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Immigrant Minors Sue Over Assaults at Nixon Facility

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – Ten young men have filed a lawsuit against more than a dozen individuals, private companies, and governmental agencies associated with the Away From Home facility in Nixon, Texas for abuse suffered while in civil immigration detention.

Represented by Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA), the leading provider of legal aid in Texas, the young men allege that they suffered repeated sexual, physical, and emotional abuse at the Nixon facility between 2006 and early 2007. All of them were minors during their stay.

“These children came to the United States with the hope that they would be able to leave the violence and poverty of their homelands and build better lives,” said TRLA attorney and Director of Litigation Jose Garza. “Their trust was violated by the very people charged with protecting them.”

The lawsuit alleges that the young men were repeatedly assaulted, denied counseling and treatment, and retaliated against when they reported the abuse. The suit further alleges that both state and federal officials were well aware of the abusive environment at the facility, but did not take any action to help the situation. The young men, all originally from Central America, are now living throughout the United States and are focused on recovering from the abuse.

Added Garza, “The physical and emotional scars they now carry could have been avoided. The system should have protected them.”

Established in 1970, Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, Inc. (TRLA) is a nonprofit organization that provides free civil legal services to low-income and disadvantaged clients in a 68-county service area. TRLA’s mission is to promote the dignity, self-sufficiency, safety and stability of low-income Texas residents by providing high-quality legal assistance and related educational services.

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