

## **Showcase description**

In the SMU law course, Technology, Innovation, and Law — Designing Legal Apps, students learned how to create legal software applications.

Nine students were in the class. Three student teams each partnered with a legal aid organizations to develop apps that address the problems of people in the communities served by each organization. This semester, our partners were the SMU Law W.W. Caruth, Jr. Child Advocacy Clinic, the SMU Law Patent Legal Clinic, and the Family Violence Division of the Dallas County District Attorney's Office.

This partnership benefits all involved. It teaches students how to think through a complex legal problem. For legal aid organizations, it can reduce cost, improve outcomes for clients, and save time. Finally, it supports the law school's mission to support access to justice initiatives.

### **Team 1**

**App Title:** Texas Foster Youth Advisor

**Team members:** Samantha Gaiss, Lara Kakish, Kyle Mason

**Partner Organization:** SMU Law W.W. Caruth, Jr. Child Advocacy Clinic

**Description:** The W.W. Caruth Child Advocacy Clinic at SMU Dedman School of Law represents abused and neglected children in Dallas County. . In addition to their work with neglected children, the Child Advocacy Clinic also works with youths aging out of the foster care system, assisting them in obtaining the necessary paperwork and determining next steps. Working in conjunction with the Clinic and Neota Logic, Texas Foster Youth Advisor Application aims facilitate the work already done by the Clinic and expending it further to provide Texas foster youth with information regarding the benefits to which they are entitled based on their time spent in the foster care system. The Application seeks to educate foster youth about their benefits, and ensure that each child or young adult is equipped with the knowledge of how to obtain them.

### **Team 2**

**App Title:** SMU Patent Legal Clinic Intake App

**Team members:** Adam Ahnhut, Katie Davis, Caroline Nunnally

**Partner Organization:** SMU Patent Legal Clinic

**Description:** The SMU Dedman School of Law Patent Legal Clinic serves individuals within North Texas that are filing for a patent with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. The Clinic aims to help inventors that otherwise would not be able to afford legal services complete a patent application. The app is designed to help the Clinic with its intake process, and therefore, asks users basic qualifying questions and provides an eligibility report to both the user and the Clinic. Due to the Clinic's specific eligibility requirements, this application is able to separate the eligible and ineligible applicants automatically for the Clinic, thus providing to the Clinic only those applicants which meet the Clinic's basic eligibility requirements. It will then be up to the Clinic to determine which applicants are best suited for the Clinic's services.

### **Team 3**

**App Title:** Victim Support Resources App

**Team members:** Cheslea Till, Sally Cooper, Andrew Burton

**Partner Organization:** The Family Violence Division of the Dallas County District Attorney's Office

**Description:** Currently, applicants for a protective order may visit the Family Violence Division at the Frank Crowley Courts Building or the George Allen Civil Courts Building, during specified hours, to be walked through the process of applying for a protective order and find out if the applicant qualifies. No appointments are currently taken. Recently, the FVD has opened satellite offices in various locations around Dallas. Each of these satellite offices has dedicated personnel equipped to assist those in need of FVD protective order services during set hours each week. Recognizing the need for a way for users to look up the most conveniently located satellite office, the FVD requested an application that would direct users to satellite offices spread around the Dallas metropolitan area based on the user's preferred zip code. Additionally, the FVD wanted the user to be able to make an appointment at the satellite offices where appointments are accepted. Finally, the FVD also wanted the application to provide users with various resources tailored to the user's specific circumstances. In addition to the functionality mentioned above, the FVD also wanted to make the application accessible to Spanish speakers. The users of the application will be victims of family violence or others who may be assisting the victims.