

CLOCK TOWER QUARTERLY

Vol. 2



Dell DeHay Law Library Contact Information

Hours:

Monday — Friday
8am — 4pm

Note: Computers will automatically log off at 4pm.

Phone Number:
817-884-1481

Email:
lawlibrary@tarrantcountytexas.gov

100 W. Weatherford, Room 420
Fort Worth, TX 76196

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Dell DeHay Law Library Celebrates Deneshia's 20 Year Anniversary!



G.K. Maenius with his wife at his retirement commemoration, September 2023

G.K. Maenius Celebrates Retirement after 35 Years of Service

G.K. Maenius began his 35 years of service at Tarrant County in 1988. He was the first and only person to serve as County Administrator during that time. Tarrant County currently employs over 4,600 individuals and works with a \$900 million dollar Operating Budget. The county population has doubled from 1.1 million in 1988 to 2.2 million in 2022.

Maenius supervised County departments including Budget and Risk Management, Community Development, Dell DeHay Law Library, Facilities Management, Human Resources, Human Services and Information Technology. The County Administrator also guides public meetings and makes sure procedures are followed based on rulings of County Commissioner’s Court.

Maenius played a crucial role in the development of the AT&T Stadium in Arlington, the Alliance corridor, expansion of the American Airlines headquarters in Fort Worth and the partnership between Fort Worth and the Texas A&M campus expansion, located downtown.

Maenius is a Texas native and graduated from Texas State University with a master’s degree in Public Administration.



Article Sources

“Staff.” Tarrant County TX, www.tarrantcountytx.gov/en/administration/staff.html.

Suarez, Miranda. “Tarrant County Hires Local Company to Lead Search for New County Administrator.” *KERA News*, 18 July 2023, www.keranews.org/news/2023-07-18/tarrant-county-hires-local-company-to-lead-search-for-new-county-administrator.

“Tarrant County Administrator G.K. Maenius Announces Retirement.” *Tarrant County TX*, www.tarrantcountytx.gov/en/news/2023/tarrant-county-administrator-g-k-maenius-announces-retirement.html.

Texas Law Help: Mitigating the Justice Gap

The Self-Represented Litigation Network estimates that **three out of every five civil cases in the United States are represented by pro se litigants**. Most of the changes in the United States Courts have taken place over the past decade. According to a study conducted by the Legal Services Corporation, low-income Americans do not receive any or enough legal help for 92% of their civil legal problems, which includes serious issues such as housing, child custody, health care, and safety.

The statistics for lack of access to justice worldwide are alarming as well. In 2019, the World Justice Project estimated that “more than 5.1 billion people, about two-thirds of the world’s population, are not getting the justice they need for both everyday problems and severe injustices, and approximately 1.4 billion people have unmet civil or administrative justice needs,” (World Justice Project, <https://worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/documents/WJP-A2J-2019.pdf>).

The Texas Law Help website (<https://texaslawhelp.org/>) is a collaborative effort by various legal aid associations, courts, and nonprofits that provides free legal information for *pro se* litigants in an effort to mitigate the justice gap. In the last year alone, more than 4 million individuals have accessed the Texas Law Help site in order to retrieve free legal guides, forms, directories, and contact information for legal clinics.

Legal aid organizations provide assistance for more than 140,000 Texas families each year. According to the Texas Access to Justice Foundation, approximately 5.2 million Texans qualify for free legal aid. An individual must not earn more than \$16,988 per year and a family of four must not earn more than \$34,688 per year. There is approximately one legal aid lawyer for every 7,000 Texans who qualify. Texas ranks 46th in access to legal aid lawyers.

Resources for Additional Information

- National Center for Access to Justice <https://ncaj.org/what-access-justice>
- Self-Represented Litigation Network (SRLN) <https://www.srln.org/>
- Texas Access to Justice Foundation <https://www.teaif.org/news/statistics.aspx>
- World Justice Project <https://worldjusticeproject.org/>

Tarrant County Statistics

- Total population is 2,154,595
- Household total is 739,084
- Persons per household is 2.80
- In civilian labor force, ages 16 plus is 68.6%
- Median household income is \$73,545
- Poverty rate is 11.6%
- Persons 65 years and over is 12.3 %
- Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years plus is 29.0%

Statistics provided by the United Census Bureau <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/tarrantcountytexas/PST04522>

Celebrating 20 Years of Public Service



Deneshia has become a personality in her own right at Tarrant County. She’s known for her positive attitude, willingness to help patrons, strong work ethic, and the most contagious smile. Deneshia possesses extensive interdepartmental knowledge and years of customer service experience. The Dell DeHay Law Library wouldn’t be what it is today without her knowledge, dedication and impressive 20 years of service. Deneshia graciously agreed to answer a few questions related to her time at the Dell DeHay Law Library as part of our celebration of her many years of public service. Here is what she had to say.

What year did you begin your career at the law library? March 4th, 2003 (!)

Have you worked at libraries previously, and if so, how do you think the law library is different regarding public service and job duties? Yes, I’ve worked for the City of Fort Worth Public Library System and UNTHSC—Gibson D. Lewis Medical Library. The Public service component is similar, but you deal with different types of individuals. At the medical library, you mainly focus on helping students gather information and journals for medical staff. In the public library, you help patrons with every aspect of what particular subject they are looking for.

What’s the most rewarding part about working for Tarrant County? The most rewarding aspect of working for the County would be the diversity of people you encounter, being able to guide them, and providing service to the community as a whole.

