

THE CUSTODY PROJECT
PO Box 20753
EL SOBRANTE CA 94820-0753 USA

Board of Directors: William Freeman, Jennifer Edwards, Donna Signorelli

510.426.2388 (Corp – Please direct calls to Info)
850.682.3460 (Info)
Tue-Thurs, 10-4 CST (Info)

Fed. Tax ID #95-4521373
www.thecustodyproject.org
August 31, 2024 [tcp25/01]

Dear Folks,

The Custody Project (TCP) assists qualified mothers and their children with care, custody, and visitation expenses in recognition of the extreme hardships imposed upon some families as the children are growing.

When mothers throughout the country call TCP for help with the complexities of their cases, our response includes telephonic and financial support, providing references and agency contacts which might be useful and, when grants are dispensed, negotiating pro- or low-bono arrangements, or an affordable payment plan at zero percent interest with their attorneys when applicable.

One mother helped this year was a mom who bore a girl, separated from the father, and later married another and bore a son. Within a few years, they separated due to domestic violence against her. Child Protective Services (CPS) got involved due to father's continuing violence and stalking even after separation, and because mother, feeling abandoned and hopeless, turned to alcohol and was tagged with driving while intoxicated (DWI). Mother completed a 5-month safety plan which included regular visits with her son who, during this time, stayed with her dear friend and her friend's boyfriend while her daughter, 7 years older, stayed with extended family, primarily her sister. When the divorce was finalized, Mother received full custody and father, supervised visits, but he stopped his visits within a year, moved back to his home country, neither paying child support nor seeking further contact with his son. Mother, continuing her alcoholism, received another DWI and was incarcerated for 5 months during which time her 13 year old daughter again stayed with family and her son, now 6, with her dear friend and her friend's boyfriend. Three months after release from prison, still struggling with alcoholism and seeing no way forward, she jumped from the 4th story of a parking garage, as observed by a happenstance witness.

Awakening in a hospital with many broken bones and unable to walk, she immediately realized “God had not given up on me,” and Life has a plan for her. Embracing sobriety, she continued visiting with her children with the help of another friend and her family, and, a year later, she had regained her ability to walk, had gotten a good job, and was ready for her children to return home. By this time, her dear friend had married the boyfriend and they refused to return her son, usually be tricking her, deceiving her, for example, saying they would return him and then refusing to do so when agreed-upon transition dates arrived, then passed. Lying on court documents that they have had this boy since he was 18 months and that mother has never sought any reunification nor paid support, they petitioned for custody, bringing up her prior history. Although she passed all sobriety tests, including a 12 panel hair follicle drug test, a nail bed drug screening, alcohol monitoring via 4-daily breath samples for 30 days, 2 alcohol monitoring programs and, for all parties – the mother, her son, and the married couple – a psychological evaluation, a custody evaluation, and meetings with a reunification therapist, all of which she paid for herself or her percentage, as ordered by the court, this court still set no visitation order in prior hearings, leaving it up to the couple, who obstruct almost all court orders, usually until forced to comply, which has kept the case dragging for years: the couple will not relinquish her son and the court seems to indulge and reward their behavior. Thanks to her own determination and her attorney, the mother is visiting her son more often during the day and at public extracurricular events, although the couple will not allow overnights to date. As for her son, now 12, Mother keeps in contact with his teachers, meeting with them when needed: he is doing poorly in school, his grades dropping even lower and the couple will not allow recommended testing for dyslexia even though it is now a court order, whereas when with his mother

he was doing well and she would hire tutors to help him advance when needed. When with his mother he is able to see all of his extended family, especially his cousins, whereas when with the couple he has no such contact. Mother is hoping that the psychological, custody, and reunification reports will break in her favor and if so, the mother's attorney is now planning to take the case to trial. Mother, completely unobstructed by the biologically silent father, is seeking sole legal and physical custody of her son from a couple who will not otherwise release him and from an overshadowing court which seems to hold the couple's right to this boy but not the mother's. In addition to her long-standing sobriety, her work is stable and she is appreciated there, and her town-home always includes rooms for her daughter, now 19, and her son. When she requested help from The Custody Project, a grant was given on her behalf to her attorney to help with legal expenses necessary to bring this boy home, including through lower court motions, trial, and appellate costs if needed. Convinced of the merits of the case, her attorney charges this mother \$200 a month at zero percent interest.

The Custody Project also helped another mother with state-to-state visitation expenses so that she could visit her 2 children three times during the year, as she is medically compromised, has had to reduce her work schedule to zero, and is living on an extremely reduced income. The court of jurisdiction is the state where the children reside and it has often been hostile towards her over many years, handing custody to the father, setting an arbitrary and reduced visitation schedule for her where state-to-state cost sharing is solely her responsibility, disregarding the domestic violence against her and mistreatment of the children by the father, as well as the medical conditions which afflict her and the scheduled treatments necessary in her home state to preserve her life.

And, as they echo the plight and the extremes a mother can experience, we continue to share these excerpts:

- ▲ Another mother, requiring the lifting of her childrens' legal restraining orders, which were causing them to live in unnecessary and extreme poverty, stated, *"To provide well for my children we should move, yet they are restrained by legal orders and we live in poverty as a result."*
- ▲ TCP assisted a mom who, unreasonably denied visitation or custody of her child, said, *"I have been unable to see my son for two years now. I owe tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees still..."*

Your help and donations are so important for these and many other families. You help lift mothers and make legal representation more affordable so that they can care for and protect their children, who are often lost in complex legal maneuvers which must be negotiated by simple mothers, who have neither the training nor resources to be successful on their own.

