



2021-2022 STATE BAR OF TEXAS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee reports are included in the July/August issue of the *Texas Bar Journal* to update Texas lawyers on State Bar 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 complete a Committee Volunteer Interest Form, go to texasbar.com/committees or call 800-204-2222, ext. 1516.

ADMINISTRATION OF RULES OF EVIDENCE

Angela Olalde, Chair

The Administration of Rules of Evidence Committee evaluates the Texas Rules of Evidence to ensure it matches and meets today's practice of law. The committee makes its recommendations to the State Bar, Supreme Court Advisory Committee, and ultimately the Texas Supreme Court. In addition to researching inquiries from Texas attorneys about specific rules, the committee monitors changes to the Federal Rules of Evidence and considers whether similar changes should be recommended to the TRE. This year, the committee recommended that the ancient documents hearsay exception applies to documents created before 1998. This is consistent with recent FRE amendments and focuses on documents created before electronically stored information was widely used. The committee also considered the "dead man's rule," including feedback from Texas practicing attorneys and scholars, published criticisms of the rule, its narrow application, and Texas' position in the minority of jurisdictions with a similar rule, and recommended the rule be abolished. Current work includes whether privileges should be added, or statutory privileges referenced in TRE comments, for sexual and domestic assault survivors and peer assistance programs such as the Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program. The committee is also considering changes to TRE 509 to ensure consistency with statutory health care privileges.

ADVERTISING REVIEW

Al Harrison, Chair

With the implementation of the revised rules, coupled with the entire new database and all-electronic filing of submissions, it has been a momentous year. The new rules, having adopted a reasonableness standard, have been simplified and streamlined to promote easier compliance. The Texas Supreme Court issued an amending Comment 10 to Rule 7.01 of the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct regarding past successes and results. The court approved the following amendment: "A

lawyer who knows that an advertised verdict was later reduced or reversed, or never collected, or that the case was settled for a lesser amount, must disclose those facts the amount actually received by the client with equal or greater prominence..." The new database and convenient online portal are accessible from attorneys' My Bar Page. Attorneys can submit an online application requesting approval along with supporting advertisements and other documentation and pay filing fees. All communications are now expeditiously handled through the portal. Advertising review has reviewed almost 2,000 submissions through the third quarter of the bar year, with Houston and San Antonio submitting the most applications. The committee, benefiting from anticipated in-person meetings, will develop interpretative comments to render compliance as logical and straightforward as practicable.

ANNUAL MEETING

*Angelica Hernandez
and Denise Scofield, Co-Chairs*

After two years, the Annual Meeting was finally held in person in Houston at the Marriott Marquis. The meeting included a diverse selection of quality CLE and featured programs for everyone, from the first-year associate to the seasoned professional. State Bar sections provided practice-specific programs, including the General Practice, Solo, and Small Firm; Litigation; and Women and the Law sections. Friday's programming included parting remarks from 2021-2022 President Sylvia Borunda Firth and 2021-2022 Texas Young Lawyers Association President Jeanine Novosad Rispoli and the swearing-in of 2022-2023 President Laura Gibson and 2022-2023 TYLA President Michael Ritter. Be sure to mark your calendars for the 2023 Annual Meeting on June 22-23 in Austin.

CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

Scott Rothenberg, Chair

In May 2022, the Continuing Legal Education Committee met with the State Bar Board of Directors

Professional Development Subcommittee and bar staff to propose topics for CLE programs and to discuss issues facing TexasBarCLE and Texas Bar Books. The section continued its mission of providing cutting-edge CLE to hardworking Texas attorneys. For over two years, TexasBarCLE has transitioned seamlessly back and forth between webcasts, live courses, programs, and institutes, as permitted by COVID-19. As a result, TexasBarCLE continues to be the go-to source for CLE for Texas attorneys despite its two-plus years of pandemic-related disruption. TexasBarCLE and Texas Bar Books continue to offer a variety of discounts, scholarships, and important free programming to help Texas attorneys advise and represent their clients in the areas needed most. Texas Bar Books continues to expand its offerings on the texasbarpractice.com website, which serves as the platform for Texas Bar Books and the Law Practice Management Program. The website offers lawyers a single place to explore free practice management content; shop for practice manuals, jury charges, deskbooks, and reference guides; and subscribe to online practice manuals with downloadable forms.

