

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC LAW • AFRICAN-AMERICAN LAWYERS • ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION • ANIMAL LAW
ANTITRUST AND BUSINESS LITIGATION • APPELLATE • ASIAN-PACIFIC INTEREST • AVIATION LAW • BANKRUPTCY LAW • BUSINESS LAW
COLLABORATIVE LAW • COMPUTER AND TECHNOLOGY • CONSTRUCTION LAW • CONSUMER AND COMMERCIAL LAW
CORPORATE COUNSEL • ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS LAW • ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES LAW • FAMILY LAW
GENERAL PRACTICE, SOLO, AND SMALL FIRM • GOVERNMENT LAW • HEALTH LAW • HISPANIC ISSUES

2015-2016 State Bar of Texas

SECTION REPORTS

Section reports are included in the July issue of the *Texas Bar Journal* to update Texas lawyers on State Bar section 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 join a section, go to texasbar.com/sections or call (800) 204-2222, ext. 1420.

IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY LAW • INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES • INSURANCE LAW • INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW
INTERNATIONAL LAW • JUDICIAL • JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURTS • JUVENILE LAW • LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW
LAW STUDENT DIVISION • LEGISLATIVE AND CAMPAIGN LAW • LGBT LAW • LITIGATION • MILITARY AND VETERANS LAW
MUNICIPAL JUDGES • NATIVE AMERICAN LAW • OIL, GAS, AND ENERGY RESOURCES LAW • POVERTY LAW • PUBLIC UTILITY LAW
REAL ESTATE, PROBATE, AND TRUST LAW • SCHOOL LAW • TAX • WOMEN AND THE LAW • WORKERS' COMPENSATION

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC LAW

Lesli Ginn, Chair

The Administrative and Public Law Section had another extremely productive year, fulfilling our objectives of advancing the field of administrative law in Texas and providing positive benefits to our membership.

We partnered with UT Law CLE to sponsor the 10th Annual Advanced Texas Administrative Law Seminar, which featured an array of timely topics and lively panel discussions, from August 31 to September 1, 2015. In October 2015, the section held its annual Mack Kidd Administrative Law Moot Court Competition, which introduces law students from schools across Texas to complex and interesting administrative law issues, giving competitors the opportunity to practice their oral advocacy skills before panels of experienced attorneys. The 2015 championship was claimed by a team from Baylor Law School, with the final round judged by justices of the 3rd Court of Appeals.

Looking ahead, this year's seminar will be held September 1-2 at the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center in Austin, with a reception on-site immediately following the conclusion of the first day's schedule.

Benefits available to section members include receiving the *Texas Tech Administrative Law Journal* and the section's quarterly newsletter, as well as a \$25 discount toward registration for the seminar.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN LAWYERS

Robert Collier, Chair

In 2016, the African-American Lawyers Section held its first Texas African American Lawyers Summit in Houston. More than 40 participants enjoyed a full day of CLE. In 2015, AALS participated in the Texas Minority Counsel Program and hosted a reception for minority bars, including the Mexican American Bar Association, Hispanic Issues Section, and the

Asian American Bar Association. Chair Robert Collier served as a panelist at the National Pre-Law Conference at the University of Houston Law Center, welcoming minority law students from across the country. Additionally, the section hosted a reception for conference members and the president of the National Bar Association. Collier also participated as a panelist and served as a section representative at the National Bar Association Annual Convention on behalf of the section. Finally, the section also sponsored a scholarship for law students with the Diversity in the Profession Committee.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Erich Birch, Chair

The section's annual meeting was held in January for the first time this year to coincide with its Annual CLE. This year, there were also two new components to the CLE, with the addition of an ADR 101 course and a mentoring luncheon. Both were well received and successful. At the annual meeting, the section presented Evans Awards to this year's two recipients, Alvin Zimmerman, a former state district judge, of Houston; and John Allen Chalk of Fort Worth.

All chapters of the updated *ADR Handbook* are now complete and the new edition will soon be available as a benefit to all members of the section and for purchase by nonmembers. This year, the editor position for the section's newsletter, *Alternative Resolutions*, was also restructured and will be managed by a volunteer chief editor and assisted by a retained managing editor.

The Global Pound Conference Series, an international effort intended to improve both access to and the quality of justice in civil and commercial disputes, selected Austin as one of its sites. The section is actively supporting the planning of the event, which will be at the Texas Law Center alongside the section's Annual CLE in January 2017.

ANIMAL LAW

Ashley Allen Carr, Chair

The Animal Law Section hosted the Annual Animal Law Institute in Austin in April, featuring speakers from across the country. Topics included breed-specific legislation, estate planning with pets in mind, animal cruelty prosecution, legal obstacles to implementation of the Animal Welfare Act, and the impact of SeaWorld's end to its breeding of killer whales. The section is already planning for next year's event.

The Animal Law Section held its annual meeting at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting. New board members, including a new chair, were elected, and two CLE programs were presented. The section is pleased that its membership continues to increase each year.

ANTITRUST AND BUSINESS LITIGATION

Hon. William G. Whitehill, Chair

We published articles discussing antitrust and business tort developments in the section's *Texas Business Litigation Journal*, as well as special issues on business torts, class actions, and antitrust expert witnesses. We revamped our website and continued our blog regarding antitrust and other commercial litigation topics.

We presented our 10th Annual Distinguished Counselor Award to James Spivey of Spivey Valenciano, a leading antitrust lawyer and former section chair. The award recognizes service to the section, excellence in antitrust or business litigation, and high professionalism and ethical standards.

At the 2015 Annual Meeting, we presented Inside the Insider Trading Trial of Mark Cuban, with speaker Tom Melsheimer of Fish & Richardson.

