

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC LAW • ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION • ANIMAL LAW • ANTITRUST AND BUSINESS LITIGATION
APPELLATE • BUSINESS LAW • CONSTRUCTION LAW • CONSUMER AND COMMERCIAL LAW • CORPORATE COUNSEL
ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES LAW • FAMILY LAW • GENERAL PRACTICE, SOLO, AND SMALL FIRM • GOVERNMENT LAW
HISPANIC ISSUES • INSURANCE LAW • INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW • INTERNATIONAL LAW • JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURTS
JUVENILE LAW • LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW • LGBT LAW • MILITARY AND VETERANS LAW
MUNICIPAL JUDGES • NATIVE AMERICAN LAW • OIL, GAS, AND ENERGY RESOURCES LAW • POVERTY LAW
PUBLIC UTILITY LAW • REAL ESTATE, PROBATE, AND TRUST LAW • SCHOOL LAW • TAX • WOMEN AND THE LAW

2013-2014 State Bar of Texas

SECTION REPORTS

Section reports are included in the July issue of the *Texas Bar Journal* to update Texas lawyers on State Bar section activities. The reports do not necessarily reflect the position or official policy of the State Bar of Texas, which is formulated by the State Bar Board of Directors or by the membership through referendum. For more information or to join a section, visit texasbar.com/sections or call (800) 204-2222, ext. 1420.

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ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC LAW

J. Kay Trostle, Chair

The Administrative and Public Law Section was pleased to sponsor the annual Mack Kidd Administrative Law Moot Court Competition in Austin in October 2013 with final arguments held before the Third Court of Appeals. The winner was the team of Jesse Beck, Brittney Ervin, and Richard Keeton of Texas Tech University School of Law. We are looking forward to another great moot court competition Oct. 24-25, 2014.

The section also joined with the University of Texas School of Law CLE to sponsor the 9th Advanced Texas Administrative Law Seminar on Aug. 29-30, 2013, at the AT&T Conference Center in Austin. Approximately 400 participants attended the 2013 seminar. This year's event will be held Aug. 21-22, 2014, at the AT&T Conference Center, and APLS members will receive discounted registration.

APLS also sponsors the *Texas Tech Administrative Law Journal*, the only such publication in Texas. The two annual volumes are provided to all section members as part of their membership dues.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Ronald Hornberger, Chair

The 2013-2014 year for the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section has been an eventful one filled with promise, new beginnings, and high expectations. This spring we completed an overhaul of our website, texasadr.org, resulting in a more dynamic, relevant, and user-friendly site. We also are editing the *Alternative Dispute Resolution Handbook* and hope to have the new version published in 2014-2015. Following years of study by the council, the issue of the "public" non-attorney members of our section was met head-on this year and the bylaws were changed to require membership in good standing of the State Bar of Texas as a prerequisite for membership in the ADR Section. Justice Linda Thomas served as course

director of an educational, interesting, and at times entertaining CLE program in Dallas in January. In April, the council conducted what I hope will become a tradition: a retreat spread over two days, utilized to drill down in detail on many of the projects and issues that will become the further focus of the coming year for the section, including membership, marketing the handbook, the website, the newsletter, and other topics that should produce many future member benefits.

ANIMAL LAW

Natalie Rebecca Lynch, Chair

The Animal Law Section announced its third annual student writing competition, open to all students enrolled in, or who graduated from, a Texas law school in 2013 or 2014. Authors of the top three papers will receive awards of \$1,500, \$1,000, or \$500, along with an offer to publish in the *Texas Animal Law Journal*.

The Animal Law Section also hosted the Animal Law Institute in Austin with speakers from around the nation and the globe. There were discussions regarding the considerations of local and international law related to the use of hunting to preserve endangered species, veterinarian liability in Texas, representation of animal interests in local courts, local legislative interests, legal consequences of concentrated animal farming operations, importation of battle buddies from war zones, and discussions of Chinese animal law. The event was an overwhelming success and there is a lot of interest in and excitement for next year's institute.

The Animal Law Section will hold its annual meeting at the State Bar of Texas's animal law conference. New board members, including a new chair, will be elected and two CLEs will be presented.