COURT RULES

Cynthia Keely Timms, Chair

The Court Rules Committee has submitted several proposed rule changes to the Texas Supreme Court. (1) Texas Rule of Appellate Procedure 6.5(d)—The proposed change would eliminate a number of cumbersome steps for the withdrawal of counsel if the withdrawing counsel is not lead counsel and lead counsel continues to represent the party. The Supreme Court Advisory Committee recommended this change to the Supreme Court at its March 25 meeting. (2) Texas Rule of Civil Procedure 193.7—The proposed change would make clear that a party using the rule to authenticate documents produced in discovery must specifically identify the documents to be authenticated. Currently, parties sometimes designate all production as being authenticated under this rule,

without specifically identifying particular documents. (3) Texas Rule of Appellate Procedure 39.7—The proposed change would adopt a uniform practice that, if a case is set for oral argument, all parties that filed a brief may participate in the oral argument. Currently, appellate courts are divided as to how they treat parties who have not requested oral argument in their briefs.

DISABILITY RIGHTS AND ISSUES

Sashi Nisankarao, Chair

Last year, the Disability Issues Committee was renamed the Disability Rights and Issues Committee to more accurately characterize the nature of the committee's work. The committee focuses on educating the bar and the public about legal issues facing Texans with disabilities, which focuses on impediments facing those with disabilities and their rights in securing accommodations. The committee continued to educate the bar and the public with internal and external presentations. The committee finalized its *Courthouse Accessibility Guide*, which sets out for the public the obligations of the courts, impediments that exist at courthouses, and available accommodations. The committee will seek print publication of the guide so that it can be available for the public and the bar at every courthouse. Lastly, the committee began exploring two new projects: (1) informing current Texas law students on reasonable accommodations in the classroom and on examinations and (2) creating a coalition of lawyers to assist other lawyers who need reasonable accommodations in the courthouse. In pursuing these visions in the coming year, the committee intends to enliven its mentoring program. If you would like a mentor or you would like to be a mentor, please email committee Vice Chair Daphne Silverman at daphnesilverman@gmail.com.

DIVERSITY IN THE PROFESSION

Tracy C. Almanzan, Chair

The Diversity in the Profession

Committee continues to enhance opportunities for attorneys from diverse backgrounds and to increase their participation in State Bar of Texas activities. A committee goal for 2021-2022 was to continue the bar prep scholarship program. The committee received a record number 73 applications this year and awarded 14 law students with over \$27,000 worth of scholarships thanks to donations from BARBRI, Kaplan, Themis, Toyota Motor North America, and Toyota Financial Services. The committee helped plan the annual Texas Minority Attorney Program, which is a CLE program geared toward solo and small-firm practitioners. The committee also made plans to host another Texas Minority Law Student Program. Additionally, the committee continued conducting outreach programs for K-12 students. For more information about the Diversity in the Profession Committee, go to texasbar.com/dipcommittee.

JURY SERVICE

Steven Denny, Chair

The Jury Service Committee continued to work remotely this year ensuring that the importance of jury service is clearly communicated to the public and that safe and respectful treatment of jurors is ensured throughout their experience in the system. The committee sought partnerships with other committees to ensure integration of bar objectives. Specifically, the committee has been collaborating with the Law Focused Education Committee on a project that includes videos explaining the legal system. The committee has almost concluded the "Juror's Bill of Rights" (working title) which is a list of best practices for the handling of jurors throughout the jury system. It includes considerations for parking, breaks, access to communication devices, and other things jurors have indicated from online surveys as issues affecting their prior service. The committee continues working on public service announcements encouraging jurors to respond when called for jury duty. It

continues to explore ways to assist law enforcement in identifying and preventing jury scams through public education and is exploring ways to assist the Diversity in the Profession Committee. Additionally, the committee discusses safety issues specific to COVID-19 from around the state at every meeting.

