



# *This One's for the Girls* **(WOMEN IN THE LAW)**

“This one’s for the girls  
Who love without holdin’ back  
Who dream with everything they have  
All around the world . . .”

—Written by Chris Lindsey, Hillary Lindsey, and Aimee Mayo  
and sung by Martina McBride

“**THIS ONE’S FOR THE GIRLS**” IS A COUNTRY MUSIC HIT FROM THE EARLY 2000s sung by Martina McBride, her daughters, and other prominent female vocalists. The lyrics are a salute to women at different ages, referencing the different struggles women face during different periods of life. Whether in high school, career uncertainty, or growing older, the message is the same: “You’re beautiful the way you are.”

Since 1995, March has been designated Women’s History Month in the United States, and March 8 is globally celebrated as International Women’s Day, a day promoting the achievements of women without regard to national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic, or political divisions. It is the perfect time for me to focus on our predecessors who spoke up and advocated for change in the legal profession.

In the vast landscape of legal history, Texas women lawyers have fought tirelessly for equality and autonomy. The journey began with the struggle to learn and practice the law. Historically, legal education was an exclusive domain, with women encountering formidable barriers to entry. However, determined women in Texas sought knowledge, often against societal expectations, and demonstrated that legal expertise knew no gender.

Establishing professional careers marked the next frontier for women lawyers in Texas. Breaking into a male-dominated profession required not only legal acumen but also resilience in the face of systemic bias. In 1902, Edith W. Locke applied to the courts in El Paso for bar admission, presumably making her one of the first of many women to be admitted to the practice of law. Women lawyers have continued to forge ahead, proving their competence in courtrooms and boardrooms.

However, despite significant strides over the past century, the struggle persists for women in the law. Gender bias, subtle or overt, continues to hinder progress. Stereotypes about women’s capabilities and commitment to their careers persist. The legal profession, though evolving, grapples with ingrained structures that resist change.

Gender diversity in the practice of law is crucial as it reflects the principles of justice and equality upon which the legal system is built. A diverse legal profession ensures a broader range of perspectives, enriching the quality of legal decisions, and fostering a more just society. Additionally, representation matters; women lawyers serve as role models, inspiring future generations.

A few years ago, under the leadership of TYLA President Britney Harrison, TYLA developed *Iconic Women in Legal History*. This website focuses on women in our nation’s legal history who have promoted and protected civil rights, fought for equality, and ultimately shaped our present culture. I hope these stories of these women will inspire you to study their history, become more involved in your community, and passionately motivate you to achieve even greater things.

Women lawyers in Texas have navigated a challenging path toward recognition and equality. As a female bar leader, I am grateful for those who paved the way for me, inspiring and encouraging me every step of the way.

**LAURA PRATT**

2023-2024 President, Texas Young Lawyers Association

SCAN THE CODE TO LEARN ABOUT ICONIC WOMEN IN LEGAL HISTORY:

ROUGH ROAD TO JUSTICE: THE JOURNEY OF WOMEN LAWYERS IN TEXAS