Mothers commonly stretch dollars daily to feed, clothe, and care for their children and themselves, often working for \$4 – \$15 per hour, through babysitting, waitress, piecework, and other occupations paying below or near minimum wage. But when circumstances arise such as domestic violence, abuse, legal attempts to remove custody, inadequate or absent child support, or legal restraints that prevent mothers from improving the quality of life for their families, their lives are made extraordinarily more difficult and their economic challenges are made infinitely harsher. With attorneys requiring substantial retainers of \$1,000-\$10,000+, charging \$25-\$300+ per hour, and court and legal fees in addition, the overarching cost to mothers defending the custody and best interests of their children can seem insurmountable.

If not broken by its financial crush, mothers must withstand relentless court and ancillary expenses to protect their children. Imposed upon the disadvantaged and overextended, such burdens cause unavoidable familial privation and there remains a great need to be met. **The Custody Project's mission**, "to promote the general welfare, both directly and indirectly, of women and their children as a unit, as related to care, custody, and visitation issues," continues: TCP has helped children and their mothers for 30 years. Yet, much remains to be done to assist these hapless families in need.

So, once a year a letter is sent inviting your gracious donations, contributions, and services. It is an honor to stand with you to make the way easier for families in need. Your grants have often kept deserving families afloat at perilous junctures, and your generosity makes it possible for The Custody Project to help qualified mothers meet legal expenses and provide for their children, assisting with legal costs when they are defending the custody and visitation of their children, and providing funds for common necessities when such legal expenses prevent it and they are unable. And, although the daunting hardships such mothers face make complex stories where excerpts

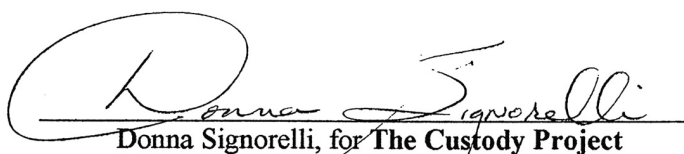
barely, or will not, do justice, this letter shares a little about our families so a light may shine on these cases, although privacy precludes names and pictures. (See our site's *About Us: Case Excerpts*; and mothers, see our *Services Section*).

While most of the difficulties our mothers face are resolved with adequate funds for legal representation, there are very few resources nationwide responsive to the plight of these families. The Custody Project's Heart to Heart Grant Program has been operational for over twenty-nine years, and our revolving-door loan program serves when, as mothers repay their loans, the funds become available to help other families in need. TCP also assists in other ways including telephone support, brief lectures, information exchange, and meeting with mothers. Because of you, we have helped families in the U.S. Virgin Islands and all 50 states, with the exception of Alaska, and our range continues to expand.

Especially during The Double Up Matches – Giving Tuesday, The Christmas Season, and Mothers' Month of May, your compassion makes the difference. As so many mothers are in great need of financial assistance to protect and sustain their children, please help shine a light on the difficulties these families face and join with others to support our Matches: This year, a group of generous donors will match your donations, up to **\$4850** spread over Giving Tuesday, The Christmas Season, and during Mother's Month of May. You can visit our **Happenings and Drives** (pp. 3-4, 6, 10) and **Our Charitable News Flashes!** (pp. 4-7) for information and ways to donate, as well as *You Can Help* on our site to explore many other ways to reach out, even at no cost when shopping; download a current or prior Annual Appeal / Newsletter (its link: below, p.3) from our site @ *About Us: Annual Newsletter (Donors and Mothers)*, or receive it by email or during the year as postage becomes affordable, and share it with interested donors and mothers needing assistance. The Custody Project is a 501(c)(3), charitable, tax-exempt, nonprofit organization, Fed. Tax ID #95-4521373 and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law (pp. 9-10).

Acknowledgment Wall. We are especially indebted to our new and long-standing donors, our Board of Directors, and all of you giving of your time, money and/or resources. Your assistance to families in such adverse circumstances has been essential since 1994, and your generosity to mothers and their children has made our continuing service possible. To the businesses, foundations, and service organizations benefiting the lives of families by supporting The Custody Project: you are listed on our site @ *Contributors: Community Angels*. Or, to be listed, please add a note with your donation or contact us @ 850.682.3460. In light of the worldwide need to assuage those pinioned by tragic dilemma, your compassion touches our mothers and children, who are often desperate and forgotten, and we thank all of you. And to the mothers who have allowed us to assist, we sincerely thank you, too.

Making the Holidays and Christmas Season merrier and Mother's Day more cheerful, your gifts cover legal expenses for qualified mothers who must defend custody and visitation of their children in courts, and help those who can no longer provide the common necessities of life for their families due to the cost of defending the custody or visitation of their children. Thank you for your prior gifts, ongoing support, and quiet compassion to our families. May this New Year be full of wisdom and blessings. ***Happy Holidays and Best Wishes!***



Donna Signorelli, for The Custody Project

HAPPENINGS

Great News! Donations, especially during our three matching 2023–2024 drives, were matched. Thank you, everyone!

