the help of a library reference attorney and go to uncontested docket. If an agreement is not reached, there is still no costs to the patron and hopefully they will get some benefit from the mediation.

We've also moved a mediation coordinator (who works for the DRC) into a library office. He will schedule the mediations in our conference room, and as the program grows, into other empty conference rooms in the courthouse complex. The DRC estimates that \$10,000 is saved every time a civil case is mediated instead of going to trial.

This was approved by commissioners court on August 15. We've already started with the vouchers. The library's mediation office opens September 11 (the start of Settlement Week).

2. We moved our forms and reference attorneys to a smallish room in the courthouse and renamed it a "Self-Help Center."
3. We hired a temp reference attorney who speaks Spanish. He meets with Spanish-speaking patrons one day a week.
4. Starting today, we have a Legal Aid attorney officing in the Self-Help Center. She works in the mornings and can only help patrons who meet Legal Aid's income requirements. If I can find some non-restrictive funds, she will be able to give all patrons 15 minutes of legal advice.

Congratulations, both of you, on your grants.

Take care.

-Lisa