This year, we presented *People v. Dewey LeBoeuf*: Prosecuting and Defending Individual Responsibility for Corporate Mismanagement, with Elkan Abramowitz, who represented Dewey's managing partner in that case; UNT Dallas College of Law Dean

Royal Furgeson, a former U.S. District Court judge; and Paul E. Coggins, a former U.S. attorney, discussing the trying of individuals for corporate crimes. Baker Botts partner Rod Phelan moderated the event.

We supported initiatives promoting pro bono and lawyer assistance programs and sponsored interns in the Antitrust Section of the Texas Attorney General's Office.

APPELLATE

Macey Reasoner Stokes, Chair

The Appellate Section had a productive year. Our Bench Bar Liaison Committee held Coffee With the Justices events in conjunction with the Texas courts of appeals in San Antonio, Corpus Christi, Edinburg, Fort Worth, and Texarkana. These events, which provided an opportunity for bar members to socialize informally with the justices, have been well attended, and more are planned. We also co-sponsored, with the Austin Bar Association, An Evening with the Supreme Court of Texas. This April 21 event featured a panel discussion with several court members followed by a reception. Our CLE Committee hosted its popular How to Handle Your First Appeal on April 15 in Austin. Our Diversity Committee planned a Diversity in Appellate Law panel discussion and lunch in the Dallas area, but floodwaters required us to reschedule it for the fall. Our Law School Liaison Committee continues to send numerous appellate lawyers to law schools around the state to speak to students about appellate practice. The committee also inaugurated the Excellence in Appellate Advocacy Award, given to one student at each Texas law school selected by faculty. Our annual 101 and Advanced Civil Appellate Practice courses will be held September 7-9 in Austin.

ASIAN-PACIFIC INTEREST

Catherine A. Le, Chair

The Asian-Pacific Interest Section celebrated its 21st year at its Discover

New Heights Annual Conference on April 9-10 in Austin. The event provided CLE and professional development panels highlighting civic leadership and female minority partnership in large law firms.

Topics included updates on the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, implicit bias, civic leadership, branding, and in-house counsel. The conference wrapped up with a fireside chat titled, Asian-American Women Partners Ascending the BigLaw Ladder (or Not).

The conference recognized excellent attorneys and organizations with awards for their dedication and commitment, including: Justice David Wellington Chew Award—Albert Lin; Champion of Diversity—Chad Anson; Outstanding Mentor—Sean T. Hamada; Pro Bono Award—Ketan Kharod; Best Lawyers Under 40—Alison L. Chen, Kelly Chen, and Chris M. Kang; and Affiliate of the Year—South Asian Bar Association of Dallas.

Additionally, APIS launched a new website with support from the State Bar Sections Department, restarted publication of its newsletter *APIS Affairs*, and regularly shared information on its Facebook page.

Our section will lead the effort to help establish a San Antonio Asian Bar Association, and it looks forward to producing dynamic, collaborative programs for its membership and Asian- and Pacific-American legal communities across Texas.

AVIATION LAW

Nathan S. Haley, Chair

The Aviation Law Section of the State Bar of Texas exists to provide education and information that equips, encourages, and supports attorneys practicing aviation law in Texas. We once again had a successful year accomplishing that mission, with robust member participation at the Annual Meeting and annual early morning breakfast at the Southern

Methodist University Air Law Symposium in Dallas. During the event, we provided the section's second annual scholarship to a deserving SMU Dedman School of Law student, and we look forward to continuing this custom in years to come. The section enjoyed its now-established tradition of dinner together the evening before the Annual Meeting, where the food was excellent and the company delightful, all thanks to the sponsorship and outstanding coordination by the Austin law firm of Slack & Davis.

BANKRUPTCY LAW

William L. Wallander, Chair

The Bankruptcy Law Section remains strong and growing. The section continues to provide advanced consumer and business bankruptcy legal education through seminars and a newsletter. Our Starting Out Right seminars for new lawyers are highly regarded, and the next one will be held July 14-15 in McAllen and simulcast to bankruptcy courts throughout Texas.

The section continues its partnership with the American Bankruptcy Institute to promote the CARE/MoneyWise program, which teaches students and adults personal financial management. The presentations were recently held in Dallas and San Antonio, and the section looks forward to expanding this initiative.

The section has been active in supporting the efforts of several organizations that provide legal aid to the poor. Our Elliot Cup Inter-scholastic Moot Court Competition is nationally recognized and has helped many students learn bankruptcy law advocacy skills. Our biannual statewide bench-bar conference and our support for district bench-bar conferences provide legal education and promote collegiality in our practice community. Finally, the section congratulated two highly esteemed bankruptcy judges, Hon. D. Michael Lynn and Hon. Richard S. Schmidt,

on their retirements last year and welcomed two new bankruptcy judges to the bench, Hon. Mark X. Mullin and Hon. Eduardo V. Rodriguez.

BUSINESS LAW

F. John Podvin Jr., Chair

The section's leadership continually works in a number of ways to enhance value for members and future members. Members from our council held meetings with law students at the 10 Texas law schools to discuss various types of business-related practices.

The section sponsored several CLE programs (where members received a discount), including the Essentials of Business Law and the Advanced Business Law Course, and it co-sponsored a CLE program with the Corporate Counsel Section. The section continues to work on updating its website design and content, including adding CLE materials from programs so section members can review them. The section is also beginning to hold online courses in selected areas of the law and converted the *Texas Journal of Business Law* into a digital format for distribution.

The section celebrated the passage of key legislation enhancing business laws in Texas and will continue to work with legislators in drafting bills to improve business laws in Texas, including, but not limited to, establishing business courts in Texas during the next legislative session.