LAW FOCUSED EDUCATION

Shivali Sharma, Chair

With the goal of providing attorneys with a fun opportunity to engage elementary students, the Law Focused Education Committee promoted a new children's book on civic participation titled *Scrappy Explores His Community*. The story features Scrappy, a dog who treks through his community to meet attorneys, public employees, and volunteers and teaches children how the courthouse operates, how taxes benefit communities, and how voting shapes our democracy. Each book comes with a Scrappy puppet, a colorful map, and lesson plans for teachers and provides real-world examples of children making a difference right where they live. Committee members presented the project to local schools, after-school programs, and local bar associations. The committee collaborated with the Jury Service Committee to develop a series of engaging whiteboard videos to educate students and the public about the role of jury service in our democracy. The committee also (1) provided free Texas Law-Related Education materials (texaslre.org) to school districts, private school networks, and community groups; (2) supported the Texas Citizen Bee, a statewide civic education program and two-part virtual competition (citizenbee.org); and (3) provided free professional development and opportunities for Texas teachers.

LAW PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

E. Steve Bolden, Chair

The committee continued its focus to fulfill its purposes: (1) the implementation of programs conducive to the effective, ethical delivery of legal

services; (2) the delivery of legal services at reasonable prices, with sufficient return to ensure viability; and (3) an increase in the management skills of State Bar members. In 2021, the committee presented CLE on the arc of a lawyer's law practice, from opening practice to succession planning. The committee also prepared CLE for the 2022 Annual Meeting, on topics including scaling up practice; hiring, training, and turnover of staff; client management; ethics and how to handle mistakes.

LAWS RELATING TO IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY

Rehan Alimohammad, Chair

The Laws Relating to Immigration and Nationality Committee of the State Bar of Texas has been meeting regularly and discussing new measures that address the migrant crisis that continues along our border and our points of entry. In September 2021, members of the committee, and other interested State Bar members, attended a tour of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility at the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport to learn about CBP's novel implementations designed to simplify and expedite traveler evaluation for entry. The committee is looking forward to developing ways to communicate and engage with the State Bar and held another meeting during the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting in June 2022. The committee will continue to monitor laws related to immigration and nationality with the goal to improve the quality of legal services provided to those in need and to improve the functioning of the legal system.

LAWYERS' ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Eduardo Juarez, Chair

This committee assists the Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program, or TLAP, by creating initiatives and programming for lawyers, law students, and judges related to substance use, other mental health disorders, and well-being support. The Cognitive Decline and Special

Population Subcommittee added resources to the TLAP database of neurology experts focusing on an expansion of diverse professionals. It inspired a new section of the TLAP website featuring three-minute videos covering mental health and wellness topics. The Law School and Solo Practitioners Subcommittee expanded outreach to law students and law school deans, including a meeting with deans highlighting helping students with post-pandemic challenges. It supported TLAP staff making law school presentations at Texas law schools during orientations and increased outreach to solo practitioners, sending an email to over 250 local and affinity bars offering wellness CLE programming by TLAP staffers. The Suicide Prevention and Anti-Stigma Subcommittee identified publishing opportunities for suicide prevention and anti-stigma related articles and submitted such articles. Through this subcommittee, the importance of using person-first mental health terminology educational material was drafted to be distributed to bring awareness to stigma perpetuating language. Also, through this subcommittee, monthly well-being CLE programming will be available in Houston in person or via Zoom.