Our TCP 2024 – 2025 Matching Drives Challenge Arrives – Double your impact today! The scoop's on pp. 6, 10.

2024 Giving Tuesday Public Matching Drive Campaigns. To donate through public matching gift drives, watch for alerts on PayPal, The PayPal Giving Fund, and many other campaigns for Giving Tuesday, the biggest global day of charitable giving each year, always the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving (pg 6).

This Newsletter: At our *About Us* drop-down, click Annual Newsletters, then Annual Newsletter for Donors and Mothers to share and to access links (<http://thecustodyproject.org/downloads/AnnualNewsletterDMCombo.pdf>).

Facebook Donors: To obtain receipts for your Facebook donations from PPGF and The Custody Project: page 6.

Insights, Observations, Networking:

- 1) There is a need for a National Pro Bono Alliance and The Custody Project does partner with law firms and nonprofits across the country to offer our qualified mothers assistance on a case-by-case basis. Large corporate law firms require their attorneys handle pro bono cases yearly and they are paid to do so. Some of these attorneys recognize the dilemma occurring in family law, that representation is unaffordable to families earning common wages, that representation for custody matters is essential, and that remedies are needed. Unfortunately, corporate attorneys required to do pro bono often have little experience with family law. But, some are willing to help and there may be ways that they can. A pro bono corporate attorney could volunteer or intern under the family law counsel representing the mother. The mother's lead attorney can attest to the financial and legal merits of the case, benefit from the additional legal assistance offered pro bono, and mentor the volunteer attorney, while the mother benefits from competent legal assistance and a reduced bill. TCP also welcomes such partnerships with family law firms willing to do the same. Such models extend our grants into gifts with far greater leverage. These are a few of the first steps towards the eventual creation of a pro bono / low bono alliance for family law matters nationally.
- 2) The Custody Project has always helped qualified mothers with custody and visitation issues. Along the way, some cases have gone forward on appeal, opening a door of partnership with other organizations, attorneys, firms, and individuals seeking to assist these families with potentially precedent-setting cases. The Custody Project will continue to assist with both common and precedent-setting cases.
- 3) Much remains to be done to lift awareness nationally, to elevate response to the plight our families face, and to evoke compassionate remedies. The Custody Project will continue to raise awareness nationally, including through interviews, radio, film, and other visuals, regarding the difficulties families endure when grappling with family law matters and expenses. You can view our homemade YouTube clips taken during The 2016-2017 Drive here (You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrx31SQT2ihmovANQAwONWg>).
- 4) Donors and supporters of The 2016-17 Drive: promised perks as visuals and videos were uploaded to Indiegogo as a carousel for Phase I at <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/drive-for-the-voiceless#/> and for Phase II, visit <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/drive-for-the-voiceless-our-traveling-art-exhibit#/>. Phase III requested funds specifically for a documentary at <https://www.generosity.com/education-fundraising/documenting-their-voice-drive-for-the-voiceless> These plans are on hold until sufficient time can be devoted and donations raised.
- 5) Protecting children and handling a protracted court case requires any mother's all, and such mothers need your financial support during the critical time when court expenses overwhelm the delicate economic architecture upon which such a family relies. The dimes and dollars you give help create a financial base so that families across the country are truly assisted. While both men and women regularly donate, it is usually because they, or someone they care about, has been affected. The safety of children and the need to have money to protect them legally is paramount, and mothers must help each other also, simply because it is the preeminent priority: mothers must actively birth this issue, too. And some of the ways you can help will not cost you – see below (pp. 4-7) and our site's You Can Help Section.

Charitable News Flashes: Ways to Give

Traditional, Online, Unusual, and Shop 'Til You Drop

Our Charitable News Flashes! describe many ways you can help, by giving directly to The Custody Project during our three matching drives on Giving Tuesday, through the Christmas Season, and Mothers' Month of May (pp. 6, 9-10), by donating online, including instantly by text and email (p. 5), through public matches on Giving Tuesdays – the Tuesday after each Thanksgiving – through online and on-street shopping including at *Artisans of the Twelfth House* and *The Shops* on our site, *eBay*, *GoodShop*, *Our Time Apparel*, with reward points, matching gifts, company grants, employee grant writing, corporate giving, stock, land, vehicle donations, State / Federal Campaigns, United Way, tax write-offs, by volunteering your time, and by donating gifts and in-kind donations, with heartfelt thanks from the families you help. For alternative and innovative ways to assist our families, see our *You Can Help* section (<http://thecustodyproject.org/help.php>).

Spontaneous or Planned: Direct Contributions. Your straight-from-the-heart contributions are our simplest way to help our mothers and their children. Steady, occasional, and recurring gifts make ordinary days extraordinarily special for mothers and children. For those donating FNSR, JB – “For No Special Reason, Just Because,” thank you. For those who are planned givers, thank you for helping mothers and their children with your regular donations. Checks, cash, and online donations are best, and gift certificates usable anywhere in the USA, preferably with no expiration date from nationwide stores or for online shopping, are helpful when they can be used to buy food, clothing, or other necessities for mothers and their children wherever the families reside. For those who like donating instantly, visit our online donation buttons, especially The PayPal Giving Fund,

which passes 100% of your donation at no charge to TCP (p. 5). Every donation allows our work to continue and when you contribute, you touch a family that might otherwise have been left without help or hope.