COLLABORATIVE LAW

Sherrie R. Abney, Chair

Last year the section began sending letters to various bar associations around the state offering to send speakers to the associations' meetings to introduce the collaborative process. Due to the response, the program is being continued with requests from bar associations.

Section members in Houston have begun providing pro bono collaborative legal services. Members are working to expand this effort in Dallas where collaborative training has been con-

ducted to introduce paralegals and attorneys to the process. In addition, plans are being made to work with lawyer referral services to provide reduced fees for parties who do not qualify for Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas pro bono services yet are unable to pay normal attorney's fees. Information on these two programs was presented at the State Bar Annual Meeting on June 16 in Fort Worth.

On September 15-17, the section, along with Texas A&M University School of Law, the Texas Center for Legal Ethics, the Tarrant County Bar Association, and the Global Collaborative Law Council, will sponsor a Civil Collaborative Law Conference, which will offer basic training followed by advanced interactive activities and guest speakers.

COMPUTER AND TECHNOLOGY

Craig D. Ball, Chair

C&T is adjusting to large section status (more than 2,000 members), evolving from a cadre of early adopters to a legion of legal professionals drawn to the technology of law and the law of technology. It's been a year of introspection and strategic planning as C&T approaches its inaugural section summit, questioning its goals and structure and asking delegates, What can we achieve? How can we better deliver value and service to our community?

The section is committed to member benefits: Members receive free membership in the International Legal Technology Association, a 20,000-plus member organization that provides peer connections, education, and collective intelligence.

C&T members get the section's app, a comprehensive law library in your pocket that supplies current rules and codes with links to cases. It has proven reason enough for hundreds of lawyers to join.

Circuits, our engaging quarterly newsletter, offers scholarly and practical articles and useful tips. In 2015-2016, C&T arranged to generate and curate

breaking news on forensic technology, revised bylaws, and underwrote two successful hack-a-thons that developed tools to support access to justice. The council explored and reported on many of the almost 200 peer-provided educational sessions at the annual ILTA convention.

CONSTRUCTION LAW

Thomas R. Barber, Chair

I am pleased to report that the Construction Law Section has continued its substantial educational, informational, professional development, and charitable activities over the past year. In that regard, the Texas Board of Legal Specialization, supported by section membership, is on schedule to offer the first construction law specialization exam October 17.

In addition, the section remained committed to the Texas Access to Justice Foundation, with a substantial contribution to assist those who cannot otherwise afford legal services. I am particularly proud of the section's commitment to charities serving the needs of veterans, having selected and made significant contributions to Folds of Honor through fundraising activities at the last two annual conferences. Moreover, the section council has decided to make contributions to deserving veterans causes a regular agenda item for the section's annual conference, based upon a two-year rotation for each selected charity.

The section also increased access to those wanting to serve by introducing an open application process for service on its governing council. The application process has been a great success, with many well-qualified candidates showing interest in service and creating new opportunities for greater individual and regional diversity.

CONSUMER AND COMMERCIAL LAW

Michael Thomas O'Connor, Chair

In its tradition of offering quality CLE, the Consumer and Commercial Law Section's two-day Advanced Con-

sumer and Commercial Law Course was well received, as was the section's CLE offered at the 2015 State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting.

The section continued its support of legal aid through sponsorship of a benefit dinner for the Texas Access to Justice Commission and Texas Law Help. The section also provided a donation to the Sheeran-Crowley Memorial Trust.

The section was pleased to receive numerous excellent submissions for the 2015 Craig Jordan Consumer Protection Writing Competition Award. The winner received a scholarship and was announced at the State Bar Annual Meeting. The writing competition continues this year.

The section continues to provide a new benefit to its members—Lexology—a web-based service that delivers legal decisions and analysis.

The section's group email list remains a valuable tool and an active forum, allowing members to tap into the collective expertise of the section. The topical publication, the *Journal of Consumer & Commercial Law*, continues its long tradition of publishing quality materials that are both current and relevant to the practice of law in Texas.

CORPORATE COUNSEL

Bradley Hancock, Chair

The Corporate Counsel Section marked a significant milestone in 2016—it passed the \$500,000 mark in pro bono grants, providing funds to deserving programs across the state and encouraging them to include in-house and outside counsel in their offerings to the underserved. In-house counsel often have a more difficult time finding pro bono opportunities. By providing the funds to organizations that can and do utilize both in-house and outside counsel, the section allows its members to provide hands-on pro bono services tailored to their positions. For details, go to www.texascorporatocounsel.com.

The section continued developing CLE, specifically its flagship program, the Corporate Counsel Institute, which

it presented with UT Law CLE for the section's 38th annual programs in Dallas and Houston. Jane McBride and Toni Nguyen also co-developed and will host the in-house counsel courses with TexasBarCLE and the State Bar Business Law Section on August 10-12 in San Antonio.

The *Corporate Counsel Review*, the insightful and timely *Corporate Counsel Newsletter*, and *Newsstand* from Lexology continued their wonderful content for members. Membership programs under Larriet Thomas and Kirsten Cohoon have included regional meetings, CLE, and networking opportunities.

ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS LAW

Sally C. Helppie, Chair

During the 2015-2016 bar year, the Texas Entertainment and Sports Law Section continued its signature events and activities: an entertaining series of ethics panels during the State Bar Annual Meeting, the Entertainment Law Institute in November, a networking mixer during South by Southwest in March, the fall and spring issues of a quarterly e-newsletter and the celebrated *Texas Entertainment and Sports Law Journal*.

TESLAW also maintains a searchable database of entertainment attorneys, supports creative organizations with cash grants, and sells a line of original merchandise, including the classic rock star attorney T-shirts.

