Our Vision

We envision a Texas where all communities thrive with dignity, justice and without fear.

Our Mission

We are Texas lawyers for Texas communities, boldly serving the movement for equality and justice in and out of the courts.

Our Theory of Change

We believe that legal advocacy and litigation are critical tools to protect and advance the civil rights of everyone in Texas, particularly our State’s most vulnerable populations, and to effect positive and lasting change to law and policy. We believe that by serving the rising social justice movement in Texas with excellent legal representation and bold strategies, we can respond to the needs of the communities we serve.
Serving the rising social justice movement in Texas

The Texas Civil Rights Project will remain committed to representing those persons and groups that have been historically targeted in Texas, and are still today — including immigrants, people of color, the poor, persons with disabilities, persons accused of crimes, and others. We will use the law as a sword and shield against abuse, discrimination, disenfranchisement and other injustices, demanding accountability from those in power. We are uniquely homegrown and rooted in Texas. That means we are not tethered to any national bureaucracy and entirely focused on advancing equality and justice in our own backyards.

Over the next three years, the Texas Civil Rights Project is committed to growth in four core areas — programs; community engagement and partnerships; sustainability; and human capital and organizational infrastructure. In these next pages, we share the strategies that we will use to reach each of our goals.

Goal 1: Deepening our programmatic impact through sharper strategy, deeper subject matter expertise and excellence of legal advocacy

TCRP has long been recognized for our willingness to stand up for the underdog against the State of Texas and other powerful interests. Our track record of bold, creative litigation has also been recognized; for instance, in 2016, we made national headlines with our successful lawsuit against Texas for refusing to provide birth certificates to babies born in Texas to undocumented mothers. Notably, we are uniquely homegrown and rooted in Texas; we are untethered from any national bureaucracy and entirely focused on advancing equality and justice in our own backyards.

Historically, TCRP's work was focused in discrete regions within Texas — meaning that we prioritized location over subject matter expertise. In the last two years, however, we have changed these practices by organizing our work within three program areas — Voting Rights, Criminal Justice Reform, and Racial and Economic Justice — rather than by region, and by bringing on senior lawyers with subject matter expertise to lead these programs. Now, we are preparing to leap forward with clearly articulated goals and strategies in each of our legal programs; with new structures to ensure the highest caliber of legal representation; and by doubling-down on our commitment to meld our advocacy in the courts with our advocacy outside of the courts.

WE WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL BY:

» Clearly articulating a theory of change for each program area.

» Evaluating our current public intake process to ensure it best furthers TCRP’s programmatic priorities while facilitating community engagement.

» Clarifying and evaluating TCRP’s programmatic priorities regularly, including identifying metrics to measure success.

» Communicating our cases, advocacy campaigns and public education efforts to the community in an effective matter.

» Implementing new case acceptance and case management guidelines and procedures to ensure the highest caliber of legal representation and advocacy.
Goal 2: Enhancing TCRP’s ability to carry out our mission by establishing and deepening a culture and habit of community engagement

Throughout the strategic planning process, one thing has remained clear: TCRP must be rooted in our communities and accountable to the people and movements we are serving. To accomplish our mission and ensure that our legal victories reverberate out of the courtroom, we must work closely with our partners, community members, and supporters to achieve and implement the change we seek.

As with our programs, TCRP’s community engagement strategy has been historically decentralized. Since mid-2016, however, TCRP’s strategy has evolved. With the creation of a dedicated Development Department and Communications Department in 2016, the organization centralized our community engagement strategies and integrated them with our Legal Department. In late 2017, we joined our development and communications staff into a single Community Engagement Department after recognizing that even more alignment and collaboration was needed. As we set out to accomplish our vision and mission for the next three years, we will create a path forward that integrates TCRP’s history of being rooted in the community while creating a deeper culture and habit of engagement to advance our broader goals. This will allow us to become an indispensable asset to the wider movement for social justice in Texas.

WE WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL BY:

» Defining what success means for TCRP in developing and maintaining strategic relationships with institutional and individual partners.
» Maintaining and deepening existing institutional and individual partnerships to advance TCRP’s mission.
» Creating clear, effective structures and processes to manage TCRP’s institutional and individual partnerships and create a culture of effective community engagement within TCRP.
» Expanding institutional and individual partnerships to advance TCRP’s mission.

Goal 3: Ensuring that TCRP has the resources we need to vigorously pursue our mission through the cultivation and stewardship of a variety of partnerships

Beginning in early 2016, we took careful steps to professionalize and modernize our development strategies in hopes of expanding our network of supporters and increasing our revenues from individual and institutional donors. We have had success in the past two years, including by launching year-round major and institutional donor cultivation and stewardship; establishing a calendar of regional fundraising events; launching a digital fundraising program; and adopting new technology into our strategies.

As we look to 2018 and beyond, we are focused on perfecting these systems and building the leadership necessary to sustain the organization for years to come. We will do this by approaching this goal with a people-first perspective rooted in our core values and research-based best practices for fundraising and engagement.
WE WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL BY:

» Fostering a culture of philanthropy at TCRP that ensures that all staff, board members, and partners hold a shared respect for and investment in the organization's values, vision, and mission.

» Creating a culture of cultivation and stewardship that engages and empowers board members, staff, and key partners.

» Identifying key partner constituencies, their engagement styles and interests, and developing a cultivation and stewardship strategy for each.

» Identifying retention goals, benchmarks to track progress, and strategies to increase retention across partner constituencies.

» Identifying growth goals for each partner constituency over the next three years as well as creating tactics and benchmarks to reach those goals.

