

Key Information

The College

The College is an intensive program of practice exercises, enhanced by faculty demonstrations and personal supervision.

Enrollment is limited to 80 students, who are selected to participate by an application and registration process. A week before the College, students receive course materials simulating a case file, including police reports and witness statements. Preparation is essential because through the week students must try their own case, from jury selection to final argument.

A distinguished faculty member gives a brief lecture on the upcoming segment of the trial. Groups of eight, selected on the basis of experience level, then adjourn to separate classrooms to begin their videotaped exercises. Faculty members not only supervise the exercises but also critique the video performance with each student. Then, a faculty member particularly skilled in that area will present a demonstration to the entire group.

Some portion of each evening must be devoted to preparation for the next day but students and faculty are encouraged to eat together, get to know one another and exchange ideas.

The Mission

The best lawyers are those who recognize and accept their position as defenders, not only of individual clients, but also of the fragile system of checks and balances that ensures freedom for us all. Thus, this College emphasizes the spirit and camaraderie of criminal defense.

The Criminal Defense Lawyers Project has been an endeavor of the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association for over 45 years. It is funded by a grant from the Judicial and Court Personnel Training Fund administered by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.

The purpose of the College is to promote efficient administration of criminal justice by providing training for lawyers to render effective assistance of counsel for indigent criminal defendants.

The Faculty

Only experienced trial lawyers are invited to teach at this College. Invited faculty are among the most successful criminal trial lawyers in the state. However, the best lawyers have the busiest schedules so it is inevitable that a few will not be able to attend and that some will stay for only a couple of days.

Note: Onsite registrations will not be accepted.

[www.tcdla.com]

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Austin, Texas



Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association
6808 Hill Meadow Drive
Austin, Texas 78736

www.tcdla.com

March 22-27, 2026
Huntsville, TX
Criminal Defense Lawyers Project

2026

49th Annual

Tim Evans Texas Criminal Trial College



Details

Application and Registration Information

This course is designed for all ranges of criminal defense trial experience—from new to veterans to former prosecutors and to the attorney who wants to continue improving trial skills. The College is committed to responsible racial and gender balance. You must be prepared to devote your entire week to this course.

Applications will exceed enrollment, so you are encouraged to apply now. Initial acceptance will be made from applications received by the December 29th deadline. Later applicants will be placed on a ranked waiting list. You will be notified by January 23, 2026, if your application has been accepted. Note: Onsite registration not accepted.

Housing and Travel Accommodations

The course is conducted at the Texas Criminal Justice Center at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX. Participants will stay in the University Hotel adjacent to the Center. The cost of your hotel is included with the registration fee. TCDLA staff will only make your hotel reservations if you will be staying at the University Hotel, two participants per room. Single rooms are available on request at Holiday Inn partner hotel, attendee will be responsible to make thier own reservation under the rooming block provided to them. Breakfast and lunch are provided, (group dinner at own expense).

[invited Faculty]

Deans:		
Kerri Anderson Donica & Lance Evans		
Deans Emeritus:		
Tim Evans & Lydia Clay-Jackson		
Roberto Balli, Laredo	Theodore Hargrove,	Stephanie Patten, Fort Worth
Heather Barbieri, Plano	San Angelo	Scott Pawgan, San Antonio
Robert Barrera, San Antonio	Michael Heiskell, Fort Worth	Stan Schneider, Houston
Sam Bassett, Austin	Amanda Hernandez, San Antonio	Frank Sellers, Fort Worth
Elizabeth Berry, Abilene	John Hunter Smith, Sherman	Sara Smitherman, Houston
Anne Burnham, San Antonio	Kameron Johnson, Austin	Mark Snodgrass, Lubbock
John Convery, San Antonio	Steve Keathley, Corsicana	Monique Sparks, Houston
Jeep Darnell, El Paso	Laurie Key, Lubbock	Clay Steadman, Kerrville
Christina Dean, Dallas	Adam Kobs, San Antonio	Stephanie Stevens, San Antonio
Nicole DeBorde Hochglaube, Houston	Jim Lavine, Houston	Rebecca Tavitias, El Paso
Danny Easterling, Houston	Brent Mayr, Houston	Patty Tress, Denton
Don Flanary, San Antonio	Dwight McDonald, Lubbock	Ezekiel Tyson, Jr, Dallas
Lisa Greenberg, Corpus Christi	Bobby Mims, Tyler	Paul Tu, Houston
Michael Gross, San Antonio	Tyrone C. Moncriste, Houston	Rick Wardroup, Lubbock
Rusty Gunter, Lubbock	David Moore, Longview	Greg Westfall, Fort Worth
David Guinn Jr., Lubbock	Jose Ozuna, Edinburg	Reagan Wynn, Fort Worth
	Damon Parrish, Houston	Thomas Wynne, Dallas

Agenda

[37.50 CLE Hours, Including 1.00 Ethics]