ANTITRUST AND BUSINESS LITIGATION

William Frank Carroll, Chair

The Antitrust and Business Litigation Section had an extremely active

year. The section continued its quarterly publication of the *Texas Business Litigation Journal*, including its annual survey articles on antitrust developments, arbitration, business torts, class-action developments, Delaware fiduciary law developments, developments in personal jurisdiction, expert witness law developments, and securities law.

The section also presented a program at the 2013 State Bar Annual Meeting titled "Strategies and Practical Tips on Multidistrict Practice and Litigation," with speakers Thomas Jackson, Barry Barnett, U.S. District Court Judges Royal Furgeson and David Godbey, and Fifth District Court of Appeals Justice Douglas Lang. The section also presented its 8th Annual Distinguished Counselor Award to Curtis L. Frisbie of Gardere Wynne Sewell, a leading antitrust lawyer and former chair of the section.

The section also presented a program at the 2014 Annual Meeting titled "Federal and State Antitrust Review of Mergers—Strategies and Practical Guidance for the Challenge to American Airlines/U.S. Airways." The speakers were the attorneys for the objecting plaintiff, the government, and the airlines.

Finally, the section revamped and updated its website, texasbuslit.org, to provide better service its members.

APPELLATE

Jeff Levinger, Chair

The Appellate Section's year began at our annual meeting last September, where we announced the winners of our Twitter brief competition and the Helen A. Cassidy Award and inducted former Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Chief Judge John R. Brown into the Texas Appellate Hall of Fame. The annual meeting also coincided with the section's Advanced Civil Appellate Practice Course.

The section continues to be very proud of its quarterly publication, the *Appellate Advocate*. Archived editions can be found on the section's

website, which was re-launched this year.

In April, the section's Diversity Committee presented a CLE luncheon titled "Minorities in Appellate Law: A View from the Bench." More than 150 attendees watched a fascinating presentation by former Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice Wallace B. Jefferson, former Supreme Court Justice Dale Wainwright, and Justice Luz Elena D. Chapa of the Fourth Court of Appeals in San Antonio. The section has also presented appellate CLE programs at the Texas Association of Appellate Court Attorneys meeting and the State Bar Annual Meeting.

The Amicus Brief Committee adopted guidelines for filing section amicus briefs in appeals of importance, and the Pro Bono Committee continues to expand its programs in the intermediate appellate courts and the Texas Supreme Court.

BUSINESS LAW

David R. Keyes, Chair

During the past year, the Business Law Section has been actively involved in the improvement of laws affecting businesses in Texas, including the passage of the Uniform Trade Secrets Act and further amendments to the Texas Business Organizations Code.

We have appeared at numerous law schools in Texas and made other outreach efforts to increase interest in business law and in section membership and diversity. We have contacted local bar associations in mid-sized Texas cities and offered to sponsor joint receptions and CLE programs in those locations. While this is a work in progress, we remain hopeful that we will be viewed as supporters, rather than competitors, for local bar involvement.

We have refreshed and enhanced our website to improve functionality and bring cutting-edge content to our members. We especially hope this will inspire younger attorneys to become

members and participate in the work of our committees—both in substantive areas of practice and in the public interest, such as donated legal services.

We continue to sponsor CLE programs throughout the year, in conjunction with the State Bar, TexasBar CLE, and various law schools.

CONSTRUCTION LAW

Matthew C. Ryan, Chair

The Construction Law Section—currently consisting of more than 2,300 statewide members—is proud to announce the creation of the Construction Law Foundation of Texas, a 501(c)(6) nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the construction community in Texas through the support of educational and professional pursuits and the state's construction community at large. The section will sponsor and collaborate in the presentation of an annual Construction Law Conference for experienced practitioners, as well as a yearly Basic Course in Construction Law for those interested in a "crash course" in this practice area. This year's annual conference in San Antonio—the 27th such event since the creation of the section—witnessed record attendance and reflected the steady increase of interest in this area of the law as the entire state of Texas continues to serve as one of the most dynamic, expanding markets for construction and development in the United States. At the same time, the section's *Construction Law Journal* continues to publish scholarly articles that arm practitioners with insights and analysis of the most recent developments in the field. The section's Young Construction Lawyers group continues to develop emerging professionals who will serve as industry leaders in the years to come.