Goal 4: Attracting and retaining talent by investing in the entire TCRP team and strengthening structures to ensure effective governance and leadership

Over the past three years, we have experienced growth and change as an organization. In early 2015, our staff decided to unionize and later that year, we announced the retirement of our founder and former chief executive. Two years have passed since our second President, Mimi Marziani, took the reins of leadership. As we continue to move forward, we will invest more deeply in our entire TCRP team and hone and strengthen organizational structures to ensure a productive, open, warm environment that fosters excellence and the type of bold, creative, collaborative thinking necessary to successfully serve the movement for equality and justice in Texas.

WE WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL BY:

» Establishing clear organization roles, departmental goals and staff expectations.

» Developing a process for the ongoing evaluation of staff and leadership, to ensure a highly engaged workforce working toward shared core values.

» Strengthening our Board of Directors, including by better defining the Board's role and responsibilities.

» Ensuring leadership has the proper training and support they need to be good coaches.

» Deepening our investment in staff, including through professional development and growth opportunities and competitive salaries and benefits.

» Furthering TCRP's strong partnership with the union.
Measuring progress

In implementing the Strategic Plan, we will adopt new tools and procedures to ensure that we meet our commitments. We will report our progress publicly on a regular basis. Our success in implementing this plan will be measured through the following key markers:

**Programs**
- Ensure that, annually, each program sets clear, written goals, with performance indicators, in a document distributed across TCRP.
- Grow our investment in our Legal Department to enhance our technical skills and subject matter expertise.
- Implement a thorough, careful process for accepting new cases and projects.

**Community Engagement & Partnerships**
- Be able to clearly define and identify strategic relationships with both institutional and individuals partners.
- Our staff will be responsible for advancing our commitment to deep community engagement.
- Adopt and maintain an easy-to-use database of institutional and individual partners that identifies how they engage with us.
- Incrementally increase the number of strategic institutional and individual partners with whom we work.

**Sustainability**
- Incrementally increase our yearly revenues from $2.2 million in 2018 to $3.5 million in 2020 with growth across our partner constituency.
- Incrementally increase our donor retention rates.
- Incrementally increase our annual number of partners.

**Human Capital & Infrastructure**
- Have an active, standing Diversity & Inclusion Committee that actively works to foster a warm, diverse, inclusive organizational culture, with the goal of making TCRP a leader in issues of diversity and inclusion.
- Have a healthy rate of staff retention, as measured against peer organizations.
- Our staff consistently expresses high levels of overall satisfaction in staff surveys.
- Continue to increase funding and opportunities for professional development.

Strategic Planning Process

In early 2017, the Texas Civil Rights Project engaged Mission Capital to help develop our Strategic Plan for 2018 to 2020. From the beginning, we were committed to creating and implementing an inclusive, transparent, thorough process for our first-ever strategic plan. The process was led by a Strategic Planning Committee (“SPC”), comprised of our President and six department directors (referred to internally as our “Leadership Team”), two representatives from our Board of Directors, and a staff member representative.

Every major decision in the process was considered collectively by the SPC. While we enjoyed robust discussion (and some debate), we worked to ensure that every voice was heard and that consensus was ultimately reached for every key decision. We broke the planning process into three distinct phases.

In Phase One, we gathered information from a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders, including through: anonymous surveys, individual interviews, focus groups, document reviews, and peer benchmarking. In Phase Two, we used the information gathered by Mission Capital to agree upon our main areas of focus, begin identifying initial strategies and tactics to advance these goals, and articulate a clearer organizational mission and vision. Through that process, we collectively identified four priority areas — Programs; Community Engagement & Partnerships; Sustainability; and Human Capital & Organizational Infrastructure. In Phase Three, we took steps to operationalize and finalize the plan. We created subcommittees for each priority and then created a draft plan. This draft was then reviewed and tweaked further by the SPC, the Board, and — ultimately — by the entire staff before it was finalized and released.
Strategic Planning Committee & Sub-committee Members

Mimi Marziani, President
Natalia M. Cornelio, Criminal Justice Reform Director
Efrén C. Olivares, Racial & Economic Justice Director
Beth Stevens, Voting Rights Director
Krissi Trumeter, Finance Director
Stephanie Schweitzer Garza, Development Director
Zenén Jaimes Pérez, Communications Director
Wallis Nader, Staff Attorney
Hani Mirza, Staff Attorney

Cassandra Champion, Staff Attorney
Rolando Perez, Legal Manager
Megan Garcia, Accounting & Human Resources Coordinator
Melissa Elfont, Operations Coordinator
Carlos Moctezuma Garcia, Board of Directors
M. Kyle Wright, Board of Directors
Kenneth S. Marks, Board of Directors
Alan Schoenbaum, Board of Directors

Board of Directors

Kenneth S. Marks, Chair
Carlos Moctezuma Garcia, Vice-Chair
Melissa Fruge
Tom Gutting
Rita Lucido

Gina K. Millin
Oscar Rodriguez
Alan Schoenbaum
M. Kyle Wright

Join the fight to protect civil rights

1. Make a contribution

You can fight for the rights of Texas’ communities by donating to the Texas Civil Rights Project. Donations to TCRP directly support our legal advocacy both in and out of the courtroom and are tax deductible. Learn more at http://texascivilrightsproject.org/donate/

To give by mail, please make a check payable to the Texas Civil Rights Project and mail it to:
Texas Civil Rights Project
Attn: Development Department
1405 Montopolis Dr.
Austin, TX 78741

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