

*Cade W.*  
**BROWNING**

**HOMETOWN:** BUFFALO GAP  
**POSITION:** PARTNER IN BROWNING LAW FIRM IN ABILENE AND TUSCOLA  
**BOARD MEMBER:** DISTRICT 14 SINCE 2023

INTERVIEW BY **WILL KORN**  
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**BY THE SUMMER OF MY JUNIOR YEAR AT TEXAS A&M,** I had tried several majors before settling on an amalgamation of international studies and animal science. Unsure about my future, I studied in Mexico City that summer. One night at a discoteca, I ran into Jody Ray Mask, an A&M bonfire friend turned law student. He and his friends convinced me to apply to law school, even though I barely knew what that meant.

**AFTER A PROFESSOR HELPED ME FIND A JOB IN ABILENE AND RUSTY BEARD TOOK A CHANCE ON ME,** teaching me how to practice law, I hung my shingle after three years. I originally had to handle anything that came my way, but I always had a passion for personal injury trial law. Finding my faith has helped me grow in empathy and connect deeply with my clients, understanding their struggles or losses. Through loving them and telling their stories, we are able to access our justice system to help, especially when they need it most. I find that

deeply rewarding, and it has, I hope, helped me to be a better human.

**YOU CATCH MORE FLIES WITH HONEY, AND YOUR WORD IS SOMETHING YOU CAN FREELY GIVE BUT NEVER GET BACK.** Practice with integrity. No matter your field, treat everyone—opposing counsel, clients, staff, and courthouse personnel—with the respect, kindness, and integrity you'd want for your own family. Do your job, but do it honorably.

**I'VE BEEN PROUD TO HAVE SERVED IN ROLES LIKE PRESIDENT OF THE ABILENE BAR ASSOCIATION** and our West Texas Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates and as chair of the State Bar of Texas Litigation Section. I was just finishing up some of those roles, when, one day, a friend called about our State Bar district needing someone to serve. Spanning from Abilene and Wichita Falls to Denton, the district's layout is odd, but I wanted to ensure rural and West Texas lawyers had a voice on the board.

**I ONCE WROTE AN ARTICLE INSPIRED BY A SERMON FROM MY A&M FRIEND OWEN ROSS, NOW A METHODIST MINISTER,** titled "There are No Tribes in Heaven: A Renewed Shared Commitment to Professionalism." The nutshell of the thought is that we all love our own tribes. I love being an Aggie and a Baylor lawyer. I am a proud West Texan. Tribes make life fun and interesting. However, we, as lawyers, are all part of one tribe. Our tribe needs to protect the rule of law and the public's perception of it. I think that is our task.

**IF OUR TASK IS TO PROTECT THE RULE OF LAW AND PUBLIC TRUST IN IT, OUR DEBATES SHOULD REFLECT THAT.** All directors share this goal, this task. While we may disagree on approaches, respectful debate helps us understand each other's perspectives and reach resolutions that accomplish the task.

**MANY LAWYERS, LET ALONE THE PUBLIC, ARE UNAWARE OF COMMITTEES LIKE THE CLIENT SECURITY FUND,** which uses bar dues to help clients wronged by lawyers who steal or fail to refund fees. Instead of just telling clients to sue the bad lawyer, we collectively step in to help. That is beautiful. I do not know if other professions do that, but I am proud that we do.

**I THINK THE EROSION OF THE PUBLIC'S CONFIDENCE AND PERCEPTION OF THE RULE OF LAW** and of lawyers is the top issue facing Texas attorneys. Certain TV shows, movies, and lawyer advertising have made us to be seen as a joke. And if something is a joke, it can't be taken seriously, can be easily dismissed, and isn't something precious worth preserving. The attorney-client relationship is something sacred. We should be a profession, not a business, and I want to be part of a profession. As Justice Cook once wrote about our profession, "pursuit of the learned art in the spirit of a public service is the primary purpose." So, let's be artists. **TBJ**