TESLAW's CLE programs are renowned for featuring leading attorneys from across the United States and celebrity guests. CLE panels at the 2015 Annual Meeting included actress Elaine Hendrix (*The Parent Trap*, *Sex&Drugs&Rock&Roll*) and celebrity music manager Richard Kraft (whose clients include Academy Award-winner Alan Menken and *Pitch Perfect 2*'s executive music producer Julia Michels). On June 16, 2016, TESLAW's ethics panels included Brad Sham (the "voice of the Dallas Cowboys"), Luke Wade (a finalist from *The Voice*), bestselling author William

Bernhardt (the Ben Kincaid series), and others.

TESLAW welcomes attorneys with an interest in entertainment or sports, whether or not they actively practice law in those industries.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES LAW

Allison K. Exall, Chair

The Environmental and Natural Resources Law Section continued its tradition of being one of the most active medium-sized sections, with member services, heavy involvement in law school outreach programs, pro bono projects, publications, and conferences. In August 2015, we sponsored the two-and-a-half-day 27th Annual Texas Environmental Superconference, a very successful (and entertaining) event that was sold out at 500-plus attendees. In February 2016, we co-sponsored the important Changing Face of Water Rights 2016 Conference.

We continue to award Buck J. Wynne scholarships to the highest-ranking environmental law student at each Texas law school and fund internships at several state and county agencies. We also participated in many panel discussions around the state, speaking with law students about careers in environmental law.

Other significant activities this year included: (1) the addition of the Texas Water Development Board internship to be funded by the section; (2) planned publication in spring 2016 of the fourth edition of *Essentials of Texas Water Resources*, an invaluable resource for water topics (available through texasbarcle.com); and (3) publication of the *Texas Environmental Law Journal*, which we distribute electronically to our members and make available on our website, texenrls.org.

FAMILY LAW

Heather Leah King, Chair

The Family Law Section had another active year that included innovative and successful CLE programs and

new publications to benefit its members. Section members continued to enjoy the *Family Lawyer's Essential Toolkit* and the *Family Law Section Report*, a quarterly publication consisting of legal articles and caselaw summaries.

The 2015 Advanced Family Law Seminar was a huge success with more than 1,800 registrants. Awards were presented to family lawyers who have made a significant contribution to the practice. The recipients were Brian L. Webb, who received the Hall of Legends Award; Dawn Fowler, who received the Ken Fuller Pro Bono Award; Chris Nickelson, who received the Joseph W. McKnight Best Family Law CLE Article Award; and Linda Solomon, who received the Gay G. Cox Collaborative Law Award. Additionally, the Texas Academy of Family Law Specialists awarded its prestigious Sam Emison Award to the Hon. Dean Rucker, presiding judge of the 7th Administrative Judicial Region.

In 2015, the Legislative Committee promoted the section's legislative package and effectively argued against legislation that could have negatively impacted family law in Texas.

The Pro Bono Committee continued to host seminars across the state and webinars to provide access to justice for indigent Texans.

GENERAL PRACTICE, SOLO, AND SMALL FIRM

Leigh B. Meineke, Chair

The General Practice, Solo, and Small Firm Section continues to serve the majority of law practitioners in Texas. The section provides current caselaw information and analysis through the *General Practice Digest* and offers with TexasBarCLE a general practice CLE program known as the General Practice Institute at Baylor Law School every April.

The section also continues to monitor changes proposed by both the Texas Legislature and Supreme Court that impact the practice of law. We

filed resolutions to be considered at the State Bar Annual Meeting that address the retention of client files and the sale of law practices upon the termination, retirement, or death of an attorney—two very important issues for practicing lawyers.

GOVERNMENT LAW

C. Scott Brumley, Chair

The Government Law Section continued to expand services to its membership, which maintains year-to-year growth. We sustained our outreach to practitioners in every area of government law, from the municipal to the federal level, by maintaining a monthly e-blast for members that highlights and provides links to current caselaw, upcoming government-law-related CLE, and other items of interest.

The section also continues to sponsor the Government Law Boot Camp and the Advanced Government Law Course (formerly Suing and Defending Governmental Entities). The section also is a co-sponsor of the Open Government Seminar at the State Bar Annual Meeting. This year, we are also initiating a "road show," bringing high-quality, focused government-practice-related CLE to outlying parts of the state that are not traditionally served by conventional CLE offerings.

Ryan Kellus Turner is being honored as the fifth annual recipient of the section's Outstanding Government Lawyer Award. Turner is being recognized for his 16 years of service in government law as general counsel and director of education for the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center.

The section also continues to improve and expand its website, txgovernmentlaw.org.

HEALTH LAW

Wilson G. Jones, Chair

In October, the Health Law Section co-sponsored its annual Texas Health Law Conference in Austin with the Texas Hospital Association. The three-

day event had its largest attendance ever, with more than 270 attorneys attending. In connection with the conference, the section provided scholarships to 15 law students from six Texas law schools, enabling the recipients to attend the conference for free. The section also hosted a networking luncheon at the conference for the law students to meet with section leaders and past section chairs.

The section continues to provide free webinars as a member benefit and also delivers to its members a weekly summary of proposed and adopted rules in the *Texas Register* affecting the practice of health law.

This year, the section also contributed to the Sheeran-Crowley Memorial Trust, which provides support for Texas attorneys who suffer from addiction or mental health issues and who are without resources for treatment.

HISPANIC ISSUES

Manuel Escobar, Chair

The Hispanic Issues Section continues to grow and address the needs of our community. Last year, we became a medium-sized section of the State Bar for the first time. We continued to build on that growth by hosting membership mixers in El Paso, Corpus Christi, and Houston and meeting with and talking to our members.