CONSUMER AND COMMERCIAL LAW

Esther Chavez, Chair

Continuing its tradition of offering high-quality CLE, the section hosted two well-received programs: a half

day event at the State Bar Annual Meeting and a two-day program on advanced topics. Speakers Chad Baruch and Richard Alderman received section awards for CLE excellence. The 10th Annual Advanced Consumer & Commercial Law CLE will be Sept. 11-12, 2014, in Austin.

The section continued its support of legal services to the indigent by launching a volunteer drive, hosting a webinar urging members to provide pro bono services for texaslawhelp.org, dedicating \$5,000 for CLE scholarships for legal aid attorneys, and providing financial support for the annual Champions of Justice Gala Benefiting Veterans.

Establishing a new tradition, the section announced its inaugural Craig Jordan Consumer Protection Writing Competition—established posthumously in honor of the section founder and nationally recognized consumer attorney. Article submissions are due Dec. 31, 2014. The writer of the winning article will receive a \$4,000 cash award.

Finally, the section continues to operate its listserv and website, txconsumerlawyers.org, and, in cooperation with the University of Houston Law Center, publishes the acclaimed *Journal of Consumer & Commercial Law*.

CORPORATE COUNSEL

Michael D. Marin, Chair

The Corporate Counsel Section continues to thrive and expand the benefits provided to our growing membership (now approximately 4,000).

The 36th Annual Corporate Counsel Institute, jointly sponsored with the University of Texas School of Law, allowed attendees to fulfill their annual CLE requirements in two days. We also provided CLE programs with the Business Law Section at the 2013 State Bar Annual Meeting and the 2013 Advanced In-House Counsel CLE program. Additionally, we held several networking and CLE

programs throughout the state.

Our section has come of age with a social media perspective under the leadership of Jane McBride and Jason Smith, including the creation of our LinkedIn group (with nearly 700 members) and a newly updated website.

Under the leadership of Aaron Carlson, the Corporate Counsel Section Newsletter published four editions and the Corporate Counsel Newsstand, for a second year, provided our section members with a free daily or weekly customizable email. The *Corporate Counsel Review* law journal was again provided to all section members.

Our section awarded grants of more than \$40,000 to pro bono organizations, bringing the total pro bono contributions made by the section over the past 15 years to nearly \$400,000.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES LAW

Mike Nasi, Chair

Our law school committee had an active year, continuing to award scholarships to the highest-ranking students in the introductory environmental law courses at each Texas law school and funding internships for law students at several Texas agencies. Members of the section attended law school events to speak with students about careers in environmental law.

In August 2013, we sponsored the 25th Annual Texas Environmental Superconference, a very successful (and entertaining) event. The two-day conference sold out at 500-plus attendees and provided a great resource for CLE and networking. In February 2014, we co-sponsored “The Changing Face of Water Rights in Texas,” an important conference for water rights practitioners.

The section is excited about the upcoming release of the third edition of *Essentials of Texas Water Resources*. This book is an invaluable resource

for everyone who is interested in water topics. To purchase a copy, visit texasbarcle.com.

Another important section-sponsored activity is the publication of the *Texas Environmental Law Journal*, which is distributed electronically. The *Journal* will soon be available online, along with a number of other resources, through a newly designed website and an “ENRLS App,” which will be a valuable practitioner tool.

FAMILY LAW

Sherri Ann Evans, Chair

Twenty committees contribute to the success of the Family Law Section. In 2013, the Legislative Committee promoted its legislative package and effectively argued against other legislation that could have negatively impacted family law in Texas.

In 2013, the Pro Bono Committee hosted 11 seminars across the state and provided access to justice for 540 indigent Texans. Further evidence of the section’s commitment to pro bono is a Family Law Cares website, which is under development, that will provide attorneys with resources to handle pro bono family law cases. In its inaugural year, Family Law Cares drew crowds of more than 1,000 to Fair Park for the Family Law Cares Pro Bono 5K Fun Run. The section also partnered with the Texas Young Lawyers Association to present a series of seminars on how to handle pro bono family law cases.

