



**HAND to HOLD**  
*Fragile Babies. Strong Support.*

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## **Hand to Hold Names Board Officers; Appoints New Staff**

AUSTIN, Texas (April 29, 2011) – Local nonprofit Hand to Hold has elected board officers. David Alter, a venture capital investor at Austin Ventures, has been named president. Barbara Balliette, partner with Reid Collins & Tsai, is serving as secretary, and Scott Whitaker, Director of Stewardship and Development with the Catholic Diocese of Austin, has been elected treasurer. Other board members include Matthew Dowd, Founding Partner, ViaNovo and ABC News Political Contributor; Sarah Masterson, Communications/Marketing Nonprofit Management Consultant; Rachel Muir, Client Strategy Executive at Convio; and Dr. Felicia Nash, Obstetrician/Gynecologist, Women Partners in Health.

“As the parent of twins born almost four months premature, it is my privilege to serve as president of Hand to Hold, an organization that is providing important navigation services and support to parents following preterm birth or loss,” said Alter. “There is a large unmet need for community-based support for parents after the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Hand to Hold is filling this gap by offering comprehensive support, information and resources to help families navigate through a very challenging time.”

To meet the growing demand for services, Hand to Hold has added two new staff members. Erika Goyer has joined the organization as a Family Support Navigator – the first point of contact for families who have had preemie, a child in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit or a loss and who have requested support, navigation assistance and resources. She interfaces with parents, trains and recruits parent peer mentors, and works to build partnerships and resources available to families. She will office with Austin’s First Steps High Risk Follow-up Clinic (a service of Pediatrix Medical Services, Inc.) to provide resources and support to parents during their child’s ongoing developmental screenings following discharge from the hospital.

Before joining Hand to Hold, Goyer spent the last four years at a statewide parent organization where she provided community-based services for families working to enhance the outcomes for families of children with special health and education needs. Goyer is a bereaved parent of a preemie and mom of two boys with special education needs.

Laura Romero has joined Hand to Hold to spearhead Hand to Hold’s sibling support program which assists families who have healthy siblings in addition to one or more children who have been born early, have a special health care need or who have passed away. Romero is a graduate student in the Family and Child Studies program at Texas State University San Marcos and a trained SibShop™ Facilitator through the Sibling Support Project. Laura is the mother of two young children, one born early and who has a special health care need.

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### **About Hand to Hold**

Hand to Hold, a nonprofit organization, provides comprehensive navigation resources and support programs to parents of preemies, babies born with special health care needs and those who have experienced a loss due to these or other complications. Based in Austin, Hand to Hold’s core service is matching experienced peer mentors with new parents who have had a child in the NICU to offer support. All services are offered without charge. For more information, visit [www.handtohold.org](http://www.handtohold.org) or call toll-free 855-H2H-NICU.