Text and Email Contributions through Your Bank. You can donate online instantly by text and email via bank to bank send money transfer options using tcpcompassion@gmail.com (no correspondence) and cell number **850 597 0604** (no calls). Your representative can walk you through the steps. There are no fees through some banks, so check out these cost-effective and instant ways to help. Also, check out wire transfers available through banks and other money service companies, too.

Online Donate Now Contributions You can donate online instantly by using secure sites at [PayPal Giving Fund](#), [Network for Good](#), [Guidestar](#), [GoodSearch/GoodShop](#), [PayPal](#), [Just Giving](#), and their partner sites, below, or by using their *Donate Buttons on our site at our Donate – Online Section*. Some permit recurring monthly, quarterly, and yearly donations, and most allow donors to cover processing fees, with minimum donations as low as \$1 – \$15. To find us easily, enter our Federal Identification Number, 95-4521373 with and without the hyphen in the site's search bar. Always use reputable sources when donating online or through companies, track and confirm to verify transactions are successful and, if you have concerns, please apprise us of your donations, too. For the Donate Now Buttons listed here, contact their sites for detailed, updated, and new information; find them on our site @ *Donate: Online* and *You Can Help: Fancy: Online*. Network for Good, Guidestar, and PayPal can send 100%, as can some other sites, when you cover their processing fees (usually 0% - 5%; Just Giving and United Way may charge more). **The PayPal Giving Fund (PPGF) passes 100% of your donations to TCP to help our families, as processing fees are not charged and their button is on our Home Page as The Custody Project Donate Now Button.**

PayPal Giving Fund (PayPal Product Site Support/Tech: 888.221.1161 / 888.215.5506 – ask to speak with PPGF directly). **PPGF accepts \$1 minimum one-time, named, or anonymous donations, with 100% of your gifts sent to us, as processing fees are not charged.** Click Donate and follow the prompts, using <https://www.paypal.com/fundraiser/charity/2172>. You can also start a fundraiser on our behalf with 100% of donations raised sent to us – we hope you will use it freely. PPGF's button on our Donate: Online and You Can Help: Fancy sections doubles on those pages and our Home Page as The Custody Project – Donate Now button: <http://thecustodyproject.org/index.php>. PPGF also handles our **eBay for Charity** direct donations, usually from a percentage of items bought and sold on eBay. For all donations to us, PPGF will send donors their donation tax receipts. (E-commerce partners charging fees on donations on their platforms (in partnership with PPGF) will disclose this on their websites).

Facebook At this time our link with Facebook is inoperative, so please donate through the PayPal Giving Fund, above, and post the PPGF link on FB: <https://www.paypal.com/fundraiser/charity/2172>. Using the PPGF link, Facebook donations and fundraisers can be conducted on our behalf for \$1 minimum, one-time, named, or anonymous donations. with up to a 1.99% + .49 cent fee, which donors can also cover.

PayPal (www.paypal.com, 888.221.1161 / 888.215.5506) accepts one-time, recurring, and possibly anonymous donations, and minimums may be as low as \$1 to cover processing fees of 1.99% + .49 cents and send us approximately 50 cents. Donors can cover fees so that 100% of donations come to us, and PayPal users may conduct fundraisers on our behalf via their personal accounts, with 100% of the donations raised sent to us through the PayPal Giving Fund. PayPal's Give at Checkout permits quick \$1 donations to us when shopping, too. On our site, use their Donate button at *Donate: Online* or, on PayPal, use our direct link: https://www.paypal.com/donate/?cmd=s-xclick&hosted_button_id=69FW53VDPLGFC.

Network for Good (<https://www.nfggive.org/donation/95-4521373> 888.284.7978) may accept minimums as low as \$10 as one-time and recurring yearly, monthly, and quarterly donations. International and domestic donors, try accessing your PayPal accounts via the Paypal option on NFG. To find us, use our site's NFG Donate Now button in our *Donate: Online* section or, on NFG, use our direct url above. View partner sites on NFG.

Just Giving (www.justgiving.com), may offer giving and fundraising options on our behalf and you may be able to donate one-time, on a recurring basis, cover processing fees, and will find us here: <https://www.justgiving.com/thecustodyproject>

Guidestar by Candid (<https://www.guidestar.org/> at 800.421.8656), may accept \$10 minimum one-time, recurring, and anonymous donations via Network for Good (888.284.7978, <https://www.nfggive.com/guidestar/95-4521373>); on Guidestar's site, put 95-4521373 in the search box, click our name to Donate, or use <https://www2.guidestar.org/profile/95-4521373>.