The 2013 Advanced Family Law Seminar proved a big success, with 1,860 registrants. It also provided an opportunity for the section to honor attorneys who have made a significant contribution, including Chris Nickelson, who received the Dan Price Award; Jane Shin, who received the Ken Fuller Pro Bono Award; Norma Trusch, who received the inaugural Gay G. Cox Collaborative Law Award; and Tom Ausley, who received the Texas Academy of Family Law Specialists Sam Emison Award.

GENERAL PRACTICE, SOLO, AND SMALL FIRM

Kevin Mutscher, Chair

The General Practice, Solo, and Small Firm Section was active in four well-attended CLE presentations. Feedback from those programs illustrates a need for courses focused on law practice management and procedures. Our *General Practice Digest* continues to be a valuable resource for Texas practitioners.

The council has advocated that equal focus and publicity be given to all clauses of the State Bar mission. We believe a majority of Texas lawyers feel that “assur[ing] all citizens equal access to justice” and pro bono have broader meanings than providing free legal services to disadvantaged Texans. The legal needs of the less fortunate are important, and many lawyers work to that end without a desire for recognition. An attorney’s involvement is often inseparable from those needs; however, neither the bar nor its members should be singularly responsible for addressing those societal needs.

The section supports fostering a collaborative relationship between the bar and the Texas Supreme Court. Many recent programs, including uniform forms and mandatory e-filing, illustrate that the bar’s involvement is more reactionary to implementation than participatory in development.

Bar leadership has been encouraged to put your needs first. The input and needs of Texas attorneys should never be overlooked. We continue our efforts to provide you a voice before the State Bar.

GOVERNMENT LAW

Joan L. Marshall, Chair

The section membership has increased to 838 members as services to its members expand. The section continues to sponsor the annual Boot Camp seminar and co-sponsor the Suing and Defending Governmental Entities seminar. This year the Boot

Camp will provide seven hours of CLE (two hours ethics), while the Suing and Defending Seminar will provide 14 CLE hours (two hours ethics). The section actively recruits individuals for scholarships to attend these seminars. The section is also a co-sponsor of the Open Government Seminar at the State Bar Annual Meeting.

The section was very proud as board member and past chair Carolyn F. Moore received the 2013 Distinguished Service Award from Texas Tech University School of Law. At the 2013 Section Annual Meeting, Stephen D. Sanders was honored as the third annual recipient of the section's Outstanding Government Lawyer Award. Sanders has devoted more than half of his life to public service, serving as an attorney on active duty with the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps for 10 years and as a civilian attorney for the Department of Defense Contract Management Agency.

The section has continued to improve and expand its website, txgovernmentlaw.org.

HISPANIC ISSUES

Judge Patricia O. Alvarez, Chair

The Hispanic Issues Section celebrated its 35th birthday this year with the theme "Outreach to Communities, Lawyers, and Law Students." Our short-term focus was on building bridges. Our long-term strategy was geared toward building a strong organizational base. We expanded our board to include committees concentrating on access to justice initiatives, membership and services, and student outreach efforts. Additionally, we worked with law school representatives to form a firm foundation for future years. We divided our state into four sections, each with a membership co-chair who worked diligently to increase membership.

To better understand the needs of

our membership, we developed a survey, which indicated that our members are concerned about legislative issues. We set the stage to prepare for the submission of legislative proposals regarding the unauthorized practice of law by "immigration notarios." We also supported the LGBT Section's proposal on the abolition of sodomy laws in Texas.

Our Bylaws Committee undertook a review to ascertain whether a continuity of leadership was in place. Law students and newly licensed attorneys are now exempt from paying initial dues.

The Website and Social Media and the Newsletter committees did an outstanding job of building bridges to link our membership with other attorneys.

INSURANCE LAW

Stephen E. Walraven, Chair

The Insurance Law Section continues to focus on bringing practical value to both full-time insurance lawyers as well as practitioners in other fields who encounter insurance matters occasionally. Through its website, *Right Off the Press* email newsletter, *Journal of Texas Insurance Law*, and seminars, the section provides resources for all Texas lawyers who have an interest in insurance law. The section is proud of its *Journal of Texas Insurance Law*, both for its scholarship and its practicality. We are also pleased with *Right Off the Press*, which provides weekly updates on developments in insurance law. The section has a new website, which includes sample pleadings, prior *Journal* articles, and other resources for the bar.

