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Tennessee Justice Center Launches Raising the Bar Campaign

Nashville, TN – The Tennessee Justice Center (TJC) has launched its Raising the Bar campaign, a fundraising effort that connects the Nashville-based legal services organization with law firms throughout the state. Raising the Bar is a pledge program that encourages firms to lend their support through 3-year donation commitments.

TJC has already raised over \$67,000 dollars through this campaign. Founding firms include: Bass, Berry & Sims; Bradley Arant Boult Cummings (BABC); Waller; Bone McAllester Norton; Burr & Forman; Harwell, Howard, Hyne, Gabbert & Manner (H3GM); Sherrard & Roe; and Stites & Harbison.

The Raising the Bar campaign was given initial support from the American Bar Association's Section of Litigation. In April 2012, TJC received the ABA Section of Litigation's Justice Assistance Fund grant, which is an award designed to promote partnerships between the private bar and public interest law firms. TJC has a long history of support from the private bar. Bar leaders from across the state founded TJC in 1996, and leaders of the legal profession have led the organization's Board of Directors throughout its history. The Raising the Bar Campaign will allow TJC to build on this history and engage in a more collaborative and sustained relationship with law firms throughout the state.

Michele Johnson, Managing Attorney of the Tennessee Justice Center said, "We are extremely excited about the opportunity to take our partnership with Tennessee's legal community to the next level. Our clients have benefited from the generous support of many private bar attorneys throughout TJC's sixteen year history. This campaign will allow TJC to strengthen these partnerships in a way that will have a real impact for our clients."

The impact of TJC's work and the importance of the funding provided by this campaign can be seen in the story of one family and child helped by TJC:

Fifth grader Darius Parker started missing school and football practice due to chronic headaches and severe weight loss. Soon after, he was diagnosed with brain cancer. TennCare told Darius he would lose coverage the day before he was to have his brain tumor removed.

Without insurance, the hospital would not do the operation. Darius' mom called TJC for help. TJC found that TennCare had made a mistake, and we helped Ms. Parker file an appeal. We also contacted the State on her behalf. Darius was able to keep his TennCare during the appeal so that he could receive his life-saving surgery. The surgery went smoothly, and Darius went home with his mom about a week later. The State reviewed his case and agreed that Darius should be able to keep TennCare. Thanks to Ms. Parker's dedication and TJC's advocacy, Darius was able to stay insured and get all the follow-up care he needed to get healthy after his surgery.

TJC was established in 1996 and is located at 301 Charlotte Avenue, Nashville, TN. **If you would like more information about the Raising the Bar campaign, please contact Kristin Ware by email at kware@tnjustice.org or by phone at 615.255.0331.** For additional information about the Tennessee Justice Center and its services, visit www.tnjustice.org or call 615-255-0331.

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