



Melissa Weaver is our Women and Children's Program Attorney, providing free legal services to indigent immigrant victims and families of domestic abuse, trafficking and violent crimes. Melissa handles cases concerning VAWA (Violence Against Women Act), U-Visa, and SIJS (Special Immigrant Juvenile Status). She first began working with children at the W.W. Caruth, Jr. Child Advocacy Clinic at Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law. She also interned for Texas Lawyers for Children.

While in law school, Melissa interned with several federal agencies. She assisted in a landmark human trafficking/national origin discrimination case at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Dallas. She also assisted with several civil and criminal cases with the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Northern District of Texas.

Prior to joining HRI, Melissa spent several years in private practice, where she focused on civil litigation and bankruptcy. Melissa received her law degree from Southern Methodist University, where she was a member of Phi Delta Phi and winner of the 2002 ABA Client Counseling Competition. She was a Master level member of the Board of Advocates. In addition, she holds a B.S.A. from the University of Georgia. Melissa is admitted to practice law in Texas and is a member of Vickery Meadows Legal Clinic and the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers.

**Speaking engagements:**

*Relief Assisting Immigrant Children*, Crimes Against Children Conference, August 2010, Dallas, TX

*Assisting Immigrant Children: A Crash Course on Immigration Relief for Children*, Ad Litem and Amicus Attorney Court Appointments: Inside and Outside the Box Training, July 2010, Dallas, TX

*Assisting Immigrant Victims of Crime*, Conference on Crimes Against Women, March 2010, Dallas, TX

*An Introduction to Human Trafficking*, University of Dallas, February 2009, Dallas, TX

*Recognizing and Assisting Immigrant Crime Survivors*, Dallas Police Department, March 2009, Dallas, TX