The section has also played an active role in designing insurance law programs and seminars. The State Bar's Insurance Law Seminar presented in Houston last April brought together leading judges and insurance lawyers to discuss the latest law, trends, and practice tips for

advanced insurance lawyers. Next fall, the University of Texas Insurance Law Seminar, to be held in Dallas, will provide attendees with valuable insights and analysis of insurance law issues.

The Insurance Law Section continues to work to benefit both the regular and the occasional practitioner of insurance law.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW

Paul R. Morico, Chair

The Intellectual Property Law Section had another strong year, publishing multiple newsletters and hosting a program at the Annual Meeting in Dallas, an advanced patent litigation course in Albuquerque, New Mexico, an advanced IP law course in Dallas, and the first-ever leadership retreat in Conroe.

At the Annual Meeting IP program, several awards were presented, including the Women and Minority Scholarship awards, the Texas Inventor of the Year Award, and the inaugural Tom Arnold Lifetime Achievement Award. We hosted the Advanced Patent Litigation course in Albuquerque and had one of our largest-ever turnouts during the Advanced IP Law CLE in Dallas. The Women in IP Law Committee was also active hosting various events, including a Women in IP Taskforce event in Plano.

This April, the IP Law Section held a retreat for its council members and committee chairs. Various topics were explored, including reorganization of committee structure, improvements to bylaws, CLE programming and the website, and the formation of a New Lawyer Committee. A survey was also developed to elicit feedback from our section members.

The section participated in the 2014 Annual Meeting in Austin and will hold the 2014 Advanced Patent Litigation Course in San Antonio on July 17. For more information, visit texasbariplaw.org.

INTERNATIONAL LAW

George F. Goolsby, Chair

Because international law plays an increasing role in the practices of Texas lawyers, the International Law Section is expanding its activities to respond to this growing need. Among other initiatives, the section has increased its outreach programs, rationalized its leadership structure, and is revitalizing its website.

The section partnered with the Texas Young Lawyers Association on two Nuts and Bolts seminars intended to provide basic legal education to newcomers to international law. In Dallas, additional sponsors of this event were the ILS of the Dallas Bar Association and the Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law. In Houston, an additional sponsor was the ILS of the Houston Bar Association. The section also held its 26th annual institute, where leading experts discussed recent developments in international law. In addition, the Law Student Outreach program provides students an opportunity to hear attorneys discuss their practices and offer tips on getting started.

The section welcomes those interested in leadership positions. In addition to officer and council roles, we have several committee positions. Our goal is to increase participation and diversity in our activities.

Lastly, the section is revamping its website to enhance usability and provide relevant content.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURTS

Howard M. Bookstaff, Chair

Our section has been busy at work. After a relatively long dormant period, in July 2013 we had a “reorganizational meeting” to revive our section. We elected eight directors.

Since July, we have taken numerous steps to reorganize the section. We have undertaken a rewriting of our bylaws to reflect the current state of our section. Included in our

changes was a revision that will allow non-lawyer JPs to be members of our section.

We also changed the name of our section. The current name of Justice of the Peace Courts reflects the makeup of our section as more than just justices of the peace. Our section is geared toward lawyers who practice in justice courts, as well as the judges themselves.

We also had a CLE presentation at the Annual Meeting on June 26, 2014, and a social that evening.

JUVENILE LAW

Richard L. Ainsa, Chair

In February 2014, the section hosted its 27th Annual Robert O. Dawson Juvenile Law Institute in Corpus Christi. The conference was well received by attendees. During the conference, the section continued its long-standing tradition of raising funds for college scholarships and financial aid for deserving youth who were originally committed to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. This project allows young people to attend a college or university of their choice that they would not otherwise be able to attend. The section hosts a silent auction and solicits donations. This project has grown as other bar associations have begun donating to the scholarship fund, with a total of \$9,000 from the Houston Bar Association in 2013-2014.

As always, the section is grateful for its continuing collaboration with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. The section works with TJJD to provide training to attorneys, judges, probation officers, and law enforcement. The section will also be providing guest editors to update the Dawson juvenile manual used by practitioners statewide. TJJD provides invaluable assistance in planning and coordinating the section’s annual conference and our upcoming Nuts and Bolts Conference that will take place Aug. 11-12, 2014, in

Austin.