LEGAL SERVICES TO THE POOR IN CIVIL MATTERS

Eric Michael Garza, Chair

The Legal Services to the Poor in Civil Matters Committee concerns itself with the creation and means of implementation of programs, such as legal aid or pro bono efforts, to assure delivery of legal services in civil matters to all Texans. The committee is composed of attorneys and advocates from law firms, legal aid providers, law schools, and corporations—all committed to enhancing access to justice. As done each year, the committee recognized deserving individuals, groups, and entities that perform exceptional work in the field of legal services to the poor through the Pro Bono Excellence Awards. A total of seven awards are given, and

honorees are recognized at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting. Throughout the year, the committee monitored issues and challenges met by attorneys working hard to ensure access to justice for all Texans, including those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the committee received regular reports from the Texas Access to Justice Foundation, the Texas Access to Justice Commission, and the State Bar of Texas Legal Access Division.

LEGAL SERVICES TO THE POOR IN CRIMINAL MATTERS

Jani Maselli Wood, Chair

The Legal Services to the Poor in Criminal Matters Committee studies the indigent defense system in Texas and develops recommendations for entities that are or should be involved in the provision of quality representation to indigent persons involved in criminal matters. The committee comprises members of the judiciary, prosecution and defense, as well as representatives of court administration, state agencies, and nonprofit organizations with a focus on indigent defense. The committee updated the *State Bar of Texas Performance Guidelines for Non-Capital Criminal Defense Representation* to reflect changes in the law. Those updates were adopted by the State Bar of Texas Board of Directors on September 24, 2021. The committee was a co-sponsor of the January 28, 2022, symposium on the 20th anniversary of the Fair Defense Act. Other projects included (1) discussing the mandated ability-to-pay inquiries regarding court costs and (2) developing guidelines for the state when prosecuting indigent and pro se defendants. The committee also received excellent recommendations for its Michael K. Moore and Warren Burnett awards. The awards recognize exceptional research or writing regarding indigent criminal defense and individuals that made extraordinary contributions to improving the quality of criminal legal representation to indigent Texans.

LOCAL BAR SERVICES

C. Michael Davis, Chair

The Local Bar Services Committee enhances communication between State Bar leadership and local bar associations to assist local bar leaders in the development of their associations. Resources available from the State Bar Local Bar Services Department include speaker coordination, membership assistance, program coordination, and guidance on creating a new association. Yearly, the committee plans the annual Law Day contest, Stars of Texas Bars Awards, and the Local Bar Leaders Conference. The Stars of Texas Bars Awards recognize local bar associations for outstanding involvement and commitment to the legal profession. The committee will resume the annual Law Day awards this year for local bars that are holding a contest, and the winners will be recognized on the State Bar website and in the *Texas Bar Journal*. The Local Bar Leaders Conference is scheduled to take place July 22-23 in Houston.

MINIMUM CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

John Boyce, Chair

The Minimum Continuing Legal Education Committee administers minimum continuing education programs established by Article XII of the State Bar Rules and the regulations and accreditation standards promulgated therefrom. Most of the committee's work consists of reviewing proposals for accreditation of an activity such as a conference, presentation, or video. The staff presents the few proposals for which there is any question. The issue is usually whether the program consists of legal education or ethics within the definition of accreditation standards. Proposal fees generate revenue for the bar and approval can mean commercial success for some applicants. The staff receives over 48,000 applications per year from non-accredited sponsors, out of state attorneys seeking credit, and existing accredited sponsors. It would not have

been possible to review such an amount without the dedication of staff, particularly Erica Rodriguez, Lowry Kraft, and Emilee Rochester. The State Bar Board of Directors charged the committee with making recommendations on changes to the Accreditation Standards for CLE Activities to allow courses on implicit or explicit bias and wellness to count toward ethics credit. The committee recommended such courses be optional. The board adopted the recommendations, and the standards have been so amended.