What kind of relationships and connections have you made? I’ve built solid relationships within the County from different departments, to multiple personnel, attorneys, and others.



Above (left to right): Top row—Peggy Martindale (retired), Cara
Bottom row—Deneshia, Amanda, Nancy, Winter 2020



Below (left to right): Deneshia, Fred, Nancy, Dell DeHay Law Library 77th Anniversary, Fall 2022

Congratulations!



Describe the changes that you've seen over the past two decades in the law library. What area and/or areas of the law library do you think has changed the most? The library has had lots of changes over the course of time I've been here. I think the biggest change came with COVID. Being tasked with developing new procedures to accommodate the community at a time when most places were closed to the public and reinventing how to make resources available when it was so much chaos. An area of the library with the most changes came with the increase in pricing for resources in print and online. Some of that required changes from going to online only.

What's one of your favorite work memories? My most memorable moment would be the birthday for myself this year 2023, when everyone came together and had all my favorite foods. My coworkers know me all too well, they know I love to eat.

How long you have resided in Tarrant County, and what are some of your favorite places in Fort Worth? I've resided in Tarrant County for the majority of my life, and briefly lived in Arizona for about a year, and back home to Texas. The most memorable places I've enjoyed here locally are the Botanical Gardens, the Museum of Science and History, The Jubilee Theater, and Del Frisco's Steakhouse along with a multitude of popular spots around town.



20 Years of Service Ceremony: (left to right) Katharine and Deneshia

What's your favorite family holiday tradition, and why? My favorite time of year would be Christmas. Just to see so many people smiling and enjoying the spirit of Christmas. My family and I have always had the tradition of opening one gift the night before Christmas Day. I love to see all the kids so excited about the gifting and the joy of spending time with family and enjoying each other.

What brings you joy? I feel like just being able to help someone or make the day go better for them brings joy and satisfaction.

What advice would you give someone interested working at a law library? My advice to anyone interested in working in a law library, or any library setting is be prepared for anything. The library is a place of learning and forever evolving. New ideas and concepts will bring challenges to create new possibilities for staff and for the community. Remember that libraries are the gateway to knowledge.



Above: Deneshia's birthday celebrations must include Dr. Pepper gifts and treats!

Below (left to right): Amanda, Cara, Deneshia, and Nancy working and adapting to numerous changes during COVID-19. Tarrant County was required to be staffed and maintain communication with the public when most businesses and government offices were officially closed.





Pictured: Texas Capitol dome, interior

Texas Legal Assistance

- **Legal Aid of Northwest Texas (LANWT)** is income based legal aid for residents of Northwest Texas. Visit www.lanwt.org to **apply online**. Applications are available in English and Spanish. **Call 817-336-3943 to apply if you are involved in a family law case, domestic violence situation, have a legal deadline, and/or have been served a lawsuit.**
- **Tarrant County Bar Association** provides an attorney referral service. **Call 817-336-4101.** The attorneys in this referral program have agreed to 30 minute consultations for \$20.00. You are not obligated to retain the attorney after the initial meeting.
- **Texas Lawyer's for Texas Veterans** provides legal aid for veterans. Visit the TLTV Tarrant County website at <https://txltvx.org>.
- **Texas Lawyers Legal Aid** is an informational blog written by Texas attorneys representing civil, family, accident, and immigration assistance. The blog includes articles, videos, and contact information. Visit their website at www.texashealthandlife.com.

Online Legal Chat Options

- **Dell DeHay Law Library** provides a **24/7 automated chat** for after-hours legal questions. Web links are provided for information and forms. Visit <https://www.tarrantcountytexas.gov/en/law-library.html> for the automated chat.
- **Texas Law Help** provides a **live chat on Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm**, for legal assistance and/or website assistance. Visit <https://texaslawhelp.org/ask-a-question> for assistance.
- **Texas Free Legal Answers** is an **income based online chat**. Create an account, post a question, and you'll receive an email when your answer is ready. Visit <https://texas.freelegalanswers.org> for more information.

Law Library Research Guides

Dell DeHay Law Library Research Guides are useful to patrons researching a specific topic. Access the alphabetical list of research guides by visiting www.tarrantcountytexas.gov/content/main/en/law-library/research-guides.html.

Online Access to Forms

Dell DeHay Law Library provides some fill-in-the-blank forms for commonly requested items. It is important to note that there are not fill-in-the-blank forms for every situation. Access the commonly requested forms page by visiting www.tarrantcountytexas.gov/en/law-library/forms.html.

New on the Shelf

- Roberts, Nick. *Texas Personal Injury Handbook*. LexisNexis, 2023. KFT 1397.P3R62
- Nollkamper, Pamela E. *Bankruptcy Courts and Procedures*. James Publishing, 2023. REF KF 319.E941
- Carlson, Richard R. *Carlson's Texas Rules of Appellate Procedure Annotated*. West, 2022. REF KFT 1755.A34H36



About the Author

Brittany Schick has a background in academic libraries, most notably Dallas College, where she worked as a reference librarian. She graduated with her Master's Degree in Library Science from the University of North Texas in 2009. She has worked at the Dell DeHay Law Library for nearly two years. Some of her duties include providing reference services, assisting with compiling research guides, and helping manage the library's fledgling social media accounts. Her favorite hobbies are reading and writing. She is thankful for the opportunity to share her love of both with the community.