



2019 Joseph Drown Award Recipient: Harriett Buhai Center for Family Law

The Harriett Buhai Center for Family Law was founded in the early 1980's by Black Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County Bar and Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles. Since its inception, the Center has served as a cornerstone of family law and domestic violence assistance for low-income persons in California. The Center aspires to create a community where poverty is not a barrier to those who seek to resolve critical family law matters.

The Center's mission is to protect victims of domestic violence and improve the well-being of children living in poverty. With the help of volunteer lawyers, paralegals and students, the Center provides free family law assistance and legal education to veterans and to the poor and assists to empower people in need and assure them meaningful access to the courts.

ABOUT THE JOSEPH DROWN AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICES TO CHILDREN

Joseph Drown was a businessman and hotel owner, including the Bel Air Hotel in Los Angeles, CA. He became interested in the work of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, California Chapter, in the early 1980's after lengthy conversations with Jeanne Ames, the original and long-time historian of AFCC-CA, who shared with him the mission, vision and values of this organization.

Joseph Drown was impressed and reflected on how he handled his divorce and parental responsibilities. He stated he wished that the AFCC had been there to help him understand the experience for children and the needs of children going through this difficult time in their lives. Over time he gave \$20,000, in \$10,000 increments, which aided in offering educational programs and training institutes to court-connected personnel, community mental health professionals, family law attorneys, researchers, etc.

This award, typically rotated between Northern and Southern California, has been given to acknowledge persons or organizations that have made outstanding contributions to the betterment of children's welfare.