Please visit juvenilelaw.org to learn more about the section.

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW

Kathy D. Boutchee, Chair

This was another strong year for the Labor and Employment Law Section.

Continuing its tradition of offering high-quality CLE programs for employment lawyers, the section hosted its 24th Annual Labor Law Institute in October 2013. Attendees heard from the judiciary, practitioners, and in-house counsel on topical employment law issues. On Sept. 19-20, 2014, the annual program will be held at the JW Marriott in San Antonio. Additionally, attendees at the State Bar Annual Meeting heard a panel discussion on “Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Policies, Practices, and Future Legal Battlegrounds” between the EEOC’s regional attorney in Dallas and attorneys representing management and employees.

The section strives to provide its membership with information that will assist them in their daily practice. It electronically distributes the *Labor & Employment Law Newsletter* summarizing recent federal and state employment law cases. Through its website, laborlaw.org, members can access a jury charge database of approved jury questions and instructions and receive highlights of the many other section activities.

The section is proud of its ongoing contributions to promoting pro bono activities. This year, the section awarded a total of \$24,400 in grants and internships: three \$5,000 internships and \$9,400 in grants to pro bono organizations.

LGBT LAW

Shelly L. Skeen, Chair

2013-2014 saw sweeping changes in state and federal laws affecting the LGBT community. More practitioners are representing LGBT clients

who have been affected by these changes. To emphasize the importance of these changes and to educate all members of the State Bar of Texas, the section sponsored six CLE webcasts and live CLE programs on immigration, taxation, employment law, employee benefits, constitutional law, family law, and estate planning. The speakers included nationally recognized scholars, practitioners, and judges, including Shannon Minter, Pat Cain, Iowa Chief Justice Mark Cady, John Nechman, Ken Upton, Judge Tonya Parker, and Jody Scheske. The section redesigned its website to provide members with more value, including a “members only” area with access to the first membership directory with hyperlinks to members’ websites. The section began a new newsletter containing member profiles and important legal developments in LGBT law. The section submitted a proposed bill for the State Bar’s legislative package to repeal Texas’s unconstitutional sodomy statute and received overwhelmingly favorable comments from all of the sections that responded to the submission.

MILITARY AND VETERANS LAW

Bob Goss, Chair

Wow—another tremendous year!

We changed our name to Military and Veterans Law and our bylaws to highlight MVLS’s commitment to both military and veterans issues.

MVLS held two highly successful two-day CLEs and a CLE rebroadcast, providing excellent training on military and veterans law issues to interested attorneys.

The MVLS CLE titled “The Biennial Institute Presents: Texas Law for Attorneys Representing Service Members & Veterans in Texas Courts” was held in the historic Omni La Mansion del Rio hotel in San Antonio on Oct. 25-26, 2013. There were 75 attendees. Presentations included consumer law, family law, changes to

Texas rules, veterans law, SCRA, FTCA, criminal defense of service members in civilian courts, and a fascinating luncheon presentation by Judge Travis Bryan. As part of MVLS’s outreach program, a video replay of the CLE for military and civilian attorneys was conducted on Fort Hood in March 2014.

Eighty-one people attended our CLE at Moody Gardens in Galveston on April 11-12, 2014, which included a presentation titled “Tips and Best Practices from Intake to Appeal.”

MUNICIPAL JUDGES

Judge Robin Doyle Smith, Chair

It has been a year of renewal for the Municipal Judges Section, and the council has done a great job of serving section members and the public.

A few years back, the section sponsored a scholarship for law students. This year, the section renewed that commitment by sponsoring two scholarships. This year’s winners are William Stephen Gribble, who will begin classes at Texas A&M University School of Law in the fall, and Michelle Hamlin, who is completing her first year at St. Mary’s University School of Law.

The section also honored its own by bestowing the Judge Michael L. O’Neal Outstanding Jurist Award. This year’s winner is Judge Bonnie Goldstein of Royse City, New Hope, and Cockrell Hill. Judge Goldstein was recognized for her judicial outreach activities as well as her abilities on the bench.