Last year we also put together a coalition of partners to address the unaccompanied minors crisis. This year we announced a new service project centered on fighting notario fraud in Texas. Notario fraud involves individuals offering immigration and legal services without being authorized to do so, relying on the differences between a *notario publico* in other countries (which can provide legal services) and a notary here in the United States (which cannot). Victims are promised assistance, pay cash, and frequently receive nothing. This multiyear project will involve building new partnerships and learning how our members can

best combat scams targeting the most vulnerable in our community who are desperately seeking help for themselves and their families.

We invite everyone to join in our efforts. Please visit us at tx-his.com to learn more, share your achievements, or voice your concerns.

IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY LAW

Debra Rodriguez, Chair

We've had a busy year. We unveiled a new website and distributed our first newsletter in several years, which is committed to advising members of local offices of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Department of State, and the Executive Office for Immigration Review. We held several seminars including, most recently, one at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting. However, our biggest honor was receiving an award from the State Bar for being the section with the highest percentage of members participating in the Pro Bono Challenge. But our section—of more than 1,000 members—didn't stop there. We awarded \$2,500 in grants to worthy organizations, such as Catholic Charities of Central Texas, Diocesan Migrant & Refugee Services, Human Rights Initiative of North Texas, the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services, Casa Marianella, St. Mary's University School of Law legal clinics, and University of Houston Law Center clinics. In total, \$17,500 was awarded as of May to help organizations reaching immigrant populations in need.

Anyone wishing to join our section or submit an article for consideration in our newsletter is encouraged to go to our website at texasimmigrationandnationalitylaw.com.

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Kevin Davidson, Chair

This year, the Individual Rights and Responsibilities Section continued its ongoing efforts to educate and

promote discussion of civil rights and our responsibilities as citizens. Those activities included supporting the *Texas Journal on Civil Liberties & Civil Rights*, organizing (along with the LGBT Law Section) the 10th Annual Bill of Rights Course: Cutting-Edge Controversies in Constitutional Law, co-sponsoring (along with the Appellate Section) a half-day of CLE at the State Bar Annual Meeting, and co-sponsoring (along with the American Constitution Society and Federalist Society) a debate on sentencing reform at the UNT Dallas College of Law. Finally, we presented the Patrick Wiseman Award for Civil Rights to Eliot Shavin in recognition of his distinguished civil rights work.

INSURANCE LAW

J. James Cooper, Chair

The Insurance Law Section continues to be an exceptional value for those confronted with insurance issues full time, part time, or occasionally. We have continued to enhance the section's website (insurancelawsection.org) by promoting the searchable member directory, offering new informative articles and recent court opinions, and adding past seminar materials to the resource library to go with previous editions of the *Journal of Texas Insurance Law*. The section's weekly Right Off The Press email continues to provide the most recent insurance-related Texas court opinions. Our insurance seminars have been great successes, including the November 2015 Insurance Law Institute (co-sponsored with UT Law CLE) and our February 2016 South Texas Insurance Law Seminar in McAllen, which drew more than 100 attendees and resulted in new section members from the Rio Grande Valley. Finally, June's 13th Annual Advanced Insurance Law Course at the Hilton San Antonio Hill Country Hotel & Spa repeated the success of last year. The section continues to solicit members to become more involved by serving on the

council, participating in committee work, or writing an article for the *Journal*. We had a great 2015-2016 and look forward to continued success.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW

Stephen Koch, Chair

The Intellectual Property Law Section's 2015-2016 year was truly one to remember. Early in 2015, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office announced it would be opening its Texas regional office in Dallas in November; the section participated in and celebrated that opening in a number of ways.

In September, the section hosted an introductory session at the Belo Mansion, publicizing practical information regarding the office's planned operation. Section members also attended an opening gala for the office at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science on November 9, an event that the section partially sponsored and at which PTO Director Michelle K. Lee provided opening comments. Since the office opened, the section has continued to publicize informational events offered to its members by the office.

The section continued its strong program of CLE throughout the year. Our Advanced Patent Litigation program in July featured the full-day Anatomy of a Patent Case Course, which was highly rated by attendees. In February, the IP Workshop and Advanced IP CLE provided both a session on best practices for corporate IP policies and our usual detailed review of recent events in IP law. The IP future is bright in Texas.

INTERNATIONAL LAW

George Humphrey, Chair

We had a blockbuster year, from our trip to Cuba and our two major conferences on international law and China, to our law student outreach events, newly formed human rights committee, and CLE that brought local bar associations, lawyers, and law stu-

dents together all across the state to learn and network.

Our Annual Institute, held in Houston in March, brought in top practitioners from China, Canada, and Mexico; the U.S. under secretary of commerce for industry and security; and a premiere general counsel roundtable to discuss important and trending issues in international law—from human rights, renewables, and China to compliance and struggles in the oil patch.

We also held a China Law Conference in San Antonio and formed a new and popular committee on human rights, which received attention from the press as Europe grappled with its flood of immigrants. We spent a week in Cuba following in the footsteps of President Barack Obama, learning the law on how a nonmarket economy works, and conducted law student outreach events, networking lunches, and local CLE for attorneys and law students all over the state in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Lubbock, and Waco.

JUDICIAL

Hon. Patrick A. Pirtle, Chair

Being a nonlegislative year, the Judicial Section of the State Bar of Texas seized the opportunity to partner with the Texas Center for the Judiciary to receive training on board development and strategic planning. Special thanks go out to Hon. Mark D. Atkinson and Hon. Lee Gabriel for their generous assistance. As a part of our strategic planning, the section re-evaluated its mission and recommitted its resources to its three primary objectives: (1) improving section benefits, (2) tracking legislative matters of interest to the judiciary, and (3) providing quality ethics opinions to all members of the judiciary.

Our Communications Task Force studied the section's existing website and made recommendations to improve membership services, while our Finance Task Force compiled financial policy

statements. Our Legislative Committee began its work on the upcoming legislative session and our Judicial Ethics Committee turned out several opinions.

