

Rebecca LINEHAN

HOMETOWN: MIDLAND

POSITION: SHAREHOLDER IN STUBBEMAN, MCRAE, SEALY,
LAUGHLIN & BROWDER IN MIDLAND

BOARD MEMBER: DISTRICT 16 SINCE 2024

INTERVIEW BY **WILL KORN**
PHOTO COURTESY OF **REBECCA LINEHAN**



MY PARENTS FIRST PLANTED THE IDEA FOR ME TO BECOME A LAWYER—I was always told that I would be a good lawyer because I had a knack for arguing with them. Between that and spending my childhood performing on a stage, it seems I've been preparing for a career in litigation my whole life! Once I got older, I took a few pre-law classes and figured out that no matter what area of law you may practice, it all entails taking a set of facts and seeing how they fit within a set of rules. It felt like solving a puzzle—I even started doing LSAT prep books for fun! That was confirmation enough for me that I was pursuing the right field.

I'VE ALWAYS HAD A DESIRE TO HELP PEOPLE. I spent the first 10 years of my career as a prosecutor making a government wage but helping people at what was often the lowest point in their lives. After I left the Midland County District Attorney's Office with almost 100 jury trials in experience, I joined the

litigation division of a civil firm. In Midland, that inherently means practicing oil and gas law because it touches every aspect of life out here. I've also started doing a small amount of criminal defense and other criminal-adjacent matters with my certification in criminal law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. You can find me just about anywhere that my skill for decoding legal puzzles intersects my passion for serving others.

FIND WHAT SERVES YOU BEST. There are so many ways to practice law, and your goal should be to find the area or the job that incites your passion. It's a game of trial and error, and you're probably not going to get it right the first time. So don't be afraid to try different things out until you find what makes you happy. Struggling through a job because it's what you're "supposed" to do is a recipe for burnout, and it's one of the primary reasons our profession is so riddled with mental health and substance use issues.

I STARTED MY BAR SERVICE LOCALLY WITH THE MIDLAND COUNTY YOUNG LAWYERS ASSOCIATION and the Midland County Bar Association, and from there, I got appointed to fill a midterm vacancy on the Texas Young Lawyers Association Board of Directors. After seven years with TYLA, it was a natural progression to continue to represent my hometown on a larger scale and become a State Bar of Texas director.

OVER THE COURSE OF ALL MY BAR SERVICE, I'VE COME TO REALIZE THAT BEING A GOOD LEADER DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN BEING THE TOP EXPERT. Being a leader is about aligning a vision and empowering others to work toward a common goal, and nothing is more rewarding as a leader than seeing those members of your team rise to the challenge and surpass you in expertise. The best soccer coach does not necessarily play better than the star forward; what makes the coach the best is that he or she is always striving to help each player and the team as a whole reach its full potential. Being the best in your field does not equate to being the best at leading others in that field. It's our role to keep our constituents informed at a local level. Every organization has experienced a decrease in engagement, especially after the pandemic. Coming from one of the districts considered more "rural" than others, it's easy to become disengaged from what's happening in Austin if there's no bridge to reach us out here in the West Texas desert—and we as directors are those bridges.

THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS IMPROVES THE LEGAL PROFESSION BY PUTTING IN THE TIME AND EFFORT TO DO SO. Whether it's budgetary changes or implementing new best practices, the State Bar is constantly evolving through the work of each individual person that's in the room. We're here because we care. **TBJ**