The Municipal Judges Section also began examining a commitment to educating judges. In 2012, the Municipal Courts Education Center began a program of flexible judicial education hours. With the renewed possibility of serving members, the section leadership once again began exploring providing seminars for members.

Efforts of the council and members have the Municipal Judges Section

well positioned for the future.

NATIVE AMERICAN LAW

Arnold S. Battise, Chair

The Native American Law Section of the State Bar of Texas had an active and productive year in 2013-2014. Our annual conference on March 19, 2014, celebrated the 20th anniversary of our organization. The original American Indian Law Section changed its name in 2013. Then-State Bar President Lisa M. Tatum spoke of women who were first in their respective fields. She noted that she has Native American heritage.

Discussion topics included an update on Indian law litigation, especially involving the Indian Child Welfare Act and the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the Baby Veronica case. Section members Ray Torgeron and Ron Jackson appeared in a webcast with members of the Family Law Section, addressing the concerns involved in this litigation. Ruth H. Soucy chaired a panel addressing the Violence Against Women Act.

Jo Ann Battise, a citizen of the Alabama-Coushatta Indian Nation and a commissioner on the Texas Supreme Court Permanent Commission on Children, Youth, and Families, received the Tom Diamond Award of Excellence. She spoke of the activities of the commission concerning Native American children in Texas. Shannon Speed, of the Chickasaw Nation, received the Lifetime Achievement Award for her work on behalf of Indian Country.

OIL, GAS, AND ENERGY RESOURCES LAW

M.C. Cottingham “Cottie” Miles, Chair

Last year marked the 75th anniversary of the section, which was founded in 1938. To celebrate this milestone, section members enjoyed a wonderful anniversary gala in Houston in October 2013. Daniel Yergin, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power*, and

the follow-up to that book, *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*, delivered the keynote address.

The section continues to sponsor and co-sponsor high-quality energy-related CLE courses and to provide the quarterly *Section Report* to section members, which includes exceptional legal articles and case law updates. Earlier this year, the section also co-sponsored the book *Ernest E. Smith Selected Works* and provided the publication to all section members.

Outreach efforts to Texas law school students continue by sponsorship of academic awards to those earning the top grade in oil and gas law courses, as well as internships at energy-related state agencies. The section also supports young energy lawyers through the newly formed Young Professionals Program, and it continues to update and improve the section website, oilgas.org. Further, the section recently commissioned a survey of its membership to determine how best it may meet the needs of its members.

POVERTY LAW

Matthew Brian Probus, Chair

The Poverty Law Section had an exciting 2013-2014. The section continued its "First Friday" CLEs. Topics included the Voting Rights Act, foreclosure prevention, guardianships, restorative justice, and child support.

The section continued its assessment of how a poverty law specialization could be developed for presentation to the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Although it is not ready for formal request, the section worked on a proposal for review and comment by the section.

The section approved a redevelopment of its website, which should occur later this year. The section is excited about making its site more informative and user-friendly.

The section approved creation of a

new committee to focus on issues surrounding Tex. R. Civ. P. 145 and IOLTA certificates, including policies surrounding the filing of Rule 145 certificates and problems surrounding e-filing of those certificates.

The section accepted nominations for the annual Impact Awards and Noble Award, which were presented at the section's annual meeting. The Impact Award recipients were John J. Grieger Jr., Andrea Marsh, Christina E. Trejo, and Michael E. Urena. The recipient of this year's Noble Award was Rebecca G. Flanigan.

PUBLIC UTILITY LAW

Kerry McGrath, Chair

The Public Utility Law Section will host its annual conference and seminar on Friday, Aug. 8, 2014, at the Hyatt Regency in Austin. The conference will begin with our annual section meeting, followed by a continuing legal education program. We are honored that all three commissioners of the Public Utility Commission of Texas have accepted our invitation to speak at the conference. In addition, panel presentations will address the transfer of water utility regulation to the PUC, new water infrastructure funding in Texas, developing transmission issues in the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, load forecasting and reserve margin issues, and certain telecommunications and natural gas matters. Finally, our traditional case law update and ethics presentations will be included.

