

*Britney E.*  
**HARRISON**

**HOMETOWN:** AUSTIN

**POSITION:** SENIOR ASSOCIATE OF TURNER MCDOWELL  
ROWAN IN DALLAS

**BOARD MEMBER:** DISTRICT 6, PLACE 3 SINCE 2023

INTERVIEW BY **WILL KORN**  
PHOTO COURTESY OF **BRITNEY E. HARRISON**



**SURPRISINGLY, BEING A LAWYER WAS MY SECOND CAREER CHOICE.** Since the age of 8, I wanted to be Clarice Starling from *Silence of the Lambs* and work for the FBI. However, I learned during college that my terrible vision would keep me out of the field and prevent me from being a special agent. I had to rethink my whole life and figure out a new plan. I took a criminal law class and learned that I really enjoyed studying law. I then started an internship in the Denton County District Attorney's Office. After a week of being in the courtroom and helping to pick juries, I knew I wanted to be an attorney.

**I WAS ORIGINALLY A COMMERCIAL LITIGATOR, BUT I DID NOT ENJOY THE WORK.** I wanted more courtroom experience and more one-on-one client interaction. The few times I did get to step into a courtroom during my first few years of practice, I saw that the family lawyers were there the most. I took a few pro bono divorce cases and fell in love with family law. It completely fit my personality. I loved the individual client interaction and helping clients through one of the worst times in their lives. Most importantly, it made me excited about practicing law again.

**I WOULD TELL LAW STUDENTS THE BEST ADVICE I EVER RECEIVED AS AN ATTORNEY, "YOU HAVE A VOICE."** My mentor, John Thomas Barrett Jr., spoke those words to me right before my first trial, which changed my career trajectory. It gave me a sense of confidence in what I was doing as an attorney. Imposter syndrome is real and can negatively affect your confidence. John's words helped me keep going, and I will forever be grateful to him. I would also tell them to always remain ethical and never approach the line. Though it might be harder, the ethical choice is always the correct one.

**SINCE JOINING THE AUSTIN YOUNG LAWYERS ASSOCIATION IN 2010, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN DRAWN TO BAR SERVICE.** Giving back has always been in my spirit. Bar service is my way of giving back. I wanted to become a State Bar of Texas director after spending three years on the State Bar board as a Texas Young Lawyers Association president. I enjoyed the work and learning more about the inner workings of the bar. There are tremendous member benefits and aspects to our governance that not all lawyers know about. Being part of changing and implementing rules and procedures governing our profession is instrumental.

**I WAS PRESIDENT OF TYLA DURING THE COVID-19 ERA.** My year was completely remote. During those years, we faced numerous challenges within our profession, the bar itself, and our nation. I learned a tremendous amount from all those experiences, including adapting in the face of adversity and immense pressure and connecting with other lawyers in the most unlikely circumstances. We were able to creatively meet our goals as a TYLA board, all while literally never setting foot in the same room. Those experiences made me a stronger and better leader.

**PROTECTING OUR ABILITY TO SELF-REGULATE OUR PROFESSION IS MOST IMPORTANT.** We must represent our districts and ensure our districts' lawyers are heard. We must understand the issues our lawyers face and ensure we understand our responsibility as directors in carrying out the regulatory powers delegated to the bar by the Supreme Court of Texas.

**THE TOP ISSUES FACING TEXAS ATTORNEYS TODAY ARE:** (1) Maintaining self-governance: Continuing to work within the framework set through recent caselaw and ensuring our lawyers maintain our unique privilege of self-governance; and (2) Well-being and overall wellness: Far too frequently, we see posts about a lawyer ending his or her life by suicide. We can continue to bring awareness and encourage new resources to address these issues, such as the member benefit with BetterHelp that launched in May. **TBJ**