GoodShop/GoodSearch A percentage of your shopping purchases and travel will benefit our families when you designate The Custody Project, and you can save money with coupons and deals offered on Goodshop while raising funds automatically for TCP. These easy ways to give help our mothers and children without a coin leaving a pocket, as long as you list us as your benefiting charity! (Visit their FAQs). Designate us at <https://www.goodshop.com/nonprofit/the-custody-project> or through <https://www.goodshop.com/?charityid=898522> (You can use Goodsearch for Internet searches (<https://www.goodsearch.org/>))

eBay For Charity. Buyers / Auctions. (For Info: use chat). There may be three ways to benefit The Custody Project via donations and purchase percentages. To go directly to us, use <https://www.charity.ebay.com/charity/The-Custody-Project/2172>

or <https://bit.ly/1aIF5cE> or <https://charity.ebay.com/charity/i/The-Custody-Project/4046>, scroll down to shop to support us where items benefit TCP up to 100%, purchase or, if an auction, bid. Next, add TCP as your favorite nonprofit on eBay. Try: under your name, Account Settings, at Donation preferences click Favorites, search for TCP, select us and follow the prompts. Also, each time you purchase items through eBay's Give at Checkout, an auto-prompt allows you to donate \$1 or more to TCP. On eBay's Charity Shop, use https://www.ebay.com/b/Charity/bn_7114598164, scroll down, on the left, choose Find A Favorite Charity and search using our name; or use <https://charity.ebay.com/search> at Charity Search, or use the direct links above to find items for sale to benefit TCP. (Verify current steps and rules with eBay). Ebay donations to us are handled through The PayPal Giving Fund.

eBay Sellers. (For Info: use chat). When selling items on eBay, you may donate a percentage of your sales to The Custody Project and eBay will give a credit on final value fees, based on the percentage donated, once the item sells (i.e., donate 10% and receive 10% of fees back: verify current rules with eBay). List the item, select The Custody Project to benefit, choose the percentage: for further direction, questions, and for receipts, visit eBay for updated information or try PayPal (888.221.1161).

On-Street and Online Shopping, Credit Card Donations, Paying Bills. When shopping on-street and online merchants, auctions, and services, and when paying utility or other monthly bills, some companies allow you to donate reward points or a percentage of purchases and payments to your charities of choice at no cost to you. GoodShop, eBay, and countless other merchants encourage such charitable giving. Your compassion generates effortless donations and our families benefit when you designate TCP and shop. Check out **Our Time Apparel** and eBay's **Artisans of the Twelfth House**. The latter lists a painting donated to The Custody Project and items by Dancing Dog Mining Company (<https://stores.ebay.com/Artisans-of-The-Twelfth-House> and <https://www.charity.ebay.com/charity/The-Custody-Project/2172> (Help on eBay: chat with them). Visit www.goodshop.com and www.goodsearch.com and our site's *You Can Help: Fancy: Shop: Artisans, and Donate: The Shops* (see New Lift Walker).

Our Triple Crown: Double Up Matching Drives For Giving Tuesday, The Christmas Season, And Mother's Month Of May. This year, a group of generous donors will match \$4850 of your donations towards our Drives. We are excited to share this with you and to watch the benefits of your compassion and generosity extend to our families. The dates of the drives are:

Giving Tuesday, December 3, 2024

The Christmas Season, November 1, 2024 – January 31, 2025

Mother's Month of May, May 1 – 31, 2025

Easily double your impact during The Custody Project's Drives and we will match your donations based on the date of the check or online submission, doubling your impact up to \$4850. If the match pool increases, updates will post on our site's Events page. When donating, use the PayPal Giving Fund (PPGF) found as the TCP button on our Home Page or use its online donation link and PPGF will pass 100% of your donations to us, or you can choose several other platforms which charge minimal or no fees (pp. 4-7 [PPGF = <https://www.paypal.com/fundraiser/charity/2172>]). To sponsor a challenge, please call 850 682 3460 (no texts). To share this announcement: <http://thecustodyproject.org/downloads/AnnualNewsletterM.pdf>.

Facebook: 2024 Giving Tuesday Matching Drive. As this newsletter goes to print, our link with Facebook (FB) is inoperative, so we cannot receive FB donations now, but all donations and fundraisers set up with The PayPal Giving Fund (PPGF) work fine, so please share and post this link (<https://www.paypal.com/fundraiser/charity/2172>) with your FB friends and direct them to donate on PPGF so that your generosity helps our families, especially on Giving Tuesday! We will continue our efforts to reconnect with FB, so watch for updates. For FB receipts after re-connection occurs, see below.

Causes/Facebook Receipts for Donors. As our FB connection is inoperative, you can use PPGF to donate and fund-raise for us. See above. To all our FB donors, thank you for supporting our mission and helping our families. FB donations come to us via PPGF; it will send donors their tax receipts, but FB donor information comes to TCP as anonymous. Call to share contact and donation information directly with us at 850 682 3460. And – share this with all your friends, especially if you and your friends donate to us through FB, plan to continue through PPGF, and need receipts.

Matching Gifts Programs / Public Matching Drives: Year Round and Giving Tuesdays! Watch for ways to give and take advantage of matching donations, especially on Giving Tuesday – the Tuesday after each Thanksgiving. Check out The PayPal Giving Fund, Paypal, and other sites / companies offering matching donations up to specified amounts and share the links with friends, especially on Giving Tuesdays! To ensure your donations are matched on behalf of our mothers and children when donating to us through public drives, please watch for your successful confirmations.

Company Matching Gift Programs: when you give and your employer matches you dollar for dollar, you double the power of your gifts. Some companies cover administrative fees, even United Way's, so that TCP can receive 100% of your matching donations. Let us know if your gift is being matched by your employer, if any documents are needed from us, remember to enclose the matching gift form with your donation to us, and list our Federal Tax Identification number as needed, 95-4521373.

Employer Fund Drives. Some employers manage employee fund drives without the United Way and others allow employees to organize workplace fund drives. If that is the case where you work and you want to help our mothers, please contact your representative to find out how to donate to us.