Inspired by the commitment of 2015-2016 State Bar President Allan K. DuBois, our board also voted to provide financial assistance to the Sheeran-Crowley Memorial Trust that supports Texas attorneys and judges who have mental health or substance abuse issues.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURTS

Howard M. Bookstaff, Chair

We are continuing to work hard in the Justice of the Peace Courts Section.

Several of our board members have been instrumental in providing educational opportunities for the attorney and justice of the peace members of our section. During the year, we had two CLE luncheon presentations.

We also had a CLE presentation at the State Bar Annual Meeting on June 16, followed by a social event that evening.

The purpose of our section is to: (1) further the administration of justice in the justice courts, (2) provide a forum for the exchange of information on matters of practice and procedure in justice courts, (3) provide information and educational opportunities for the membership, and (4) cooperate closely with the State Bar of Texas and other professional organizations in developing, supporting, and promoting legal and professional activities affecting justice courts.

In addition to licensed attorneys in good standing with the State Bar, membership in the Justice of the Peace Courts Section is now open to all current and former Texas justices of the peace. Justices of the peace who are not licensed attorneys can become associate members of the section.

JUVENILE LAW

Riley N. Shaw, Chair

The 29th Annual Robert O. Dawson Juvenile Law Conference in San Antonio this spring was a huge success. Thank you to the speakers and participants who made the conference one to remember, as well as our partners at the Texas Juvenile Justice Department and the State Bar of Texas who got the word out and kept things running smoothly.

With another Texas legislative session on the way, be on the lookout for bills affecting the way juvenile records are handled, the way juvenile sex offender registration operates, regionalization, and the age limits of jurisdiction in juvenile court. It looks to be an exciting session for juvenile justice practitioners, and we look forward to seeing you in Austin as the Legislature considers bills that will affect our daily work.

As a final note, browse through the juvenile forms bank that is available as a resource for all practitioners on the section website, juvenilelaw.org.

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW

Leticia Dominguez, Chair

The Labor and Employment Law Section differs from some other sections in that the majority of our members practice exclusively on one side of the docket. Because attorneys who exclusively represent employees with claims against their employers tend to see the law very differently than attorneys who exclusively represent employers in complaints brought by their employees, the section typically does not, and did not this year, propose legislation or take a position on proposed legislation.

Additionally, in order to try to address the differences of opinion within the membership, the section's governing council is made up of an equal number of plaintiff's attorneys and an equal number of defense attorneys, as are all council committees, and the chair alternates between the two

sides of the docket.

This year, through its governing council, the section funded several pro bono projects and provided various benefits to our diverse membership, including a regular newsletter, which is edited by Professor Richard R. Carlson of South Texas College of Law; reasonably priced, high-quality CLE opportunities; and our section website, through which members can access, among other things, jury charges that have been given in trials across the state.

LAW STUDENT DIVISION

Latoya Merida, Chair

The Law Student Division had another outstanding year. Both Texas A&M University School of Law and St. Mary's University School of Law purchased memberships for their entire student bodies. The 2015-2016 school year produced the largest increase in membership for the division. For a \$15 annual division membership fee, law students become automatic members of the Texas Young Lawyers Association, obtain a student bar card that includes their lifetime bar card number upon passing the Texas Bar Exam, receive a free T-shirt, and get free registration to TexasBarCLE live and video replay seminars. New memberships and renewals can now be processed online. The student representatives continued to host informational programs for their respective schools, contributing to the success of the division. The Law Student Division will continue to flourish with the continued support and leadership of our project coordinator, Bree Trevino, and all student representatives.

LEGISLATIVE AND CAMPAIGN LAW

Ross Fischer, Chair

Throughout 2015 and 2016, the Legislative and Campaign Law Section continued its mission of educating members about the rapidly changing area of campaign finance, lobby, and election law. The section continued

to distribute electronic newsletters containing updates on caselaw developments, rules, and advisory opinions issued by the Texas Ethics Commission and interim legislative studies related to all things ethics.

In December, the section hosted a well-attended seminar providing an overview of legislative changes in the area of procurement and purchasing law. At the 2016 State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting, the section hosted an afternoon of legal education, focusing on issues in judicial campaign finance and the developing legal landscape. Material for events can be found on the section's website at legislativeandcampaignlaw.com.

LGBT LAW

Frederick W. Sultan IV, Chair

The 2015-2016 bar year was a historic time for legal issues affecting the LGBT community. The U.S. Supreme Court issued its landmark decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, and—overnight—marriage equality became the law of the land. As a result, Texas lawyers faced numerous questions from LGBT clients, their families, and employers. To address these questions, the section sponsored a CLE webcast discussing the decision and its ramifications, and for the first time, the State Bar and the section produced a full-day live CLE at the Texas Law Center in Austin dedicated to LGBT legal issues and the effect of marriage equality on Texas law. In its CLE programming, the section again partnered with other bar sections, including the Individual Rights and Responsibilities; Family Law; and Real Estate, Probate, and Trust Law sections, and focused on constitutional, family, probate, employment, HIV, elder, and sports law, with a special focus on transgender legal issues and access to care. The section hosted networking mixers following its two live CLE programs at the State Bar Annual Meeting and brought a taste of Texas to the National LGBT Bar Association's Lavender Law Conference in Chicago, where we hosted a "Texas Meet and Greet."