PATTERN JURY CHARGES—BUSINESS, CONSUMER, INSURANCE & EMPLOYMENT

William Chriss, Chair

Throughout this year, the Pattern Jury Charges—Business, Consumer, Insurance & Employment Committee has met as a full committee and through numerous subcommittee meetings to develop and complete material for its 2022 edition. In collaboration with the PJC Oil and Gas Committee, the committee has undertaken a comprehensive review and update of the contracts chapter to incorporate substantive revisions and to make the chapter more user friendly for the practitioner. Additionally, the committee has collaborated with a cross-volume PJC Oversight Committee to review and update material relating to exemplary damages. The committee has drafted updates to charges in the employment chapter to reflect recent statutory changes and has revised the PJC section on defamation to reflect recent caselaw. As it updates charge material, the committee has worked closely with the oversight committee to ensure clarity and accuracy. The 2022 volume, which will also include caselaw updates throughout, will be published at the end of this calendar year. Following publication of the 2022 edition, the committee will begin studying material for its next volume. The committee welcomes questions, comments, and suggestions for new material from the bench and bar, which can be sent to books@texasbar.com.

PATTERN JURY CHARGES—CRIMINAL

Emily Johnson-Liu

and James McDermott, Co-Chairs

In the past year, the Pattern Jury Charges—Criminal Committee has focused its efforts on transitioning the Texas Criminal Pattern Jury Charges volumes to an online product, which will be offered in a subscription model with accessible pricing. As part of this project, the committee has significantly revised the format for all charges, which will result in clearer, more concise guidance for the jury to understand the relevant law and apply it to the specific facts of the case. The committee has improved the instruction for the preponderance of the evidence standard found in several charges (such as the affirmative defenses and renunciation) and is producing new charges for burglary of a vehicle, improper relationship between a teacher and a student, animal cruelty, and others. In addition, the committee is revising existing charges and commentary to reflect recent statutory and caselaw developments, including to self-defense instructions. Committee members are also working to educate the bench and bar about the usefulness and high quality of the *Texas Criminal Pattern Jury Charges*. The committee welcomes questions and comments, which may be sent to books@texasbar.com.

PATTERN JURY CHARGES—FAMILY AND PROBATE

John "Chris" Nickelson, Chair

The Pattern Jury Charges—Family and Probate Committee recently submitted the 2022 edition of its volume to the bench and bar. The new edition provides practitioners with a thoroughly revised and more usable charge for reimbursements and offsets in divorce proceedings. In response to legislation from the 87th Texas Legislature, the committee modified conservatorship questions to reflect that a geographic restriction can be placed on a sole managing conservator and that the death of a conservator is grounds for a modification proceeding.

The 2022 edition also benefits from numerous edits to help charges more closely conform to statutes. Improvements the committee is undertaking for the next edition include addressing recent caselaw for undue influence in will contests, adding a charge for civil contempt actions, and adding charges for privacy issues that arise in divorce litigation. The committee is also researching fiduciary duty issues in divorces with an eye to possibly revising charges for the 2024 edition. Comments, questions, and suggestions for new topics for inclusion in future editions may be sent to books@texasbar.com.

PATTERN JURY CHARGES—GENERAL NEGLIGENCE, INTENTIONAL PERSONAL TORTS & WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Judge Hyattye O. Simmons, Chair

The Pattern Jury Charges—General Negligence, Intentional Personal Torts & Workers' Compensation Committee is finishing updates on the 2022 volume. These changes include new language regarding proximate cause, personal injury damages, negligent undertaking, broad form submission, pecuniary loss, preservation of error, subsequent aggravation of injury, and personal property damages. The committee revised the comments to PJC 4.1 and 4.2 to address statutory changes resulting from House Bill 19 in actions involving commercial motor vehicles. The committee also anticipates completion of a multiyear project to revise the language regarding exemplary damages, as well as inferential rebuttal and trespass and nuisance.