REAL ESTATE, PROBATE, AND TRUST LAW

Lisa H. Jamieson, Chair

The Real Estate, Probate, and Trust Law Section is the largest section of the State Bar. The section contracted with Professor Gerry W. Beyer to be the editor of the section's *Reporter*. Professor Beyer has published two issues this year with a wealth of information for section members. The section provides a \$25

discount for members attending select TexasBarCLE programs. This discount is in addition to the \$25 discount that members currently receive from the State Bar.

The section's Public Service Committee provides grants to nonprofits that fund worthwhile programs across the state to assist pro bono projects in the real estate, probate, and trust law areas. This year more than \$50,000 in grants will be awarded to six organizations. The probate division is working on proposed legislation in the areas of advanced directives, trusts, estates, and guardianships. The real estate division is working on an analysis of the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act.

This year's Lifetime Achievement Award winners were Steve Akers and Charles W. Spencer. All activities of the section and a CLE library can be found on the section's Web page at reptl.org.

SCHOOL LAW

Michael J. Currie, Chair

The School Law Section hosted its 27th Annual School Law Retreat at the Hyatt Hill County Resort in San Antonio on July 19-20, 2013. This retreat allows for quality CLE in an informal setting where both sides of the school law bar congregate and interact with one another in a relaxed, fun, family environment. Recently, the School Law Section instituted the Kelly Frels Lifetime Achievement Award. The 2014 award was given to Dorcas A. Green, a pillar of the section and dedicated advocate for her client school districts. Additionally, a posthumous award was given to both Cecil Morgan and Tom Garner. The inaugural award was presented to Kelly Frels of Houston, a pioneer of modern school law in Texas. The 2013 award went to Jefferson K. "Jay" Brim of Austin, a former section chair who has represented school employees.

The section's 28th Annual School

Law Retreat is July 18-19, 2014, at the Hyatt Hill County Resort in San Antonio. The retreat will include two mornings of CLE, along with the annual Tom Garner Memorial Golf Tournament. The section's website, schoollawsection.org—which features the section's newsletter, date book, and membership roster—is being redesigned.

TAX

Elizabeth A. Copeland, Chair

This has been an amazing year. Foremost, we officially changed our name to the Tax Section.

We began our second biannual Leadership Academy, assisting young tax lawyers in the development of leadership skills and providing networking opportunities throughout the state.

Our Committee on Government Submissions submitted eight significant comment projects addressing six proposed Treasury regulations, the Affordable Care Act, and the Texas comptroller's rules governing settlements.

Our section's award-winning pro bono program assisted pro se litigants during U.S. Tax Court Calendar Calls throughout Texas. This year, with the cooperation of the Internal Revenue Service, we added tax Problem Solving Days in two cities.

We added a new basics tax course and continued our 24/7 free online CLE webcast library, available at texassection.org. We hosted several live CLE events, including an outstanding lineup for the Tax Section Annual Meeting. The 2014 Advanced Tax Law course is sched-

uled for August in Dallas.

Our electronically published newsletter, *The Texas Tax Lawyer*, includes articles of interest, as well as a practitioner's corner. Our law school outreach program visited law schools throughout Texas; this year we added a scholarship program for students excelling in tax law. Finally, our section selected U.S. Tax Court Judge Juan Vasquez as the 2014 Outstanding Texas Tax Lawyer.

WOMEN AND THE LAW

Melissa Anne Dorman, Chair

We have had a productive year. We have grown the section to almost 700 members, in part because of our March section meeting and breakfast with women lawyers and law students in Lubbock. The night before, past section chairs Carolyn Moore and Ralph H. Brock (posthumously) received the 2013 Distinguished Service Award from Texas Tech University School of Law.

We also co-sponsored the 2014 Women in the Law ... Leading, Empowering, Succeeding conference, held in Austin to a sold-out crowd. There was so much interest, overflow rooms had to be arranged. The program highlighted issues important to our section, including mentoring and retention of women in the law.

We are participating again in the diversity forum, and our Annual Meeting CLE focused on the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and how it has impacted our families, our clients, and our medical providers. We have partnered with the Health Law Section to present speakers to address current legal issues.

Incoming chair Nora Bryant has been busy working to make the next bar year a success. I look forward to working with her to promote the interests and causes of women and to provide useful resources for our members. **TBJ**