Grants, Corporate Giving. Some companies offer grants to nonprofits that their staff support, nominate, or volunteer with. Please check your company's possibilities.

State and Federal Campaigns. Federal and State employees may designate a gift to TCP through the campaign at your place of work. If your campaign allows write-ins, list The Custody Project, our address, and Fed. Tax ID #95-4521373 (page 1).

United Way Worldwide and your Local UW (www.unitedway.org, 800.892.2757, 800.543.7709). **Workplace Campaigns.** You may be able to make a gift to us through a workplace United Way Campaign by designating us, indicating your donation to TCP on your UW pledge form, listing our name, address, contact information, sometimes in the Comment Section, and our Fed. Tax ID #95-4521373 (p. 1). Ask your campaign coordinator for the steps and if the Campaign covers processing fees so The Custody Project can receive 100% of your donations. Often you can choose whether you want to cover the processing fee or have it taken from the donation, whether you want to make a one-time or recurring donation, and if the ways to donate include by credit card and PayPal (useful when overseas). **United Way Bay Area (of CA):** www.uwba.org (415 808 4300).

Moving Vehicle and Land Donations. You can benefit TCP by donating your used moving vehicles and land. If you donate through towing companies, your church or other forums, designate us as the nonprofit beneficiary on intake forms and contact us as needed. **The Volunteers of America ("VOA") via Charitable Adult Rides and Services, accepts** moving and non-running motorized vehicle donations; the VOA may accept property / real estate in some states. When you donate your vehicle either through the VOA (<https://www.carshelpingpeople.org> or www.careasy.org) and designate TCP as your nonprofit beneficiary, we receive a percentage of the net proceeds from the VOA (perhaps 50% of the gross minus processing and towing (P&T) fees – ask.) or a percentage (perhaps 80%) of the net proceeds from vehicles sold by Charitable Adult Rides – ask (www.careasy.org). Typically, both handle the sale, the paperwork, help determine the deductible amount, and will provide a donation receipt and written statement for tax purposes, while you help The Custody Project and may receive tax benefits. Usually, they will pick up most cars and trucks at no cost. Ask about donating your boats, RVs, motorcycles, wheelchairs, golf carts, trailers and other specialty vehicles and equipment, too. And, according to Charitable Adult Rides representatives, for sales up to, for example, \$500, you can claim the full \$500; for sales over, for example, \$500, you can claim a deduction based on the actual sale price of the vehicle minus the T&P fees. Verify this with them as policies change with time. Contact Car Easy/VOA @ <https://www.carshelpingpeople.org> 833.300.5737 / 855.500.7433, and VOA's national office for updates, verification, and national car donations, including for the San Francisco Bay Area, CA at 800.552.1515. For property / real estate donations, call us, but for VOA property donations to us: try 800.552.1515 / or their Michigan office: 248 945 0101.

Stocks, Options, Investments. You can donate stock, stock options, other securities, and investments to TCP. Usually, to the extent provided by IRS tax laws, you benefit by being able to deduct the full market value while at the same time avoiding capital gains taxes, and TCP benefits by receiving property that will generate funds for our services. Tax laws are subject to change, so speak with an investment counselor or your tax professional for information and updates as needed.

Raffles. Occasionally TCP conducts Raffles, and contributions are welcome. To donate cash, gift certificates, or items of value, contact us. Winners like cash options, transportable prizes are useful, and cash and gift certificates travel best. Thank you to Dancing Dog Mining Company for contributing cash awards and its "Silver Hearts of Love" Newborn Medallions over the years. To distribute raffles in your area, to purchase them, and for additional information, contact us.

Wish List & Volunteer Opportunities

Have time but not cash? Volunteers may be able to deduct mileage and other expenses incurred in conjunction with their work for The Custody Project to the extent allowable by law. And, although you cannot deduct the value of your time, we can provide you with a letter indicating your service, if this is advisable by your tax professional.

- ^ Attorneys and Experts: To be on our resource referral list or to volunteer time to assist mothers, call. [850.682.3460].
- ^ To work on updating, improving, and maintaining our website, brochure, and mail/email data capture tasks, call.
- ^ Obtaining grants and matching gifts for The Custody Project through your company or place of work helps our families. Sharing TCP with service organizations, friends, businesses, and co-workers enables us to assist families. To raise awareness, funds, and assist with or arrange speaking engagements, contact us.
- ^ Program / Management Funding. Private gifts to Donna Signorelli for program / management expenses, send c/o The Custody Project. A private sponsorship [not tax-deductible] allows the completion of tasks which serve our families and generates revenues for them, and helps us reach goals of continued assistance to families possible.

MOTHER'S CORNER

For help or to inquire about our grants, contact us; visit our site's *Services* for information, resources and tips. A few resources listed here for quick reference may lead to others of use in your state. See our web site for more: ACES: Advocates for Child Empowerment and Safety (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/15708102429/?ref=ts&fref=ts>), assists with child support and related matters, Battered Women's Justice Project, California Protective Parents Association, California Women's Law Center, Child Justice, Defenders of Children, Harriet Buhai Center for Family Law, Her Justice, Legal Momentum, Legal Services Corporation, Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice, Loyola Center for Conflict Resolution, National Center on Protection Orders and Full Faith and Credit, National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women, National Crime Victim Law Institute, National Domestic Violence Hotline, National Organization for Women (NOW), Nolo, Pine Tree Legal Assistance (Contact Us: Your Local Office: Local Legal Aid Organization: Get Help in Another State), The Liz Library, Women's Law Center of Maryland (Services: Family Law / Pro Se), Women's Law Project, U. S. Dept. of State's Office of Children's Issues: Travel.State.Gov [includes: International Parental Child Abduction, 888 407 4747 / 202 501 4444]. Law libraries, lawyers in the library programs, law schools, literature, and mothers' support groups are accessible, too.