LITIGATION

Paula W. Hinton, Chair

The section council and its subcommittees have had an extremely active year on numerous projects. Particular focus has been on improving our publications to provide greater access to our membership. *News for the Bar* is now delivered with the ability to review and download specific articles and with hyperlinks to cited cases and statutes; these tools are also being implemented for *The Advocate*. Both of these publications and past issues can be found on the Litigation Section website at litigationsection.com. The website continues to add free CLE offerings for our members. The Litigation Update Institute CLE program provides litigators with the latest updates in various areas relevant to their practices. The Texas Legal Legends program is thriving, and in this past year, Hon. Mary Lou Robinson and Hon. Ruby Kless Sondock were inducted. At this year's State Bar Annual Meeting in June, five legal legends conducted a panel discussion on the past, present, and future of our profession. Continuing to look forward and toward the future lawyers of our state, the section provides Texas law students the opportunity to work as summer interns for legal service agencies in Texas through the grants/internships pro bono program.

MILITARY AND VETERANS LAW

Gary M. Manuele, Chair

The Military and Veterans Law Section held two CLE programs, which provided excellent training and materials regarding issues impacting service members and veterans.

In October 2015, the section held the 22nd Biennial Institute on Texas Law for Attorneys Representing Service-Members and Veterans in San Antonio. Topics included estate planning and probate issues (including Texas firearms law and gun trusts); landlord and tenant law; changes in military law relating to sexual assault

cases; divorce, child support, and child custody issues involving service members and veterans; and a how-to primer on obtaining medical information from U.S. Department of Defense facilities.

In February 2016, the section, in partnership with the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, presented the Indigent Defense & Veterans CLE, which included presentations on how to effectively represent a veteran defendant, a primer on how the Veterans Affairs system works and the role of an attorney in the system, a presentation on how to correct military and veterans records, and a primer on the military justice system and the military administrative separation process.

A section business meeting was held after each CLE. Next year will include another great year of CLE on issues impacting service members and veterans.

MUNICIPAL JUDGES

Hon. Joyce Elaine Marshall-Augustine, Chair

The Municipal Judges Section had its members busy across the state addressing the new truancy law and developing procedures according to House Bill 2398. Many cities have joined with their local justices of the peace to create joint truancy committees that will formulate: (1) a uniform process for filing truancy cases with truancy courts, (2) recommendations for a local plan with strategies that address truancy, (3) recommendations for a system for tracking truancy information that is gathered, and (4) recommendations for any changes to the existing statutes that are necessary to address truancy issues.

The members have also been busy developing teen courts across the state and utilizing juvenile case managers, which are proving to be a useful tool to help students and encourage them to stay in school.

The Texas Municipal Courts Edu-

cation Center has developed many useful seminars to keep its members educated on issues that concern our courts, such as how we should address the tragic events that occurred in Ferguson, Missouri. Our presentation this year titled, Facing Mental Health Issues in Our Courts, should be very informative.

NATIVE AMERICAN LAW

James Alexander McCorquodale, Chair

The Native American Law Section sponsored its annual seminar in January, which included a federal Indian law overview by Ray Torgerson; Franklin G. Snyder, a professor at Texas A&M University School of Law, leading a session titled Marijuana Legalization for Tribes and the Department of Justice Policy Statement Regarding Marijuana Issues in Indian Country; Victoria Sutton, a professor at Texas Tech University School of Law, addressing whether we should have a Texas Native American policy center; Jay Hurst, a former section chair, speaking on eagle feathers and Native American religious rights under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act; Paul Shunatona, vice chair, addressing the new Indian Child Welfare Act guidelines; and Gavin Clarkson and William Brotherton, examining the Indian mascot issue from legal and policy perspectives.

The cultural program featured Robbie Bass and the Eagle Point Singers, along with the Chickasaw Nation Stomp Dance Troupe and flutist Jesse Lindsey.

Gaines West presented the section's legal ethics program at the bar's Annual Meeting; it was a well-attended success. Hurst represented the section at the Texas Minority Counsel Program. Section membership continued to grow.

The section is available to serve and assist members working with tribal communities and families, as well as like-minded organizations.

OIL, GAS, AND ENERGY RESOURCES LAW

Ricardo E. Morales, Chair

With its 77th slate of council members elected at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting in San Antonio last summer, the Oil, Gas, and Energy Resources Law Section has continued its work in serving Texas oil and gas practitioners. Despite an oil and gas industry downswing, membership has taken only a slight dip, and the section continues to be one of the largest sections of the State Bar.

The section's primary mission is to monitor legal developments in oil and gas law and provide oil and gas law education to its members. In support of this mission, OGERL continues to sponsor six statewide energy-related CLE programs with the State Bar and the University of Texas. All materials from these courses are maintained in searchable format on the section's website at oilgas.org.

OGERL continues to maintain its scholarship program, awarded to the top student in each oil and gas law course taught at each Texas law school. It also issues a quarterly section report.

OGERL's *Landmark Cases* book will be published later this year and we expect our *Texas Oil & Gas Causes of Action* book to be published next year.

POVERTY LAW

Maria Luisa Mercado, Chair

The Poverty Law Section has grown from a small-sized section to a medium-sized section. It continues to provide free First Friday CLE programs under the coordination of former chair Shelby Jean. The membership receives CLE on a range of topics, and the *Poverty Law Handbook*, maintained and updated by Bruce Bower, is another valuable resource. Our website has been revamped by past chair Matt Probus. The section's committee on Texas Rule of Civil Procedure 145 and Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts certificates provided valuable information to the legal team that included former Texas

Supreme Court Chief Justice Wallace B. Jefferson, who successfully advocated in defense of TRCP 145 in the 8-0 decision by the Texas Supreme Court in *Campbell v. Wilder*.

The Poverty Law Conference was a success and the awards were presented at the annual meeting. The Impact Award recipients were Erin Gaines, a Texas RioGrande Legal Aid attorney, and Kelly L. Haragan, a professor at the University of Texas School of Law, for their work leading the environmental justice legal team in Corpus Christi. The recipient of the 2016 Noble Award for Lifetime Achievement in Poverty Law was Jaime Sanchez of Texas RioGrande Legal Aid in El Paso.

