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## **New Leadership for Texas Appleseed in 2015**

*Nonprofit promotes social and economic justice to help Texans*

AUSTIN, Texas — The Texas Appleseed Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Deborah Fowler, current deputy director at Texas Appleseed, will assume the role of executive director in January 2015. The current executive director, Rebecca Lightsey, has decided to step down to pursue other interests. Lightsey will remain at the helm of the nonprofit through the end of 2014.

“Deborah is a natural fit for this appointment, and there is no better person to help continue to move Texas Appleseed forward,” said Board President George Butts. “We have a true advocate in Deborah who has worked tirelessly to ensure that all Texans can get the same fair shot at life and have equal access to justice. We know that her energy, passion and knowledge will continue to ignite the work we do.”

Fowler joined Texas Appleseed 10 years ago, overseeing the legal team and coordinating other Texas Appleseed projects to enact real reform on issues that affect Texas youth, families and those with mental illness. She is a nationally recognized expert in school discipline and juvenile justice issues, having authored several major reports on the School-to-Prison Pipeline in Texas. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Tulane University and a Juris Doctor from Lewis & Clark College’s Northwestern School of Law.

“I am proud of the work we do at Texas Appleseed, and delighted to continue working with our outstanding team to give a voice to the Texans who often get overlooked in our political and legal processes,” said Fowler.

### **A Great Leader’s Departure**

Rebecca Lightsey is an attorney experienced in public policy and nonprofit management. She helped the organization evolve into what it is today by bringing on new issue areas integral to social and economic justice, as well as implementing Texas Appleseed’s vision with ease and sound leadership. Under her leadership, Texas Appleseed has become one of the most effective advocacy organizations in Texas, gaining national recognition for their work on financial access, disaster recovery and foster care, as well as school discipline.

“Rebecca will be deeply missed. She has been a part of the Texas Appleseed family for nearly a decade. Under her direction, we have made major advancements that have changed Texas laws for the better and that have helped families succeed. Her thoughtful approach to leadership is something that the Board, staff and many others have appreciated over the years,” said Butts.

“I will continue to be one of Texas Appleseed’s greatest champions,” said Lightsey. “My work here has been incredibly meaningful, and my support for these issues won’t end here.”

### **About Texas Appleseed**

Texas Appleseed is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote social and economic justice for all Texans by leveraging the skills and resources of volunteer lawyers and other professionals to identify practical solutions to difficult, systemic problems. [www.TexasAppleseed.net](http://www.TexasAppleseed.net)

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