GENUFLECTION

Now, Will Fall On You

In the darkness of the testing ground,
I practiced, privately;
And hundreds after, training,
Practiced after me:

And in the burning –
Trammeled – by the fires angels sow,
We withstood those brothers
When Love, they would not know.

Our mangled spirits tracing
Wisdom's woven, patterned thread...
Who fathomed joy arising
From our ashen, ancient dread?

In silence lift redemptive eyes,
Transposed from haunted sight,
To trued and deep perspectives,
Built on Truth and Light...

We, quiet, spied the footpath,
Of sunlit earth and grass,
As sacred shone its golden way...
Our mystic future and our past.

And genuflected on one knee,
We, in homage, paid our dues,
For the strength bestowed upon us,
Which, now, comes, blessing you.

Now ... it falls on you.

© 2024, reprinted with author's permission

***Genuflection** was written by a mom who successfully resisted eleven legal attempts by her ex, who attempted to take custody from her and failed every time. It is dedicated to mothers everywhere, and we hope it is an inspiration to you.*

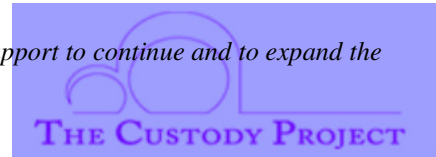
Across the country, some courthouses offer free pro per clinics; some attorneys offer free consultations in their offices, at libraries, at court offices, and shelters. Some attorneys will take cases pro bono or at reduced rates, especially through The Battered Women's Alternative, domestic violence agencies, shelters, and when you ask. Check your region or state for helpful organizations, nonprofits, attorneys, women's law centers; talk with law librarians, state bar associations, paralegals, and law firms. Check colleges, university law libraries, and law departments as law professors, law students, and law librarians may help with portions of cases, legal cites, and pertinent case law. If your finances are stretched, occasionally churches will help; sometimes private or individual sources will assist. And check the cites above, even if your state is not listed.

Some hearings are simple and you can save money by representing yourself. However, if at all possible, arrange to have an attorney represent you for custody hearings (and others of significant import). If you don't have enough money, see if you can work out a financial arrangement of payments over time so that an attorney can represent you for the custody hearings. Offer to do as much as you can, such as organizing your facts and exhibits, and doing your own copying and printing to help reduce costs. If any, ask that interest be forgiven. Later, if you have sufficient money, lump sums can reduce and zero out your bill in lieu of continued payments over time, as most people prefer some cash now to extended payments. Court transcripts can be half-price when requested prior to hearings and sometimes the Certified Shorthand Reporters Board can help you obtain them at no cost. Lastly, certain court expenses occur only if you agree to them: research the law so that you know what legal expenses to refuse. (In some areas, stating that you cannot afford a special master precludes a judge from appointing one). Misuse usually occurs when isolated. For those faced with the abuse and/or molest of their children, you may be able to help your offspring by communicating effectively. Consider contacting your child's local hospitals, physician(s), nurses, teachers, principal, caregivers, coaches, therapist, church(es), police for both the mother's and father's jurisdictions, as well as other professionals, and your child's friends and neighbors. Bring your visitation/custody court order(s) with you, explain the danger your children are (or child is) in and how each person can help, should your child or children disclose to him/her. Abuse decreases when people communicate effectively, when there are a lot of eyes watching children, and when a plan of action is in place. Please visit our site's *Services: Support Links, Tips, and Testimonials* sections for additional information.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Custody Project's (TCP) mission is to promote the general welfare, both directly and indirectly, of women and their children as a unit as related to care, custody, and visitation issues. Your charitable contributions will be applied to support the programs, services, and activities of The Custody Project, including:

- * **Heart to Heart**, assisting qualified mothers with care, custody, and visitation expenses, including reference, consultation, and caseload costs, via grants and the revolving door programs. Heart to Heart received 75% in Fiscal Year 2022-2023 and 75% in FY 2023-2024.
- * **Fund & Friend-Raising, Public Awareness Actions**, including raising awareness about the issues and hardships affecting mothers and their children involved in custody and visitation proceedings.
- * **Educational Outreach**, including teaching mothers about custody and visitation proceedings, preparing and filing legal briefs, gathering exhibits, discussing individual cases, and protecting children.
- * **Property & Program Grants**, including for event expenses, land acquisition, capital, building, renovation, program development, and technical assistance.
- * **General Purposes and Overhead**, including for general operating support to continue and to expand the operation of The Custody Project.
- * **Where Most Needed.**



CONTRIBUTIONS

Received from _____ Amount \$ _____
Address _____ Date _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone(s) (____) _____ Fax (____) _____
Email _____ Web Address _____

The Custody Project is a 501(c)(3), charitable, tax-exempt, nonprofit organization, Fed. Tax ID #95-4521373; contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law. (Make a copy for your records as receipts may come once a year; Facebook receipts: pg 6).

