



Everychild Foundation Awards \$1 million to the Center for Juvenile Law and Policy at Loyola Law School, Los Angeles

Los Angeles, California – November 20, 2017 - The Everychild Foundation announced today that its 2017 \$1 million grant has been awarded to the Center for Juvenile Law & Policy (CJLP) at Loyola Law School, Los Angeles. The grant, payable over three years, will help launch the *Everychild Integrated Educational and Legal Advocacy Project*.

The project aims to stop the school-to-prison pipeline for “crossover youth,” the name given to foster youth who are also involved in the juvenile justice system. The program anticipates serving 300 unduplicated such youth.

When a child enters the foster care system, (s)he is more likely to experience abuse and maltreatment as well as entry into the juvenile justice system. Additionally, fewer than 50 percent of foster youth and only 33 percent of those who have been incarcerated ever complete high school. Alternatively, this program will increase graduation rates for crossover kids and their potential to become productive members of society.

The CJLP program will advocate for clients in the education and court systems, while addressing the often-treatable root causes of delinquency, and create a model for systemic change.

“We are extremely proud to be associated with this project,” said Jacqueline Caster, Founder and President of the Everychild Foundation. “Crossover children require a strong advocate to assure them the services and opportunities to which they are entitled, but most often denied. Without this support, they are invariably pushed further along the proverbial ‘Pipeline to Adult Prison.’ However, with education proven to be the best vehicle to avoid this trajectory, the Loyola program has the ability to provide brighter futures for generations of children.”

The CJLP currently provides integrated pro bono advocacy for juveniles in delinquency court. The Everychild-funded program will expand those services to include integrated legal and educational representation for crossover youth.

“Foster youth already have the deck stacked against them when it comes to the criminal justice system,” according to Sean Kennedy, the Kaplan & Feldman Executive Director of CJLP. “With the Everychild Foundation’s significant help, we have the power to fulfill a critical unmet need: the holistic representation of foster youth who have been charged with crimes. Together, we

have the opportunity to secure justice for kids who have traditionally lacked the means to obtain it.”

In addition to his role at CJLP, Kennedy is a professor of Law at Loyola Law School and a former federal public defender for the Central District of California.

Each EIELAP client will have a legal team including a juvenile-justice attorney, an education lawyer and a social worker. The education attorney and law student will aggressively advocate for the youth’s education and disability rights, in tandem with a juvenile justice attorney and law student who will defend the youth in delinquency court. The social worker will help address the issues that are causing the delinquent behavior.

The project will also train 1,500 child advocates in education law, including delinquency and disability issues. Additional project goals are to secure successful outcomes for, at least, 90 percent of the clients served, based on their identified needs, train 36 lawyers in best-practices education advocacy for children, and push for systemic reform and a replicable system standard of integrated advocacy.

The CJLP was founded in 2004 at Loyola Law School to address injustices within the Los Angeles County juvenile court system - injustices rooted in inadequate funding, racial discrimination, a failing social-welfare system, and a culture of over-incarceration. Since then, the Center’s three legal clinics have provided more than 525 indigent children with free, holistic legal services while also training the next generation of top quality child advocates with the skills and tools they need to meet the complex psychological, social, and educational needs of at-risk youth. For more information on the Center for Juvenile Law & Policy, visit www.lls.edu/cjlp.

The Everychild Foundation makes a single \$1 million grant to a different Los Angeles-area non-profit agency each year that benefits children and youth, ages 0 to 24. Applicants must undergo an extensive grant screening process to be eligible. The grant is funded by annual contributions from foundation members. Everychild does not hold fundraising events. This is the 18th consecutive award made by Everychild, bringing its overall community contributions to date to \$16 million and more than one million children served.

For more information on the Everychild Foundation and the 2017 grant, please visit www.everychildfoundation.org.