PUBLIC UTILITY LAW

Kristina F. Rollins, Chair

The Public Utility Law Section will host its annual conference and seminar on August 5 at the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center in Austin. The event will begin with our annual section meeting, followed by a continuing legal education program addressing issues of interest to practitioners involved in electric, communications, cable, water, and natural gas regulation. Panels composed of practitioners and agency staff will discuss recent decisions and rule-making proceedings at the Public Utility Commission of Texas and the Texas Railroad Commission that impact utility-rate cases and other subjects of interest. Topics will include tax treatment of electric utilities from a ratemaking perspective, PUC regulation of water and sewer retail public utilities, significant developments in telecommunications and cable, and other areas. Recent changes to the Administrative Procedure Act relating to the motion for rehearing process and potential issues for the upcoming legislative session will also be discussed. Our traditional

caselaw update and ethics presentations will round out the CLE program.

REAL ESTATE, PROBATE, AND TRUST LAW

William D. Pargaman, Chair

The section began its year by honoring D. Diane Dillard (real estate) and Nikki DeShazo (probate) as its 2015 Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award recipients. We published four quarterly issues of the *REPTL Reporter* and sent shorter, more frequent e-blasts containing breaking news and reminders. In October, we notified our membership of a change in notary laws that led to amended rules from the Texas Secretary of State's Office, clarifying that existing notaries need not include their identifying numbers on their seals until their first renewal following January 1. Legislative updates for the 2015 session were posted on our website (reptl.org), and the Probate Division completed and submitted its 2017 legislative package to the State Bar Board of Directors for approval. Section members enjoyed more than \$70,000 in discounts on registration fees for TexasBarCLE seminars; our Public Service Committee awarded approximately \$50,000 in grants to agencies assisting underserved citizens in our areas of practice; our Student Writing Contest winners received almost \$10,000 in awards; and the section contributed \$10,000 to the Sheeran-Crowley Memorial Trust in support of 2015-2016 State Bar President Allan K. DuBois's presidential initiative. We continue our partnership with the Oil, Gas, and Energy Resources Law Section in funding the Title Standards Joint Editorial Board.

SCHOOL LAW

Ellen H. Spalding, Chair

The School Law Section had yet another tremendous year. Membership and attendance at our confer-

ences continue to exceed our expectations. Our annual University of Texas School Law conference at the UT AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center in February was one of our best attended in history. We are looking forward to our annual School Law Retreat on July 21-23 in Galveston. We believe that the issues we consider as both friends and adversaries in our section—including public school finance, school district and employee accountability, and school safety—are relevant to almost all Texans. We invite anyone interested to join us.

TAX

Alyson Outenreath, Chair

This was another strong year for the Tax Section.

A focus item was member outreach. We increased member communications and added networking events to all CLE courses, which included, for the first time, a networking social at the State Bar Annual Meeting.

We focused on infrastructure, most notably launching a new version of our online CLE library. It has tons of new programs and it provides members the ability to earn all of their CLE credit online for free.

We continued our award-winning pro bono program, which assists pro se litigants during U.S. Tax Court calendar calls. Our Government Submissions Committee submitted 10 comment letters on significant tax topics.

We continued our tradition of hosting six live CLE events, selected our third Leadership Academy class, and the council chose Louise Hytken as the recipient of the 2016 Outstanding Texas Tax Lawyer Award.

We undertook the initiative to visit every Texas law school to host our Tax Career Day panel, awarded four law student scholarships, and published three issues of the *Texas Tax Lawyer*.

And last, but not least, we

launched a new version of our Texas Tax Legends video library on our website.

WOMEN AND THE LAW

Chelsie King Garza, Chair

The Women and the Law Section has been busy and plans to become even more active in the 2016-2017 bar year. In line with our goal of gaining new members and providing more benefits to them, the section added free CLE, free networking happy hours, and private social media groups to the list of benefits that our members can expect. The section hit the road this year, co-hosting, with various trial lawyer associations, complimentary happy hours in Houston, Austin, and Dallas. The section also added telephonic CLE (free and from the comfort of your own office) to our member benefits and plans to make these more frequent next year. In an effort to brand our section and become more recognizable among the women of the State Bar, we put

together a new logo and are in the process of rebuilding our website (txwomenlawsection.com). The new site will be interactive, easy to navigate, and will provide a calendar of upcoming events and a membership directory searchable by practice area. The section plans to use our new website and social media platforms to keep our members informed of cases, rule changes, and proposed legislation impacting women in the law.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Judy L. Ney, Chair

The Workers' Compensation Section experienced an exciting year. In August 2015, the section had its yearly fundraiser, with more than \$6,000 being donated to charitable organizations. Michael Sprain and Joe Anderson performed superbly as the co-chairs for last year's advanced CLE course. Also in the spotlight was Stuart Colburn, a founder of the section, who won the annual Barbed Wire Award.

The section contributed to the Justice for All calendars, published by the State Bar's Legal Access Division, which includes information for the injured worker.

The section is embarking on a new pro bono endeavor to work with a group called Kids' Chance of Texas, a nonprofit organization that provides college scholarships to children of catastrophically injured or deceased workers. Jane Lipscomb Stone and Sprain are the project contacts.

Hearing officer Kenneth Wrobel continues to keep members apprised of current events through our newsletter, group email list, and email blasts.

On August 11-12, our 13th Annual Advanced Workers' Compensation Course will be taking place in Austin. In conjunction with the event will be another great fundraising endeavor on August 11, under the guidance of Margaret M. Knott and Anna Ansari. At the same time, the section will also hold its annual meeting, welcoming Knott as the new chair. **TBJ**

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