Giving Tuesday! Public Matching Drives. Watch for matching gift opportunities especially on Giving Tuesday – the Tuesday after each Thanksgiving – on The PayPal Giving Fund and other sites, as it is the greatest day of global giving. To ensure your donations are matched on behalf of our mothers and children when donating to The Custody Project through public drives, watch for your confirmations. And you can support our Matching Drives, too!

Awesome Every-Day Donations. Send instant donations via bank to bank send money transfers using **850 597 0604** (no calls) and tcpcompassion@gmail.com (no correspondence), or by using secure sites including PayPal, Network for Good, and Guidestar, which charge minimal fees, while the **PayPal Giving Fund** passes on 100% of your donations and fundraisers at no cost (<https://www.paypal.com/fundraiser/charity/2172> and TCP's Donate Button on our Home Page). Use **95-4521373** or our name on their sites, or their Donate Now Buttons on our site at *Donate: Online or You Can Help: Fancy: Online. Money orders, certified, cashiers, and personal checks make payable to **The Custody Project.***

Through your kindness, our assistance to mothers and their children continues.
Your compassion becomes the difference. Thank you for helping as you can!

MAIL DONATIONS TO:

850.682.3460 [INFO]

THE CUSTODY PROJECT
PO Box 20753

EL SOBRANTE CA 94820-0753 USA
www.thecustodyproject.org / www.tpc cares.org

DONATE TODAY!

THANK YOU.

THE CUSTODY PROJECT'S DOUBLE UP MATCHING DRIVES!

OUR TRIPLE CROWN: GIVING TUESDAY, THE CHRISTMAS SEASON, MOTHER'S MONTH OF MAY

This Year, a group of generous donors will match your donations up to **\$4850** on Giving Tuesday, during The Christmas Season, and during Mother's Month of May. So, you can double your impact with each donation during the Drives until match funds are met. For each drive:

___ \$10 becomes \$20 ___ \$100 becomes \$200
___ \$25 becomes \$50 ___ Other \$ ____ will be doubled and worth twice as much! Up to above amount.

OUR GIVING TUESDAY MATCHING DONATION DRIVE FALLS ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2024

OUR CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY SEASON MATCHING DRIVE RUNS FROM NOVEMBER 1, 2024 – JANUARY 31, 2025

OUR MOTHER'S MONTH OF MAY MATCHING CAMPAIGN RUNS FROM MAY 1 – MAY 31, 2025

Your donations support those affected by custody, visitation, and move away issues, assist with the complications of the family court system, inadequate child support, the inability to afford counsel and other hardships, honor mothers relocating with their children, and lift awareness for these voiceless families. You help us encourage and assist mothers receiving no child support, facing foreclosure, imminent removal, the stress of upcoming custody hearings, and those who have lost custody: all events, legal expenses, and results stemming from the inherent difficulties of family law. We thank all our donors who respond to the plight of these families and lighten their way. Visit our site for our Programs / Mission. To share the Matching Drives: <http://thecustodyproject.org/downloads/AnnualNewsletterM.pdf>.

Sponsors: To increase the match pool of any of these or future drives, contact us @ 850 682 3460. We will post new challenge amounts and matching drive updates on our site's Events page (<http://thecustodyproject.org/events.php>).

MATCHING GIFTS CONTRIBUTIONS: DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT PER DRIVE, FOR –

Giving Tuesday 12/03/24 \$___ Christmas Season 11/01/24 – 01/31/25 \$___ Mother's Month of May 05/01 – 05/31/25 \$___

Received from _____ **Amount \$** _____

Address _____ **Date** _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone(s) (____) _____ **Fax** (____) _____

Email _____ **Web Address** _____

The Custody Project is a 501(c)(3), charitable, tax-exempt, nonprofit organization, Fed. Tax ID #95-4521373; contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law. (Make a copy for your records as receipts may come once a year; Facebook receipts:pg 6).

We Will Match your donations based on the date of the check or online submission, doubling your impact up to **\$4850.00**. You can donate instantly via bank to bank send money transfers using tcpcompassion@gmail.com (no correspondence) and **850 597 0604** (no calls), or donate without charge online using our PayPal Giving Fund Donate Now Button – PPGF sends **100%** of your donations to us (<https://www.paypal.com/fundraiser/charity/2172>, also TCP's button on our Home Page: <http://thecustodyproject.org/index.php>), or use other secure sites including Network for Good, PayPal, Guidestar, Just Giving, which charge minimal fees. Use their Donate Buttons on our site at *Donate: Online* or *You Can Help: Fancy: Online* (http://thecustodyproject.org/donate_online.php or <http://thecustodyproject.org/help-fancy.php#online>) or input our name or 95-4521373 on their sites. *Money orders, certified, cashiers, and personal checks make payable to **The Custody Project**.*

Through your kindness, our assistance to mothers and their children continues.

Your compassion becomes the difference. Thank you for helping as you can!

MAIL DONATIONS To:

850.682.3460 [INFO]

THE CUSTODY PROJECT

PO Box 20753

EL SOBRANTE CA 94820-0753 USA

www.thecustodyproject.org / www.tcpcare.org

DOUBLE DONATE TODAY!

THANK YOU.