Sunday, March 22

2:00 pm	Registration and Check-in
4:00 pm	Orientation, History and General Discussion of the Institute Lecture: Opening and Closing Arguments How to Start . . . Week Instructions and Q&A Developing a Theory of the Case
4:45 pm	The Fun of an Initial Lawyer/Client Interview
5:30 pm	Cultural Competence in the Courtroom (Including CS)
6:00 pm	Daily Evaluation & Adjourn
6:30 pm	Group Dinner
7:00 pm	

Monday, March 23

7:30 am	Breakfast Provided
8:30 am	Lecture: Theater and the Lawyer in the Courtroom
9:15 am	Introductions, Group Activity, and Closing Argument Exercises
11:30 am	Lunch Provided
1:00 pm	Continue Closing Argument Exercises
3:30 pm	Demonstrations and Discussion: Closing Arguments
5:00 pm	Taking Care of Yourself
5:30 pm	Daily Evaluation & Adjourn
6:30 pm	Group Dinner

Tuesday, March 24

7:30 am	Breakfast Provided
8:30 am	Lecture: Direct and How to Introduce Demonstrative Evidence (Making and Responding to Objections) Direct Examination Exercises
10:00 am	
12:00 pm	Lunch Provided
1:30 pm	Lecture: Dealing with Difficult Clients Appointed and Retained (Including Collateral Consequences) (Ethics)* Complete Direct (if needed) and Begin Cross Examination Exercises
2:30 pm	Lecture: Making Objections and Protecting the Record
5:00 pm	Daily Evaluation & Adjourn
6:00 pm	
6:30 pm	Group Dinner

Wednesday, March 25

7:30 am	Breakfast Provided
8:30 am	Lecture: Cross-Examination
9:30 am	Cross-Examination Exercises
12:00 pm	Lunch Provided
1:00 pm	Demonstration and Discussion: Cross-Examination
2:30 pm	Cross-Examination Exercises Continued
4:00 pm	Break
4:15 pm	Demonstration and Discussion: Jury Selection
5:45 pm	Daily Evaluation & Adjourn
6:15 pm	Group Dinner

Thursday, March 26

7:30 am	Breakfast Provided
8:30 am	Lecture: Jury Selection
10:00 am	Jury Selection Exercises
12:45 pm	Lunch Provided
1:45 pm	Jury Selection Exercises Continued
4:00 pm	Lecture: Punishment/Sentencing
4:45 pm	Lecture: Opening Statements
5:30 pm	Daily Evaluation & Adjourn
6:30 pm	Group Dinner

Friday, March 27

7:30 am	Breakfast Provided
8:30 am	Wrap Up and Questions
9:00 am	Opening Statement Exercises
12:00 pm	Adjourn, Farewell Lunch, or Grab & Go — Check Out with TCDLA

**Ethical considerations will be emphasized throughout the College.*

Registration

Completed applications must be received by 5:00 pm on Monday, December 29, 2025

Bar # _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ Cell _____

Email _____

Must be a licensed Texas attorney. Please complete entire application.

- I would like to attend this training and have enclosed:
- ☐ \$150 registration. Registration price includes breakfast and lunch each day, dinner two nights, and hotel double occupancy. *Special needs or financially unable to pay, contact TCDLA. (refunds, less 10% processing fee, only for cancellations made before February 27, 2026).
 - ☐ Requested Roommate: _____
 - ☐ This application plus a letter of intent telling us your level of trial experience. Additionally, please tell us why you want to attend the Tim Evans Texas Criminal Trial College.
 - ☐ A letter of recommendation from a Texas Judge (District, County, or Federal).
 - ☐ A letter of recommendation from a criminal defense attorney.
 - ☐ A professional headshot for directory. (If not uploaded to TCDLA profile already)
 - ☐ Single Room at own expense— TCDLA will provide info for off-site partner hotel (I will book my own room at my own expense)

You will be notified by January 23, 2026. Only complete applications will be considered.

Note: After February 27, 2026, cancellations will be charged a portion of the actual cost of \$750 per person if we cannot fill your spot.

Required { Credit card number: _____ Expiration date: _____

Signature: _____ CVC: _____

☐ I applied last year. ☐ I attended Criminal Trial College in _____

I accept court appointments: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Trial Experience: Please be candid about your trial experience, and do not exaggerate.

Number of Trials (as first chair only):

_____ Felony Jury # _____ Felony Bench # _____ Misdemeanor Jury

_____ Misdemeanor Bench # _____ Civil Jury

Number of Trials (as second chair): **On a separate sheet explain your involvement.

_____ 2nd Chair Felony Jury** # _____ 2nd Chair Misdemeanor Jury**

Type of practice and years in practice (general description): _____

Other Training or Experience:

Law school: _____ Date graduated: _____

Other trial training courses taken: _____

Former Prosecutor: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how long, when did you leave, and what experience did you have? _____

Public Defender: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what office? _____

Special Needs? _____

☐ Vegetarian Lunch

Email: smartinez@tcsla.com | Fax: 512-469-0512 or mail to 6808 Hill Meadow Drive | Austin, TX 78736
Sponsored by CDLP, a project of TCDLA, funded by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.

*If you do not receive a confirmation of application in 5 business days, please call 512.646.2730