PATTERN JURY CHARGES—MALPRACTICE, PREMISES & PRODUCTS

Laura Trenaman, Chair

The Pattern Jury Charges—Malpractice, Premises & Products Committee continues to develop new charges and commentary addressing numerous areas of law. The new 2022 edition will include a new basic damages question that offers the

practitioner two options—one for when “injury” is used in the liability question (i.e., did the defendant cause the injury?) and one for when “occurrence” is used in the liability question (i.e., did the defendant cause the occurrence that resulted in the injury?). Another new instruction has been added for situations where a subsequent injury aggravates an initial injury. The edition will also incorporate the latest caselaw from the Texas Supreme Court examining the definition of “design defect.” The committee is making numerous other revisions to the volume’s comments in its efforts to maintain them as a current and helpful resource for the trial attorney and judge, including clarifying non-subscribing employer duties to employees, incorporating caselaw about proximate causation in contexts with multiple possible causes, revising for recent statutory changes regarding architects’ and engineers’ standards of care, and many others. The committee continues to keep a close eye on new developments in Texas law. The mission remains the same—to “get it right.”

PATTERN JURY CHARGES—OIL AND GAS COMMITTEE

Ricardo Morales, Chair

The Pattern Jury Charges—Oil and Gas Committee has met throughout the year to develop new material and update current charges for the 2022 edition, which will be published later this year. The committee has collaborated closely with the PJC General Negligence volume to study and update materials relating to nuisance to be added to the PJC Oil and Gas volume and comprehensively revise current charges relating to damages and improper use of real property. The committee has also worked closely with the PJC Business volume to undertake a complete review and update of the contracts charges appearing in both volumes, substantively updating the material while also creating a more user-friendly format for practitioners. Additionally, the committee continues to review and update current material to reflect new caselaw throughout the volume. The

committee has formed working groups to begin studying issues and developing materials relating to co-tenancy and confusion of goods and anticipates publishing related materials in a future edition. The committee continues to work closely with the PJC Oversight committee as it updates materials and on issues affecting multiple volumes. The committee welcomes comments and suggestions from the bench and bar, which can be sent to books@texasbar.com.

PATTERN JURY CHARGES—OVERSIGHT

Daniel Hinde, Chair

The Pattern Jury Charges—Oversight Committee has supported the drafting committees as they complete work for their 2022 editions. The committee works closely with the PJC drafting committees to facilitate projects impacting multiple volumes and to ensure accuracy and clarity in new and revised charges. The committee reviewed several updated charges for the recently published PJC Family and Probate volume, including updates to charges on reimbursement and community-property agreements. The committee worked with the other civil drafting volumes to review numerous proposals for the 2022 editions, including new material on subsequent aggravation of injury (PJC General Negligence and PJC Malpractice), updates to charges on nuisance and related damages charges (PJC Oil and Gas and PJC General Negligence), updates to employment charges (PJC Business), and a comprehensive update of contracts charges (PJC Business and PJC Oil and Gas). Additionally, the committee has facilitated a subcommittee revising exemplary damages charges appearing in multiple volumes. The committee also reviewed new and updated materials for the PJC Criminal volume, including updated templates for charges that will be included in the volume’s new online edition to be launched later this year. Comments and questions from the bench and bar are welcome and can be sent to books@texasbar.com.

PROFESSIONALISM

Sarah P. Springer, Chair

The Professionalism Committee has been meeting regularly this year to discuss various projects under its wing, including mentorship of new lawyers and law students, promoting professionalism in the judiciary, professionalism in practicing lawyers, and our ethics directory of speakers who can be called on by local bars for ethics presentations. After a very successful Day of Civility program last September, the committee is working on its next celebration scheduled for April 2023. Preparation for this event will begin in earnest this fall. The Ethics Publicity Subcommittee is coordinating with the Texas Center for Legal Ethics, or TCLE, which will work with the committee on ethics CLEs for the Day of Civility and work on speakers for other programs. The committee will also collaborate with the Texas Bar College and create CLE content from videos of past Day of Civility events. The committee is closely following the proposed modifications to the Texas Lawyer's Creed. Distribution of the creed to lawyers, judges, and the public is a continuing project of the committee. For more information on professionalism resources, go to texasbar.com/professionalism.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Julie Doss, Chair

The mission of the Public Affairs Committee is to expand public understanding of the legal system and to foster relations with the news media to advance that goal. During the 2021-2022 bar year, the Public Affairs Committee worked to ensure the continued success of its Open Government Seminar at the 2022 State Bar Annual Meeting. The Open Government Seminar, hosted June 10, provided valuable panel discussions for lawyers, the media, and the public. The panels offered lively and informed discussions titled "Courtroom Transparency—How the COVID-19 Pandemic Altered Court Accessibility and What Transparency Looks Like in a Post-COVID World" and "Legislative Update: Trends in Open

Government Law." The committee also hosted the 2021 Texas Gavel Awards. Through the Texas Gavel Awards, the committee honored outstanding Texas journalism that enhanced public understanding of our legal system. Learn more about the awards and read the winning pieces at texasbar.com/gavelawards.

REAL ESTATE FORMS

Edmond R. McCarthy Jr., Chair

The State Bar of Texas published the 2022 edition of the *Texas Real Estate Forms Manual* in May. The Real Estate Forms Committee reviewed the existing manual and drafted updates to the practice commentary and forms. Revisions reflect legislative amendments enacted during the 87th regular legislative session and recent caselaw, as well as guidance on navigating challenges related to the evolving circumstances of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The 2022 edition also provides new forms and includes updated references to recent State Bar CLE articles. The manual is now available as three sleek softbound volumes, as well as in both online and downloadable versions that offer enhanced word-processing forms. The online and downloadable versions provide links to primary research, including cases, statutes, and CLE articles. The manual serves as a starting point for recognizing issues and drafting documents for real estate transactions. Since 1970, committee members have identified and responded to changes in the law and enhanced the value of this manual. A recurring goal of the committee is to provide relevant information and resources for understanding how to handle a real estate transaction.

TEXAS BAR JOURNAL BOARD OF EDITORS

Brent Benoit, Chair

The *Texas Bar Journal* is the official publication of the State Bar of Texas. In print since 1938, the magazine serves as a publication of record for the Texas Supreme Court, a scholarly legal journal, and the association magazine for the State Bar of Texas. Each month (except a combined

July/August issue), the *Texas Bar Journal* is mailed to approximately 125,000 subscribers, is available in digital format, and is the only publication reaching every lawyer in Texas. The Texas Bar Journal Board of Editors reviews legal article submissions, develops issue topics, and helps set the general editorial direction for the magazine. In 2021-2022, the *Bar Journal* examined a number of subjects of interest to Texas lawyers, including disaster preparedness, diversity, the legislative update issue, animal law, retirement, constitutional law, litigation, women in the legal profession, and labor and employment law. The *Bar Journal* also offered an informative "Year in Review" issue.

WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION

Katherine Kunz, Chair

This year, the Women in the Profession Committee's guiding theme was "Embracing Change: Extraordinary Women, Exceptional Circumstances," focusing on a rebuilding year to reconnect women attorneys with each other and with their professional goals in spite of the pandemic's obstacles. The committee publicized the findings from its 2021 COVID-19 impact survey in the *Texas Bar Journal* to bring awareness to pandemic-related issues facing Texas women attorneys. The committee revived its in-person, city-specific networking groups and updated the committee website (texasbar.com/wipcommittee) with award opportunities and resources for women lawyers. In April, the committee continued its support of the Texas Minority Attorney Program, a CLE seminar and networking event geared toward minority and women solo and small-firm practitioners. The committee is working on additional CLE webinars on topics including retaining and attracting women and minority talent, non-traditional career paths, and professional presentation and appearance tips and advice. The committee also continued to promote author Betty Trapp Chapman's *Rough Road to Justice: The Journey of Women Lawyers in Texas*, including via an inaugural "book club" virtual discussion group. **TBJ**