



General questions regarding attorney discipline should be directed to the Chief Disciplinary Counsel's Office, toll-free (877) 953-5535 or (512) 453-5535. The Board of Disciplinary Appeals may be reached at (512) 475-1578. Information and copies of actual orders are available at txboda.org. The State Commission on Judicial Conduct may be contacted toll-free, (877) 228-5750 or (512) 463-5533. Please note that persons disciplined by the Commission on Judicial Conduct are not necessarily licensed attorneys.

REINSTATEMENTS

Michael Timothy LeJune [#12188300], 61, of Houston, has filed a petition in the 333rd District Court of Harris County for reinstatement as a member of the State Bar of Texas.

BODA ACTIONS

On Aug. 25, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals dismissed as moot the appeal of **Jeffrey Mark Bragg** [#02859100], 48, of Dallas, from a judgment of partially probated suspension signed on Feb. 17 by an evidentiary panel of the District 1-2 Grievance

Committee in Case No. D0080938182. Bragg was disbarred on March 25 in SBOT Cause Nos. D0080835493 and D0100355914 and the judgment of disbarment is final. BODA Cause No. 48248.

On Aug. 29, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals dismissed as moot the appeal of **Todd R. Phillippi** [#00790178], 51, of Midlothian, from a judgment of partially probated suspension signed on Jan. 31 by an evidentiary panel for the District 7-4 Grievance Committee in Case No. D0090938264. Phillippi was disbarred on July 6 in BODA Cause No. 48678 and the judgment of disbarment is final. BODA Cause No. 48613.

On Sept. 26, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals signed an agreed interlocutory order of suspension against **Walter E. Demond** [#05736600], 64, of Austin. On June 15, Demond was found guilty of misapplication of fiduciary property, theft, and money laundering, intentional crimes as defined in the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure, in Case No. CR-1016 Counts I, II, and III styled, *The State of Texas v. Walter Demond*, in the 424th Judicial District Court of Blanco County. Demond was sentenced to 10 years in the custody of the Institutional Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. The court suspended the confinement and placed Demond on community supervision for 10 years and ordered him to pay a \$10,000 fine, \$378 in court costs, and \$212,000 in restitution for each count (Demond is jointly and severally liable for \$86,000 of the restitution), to run concurrently. As a condition of community supervision, Demond must be confined to the Blanco County Jail for 140 days as to Count I, 180 days as to Count II, and 180 days as

to Count III, said terms of confinement to run consecutively. Demond has appealed the conviction. The Board retains jurisdiction to enter a final judgment when the criminal appeal is final. BODA Cause No. 48995.

On Sept. 29, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals signed a final judgment of suspension against **Patricia Foster Skelton** [#07307200], 52, of Utopia. On June 19, 2008, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals signed an interlocutory order of suspension against Skelton. On Dec. 12, 2007, she was found guilty of forgery, an intentional crime as defined in the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure, in Cause No. 2004-934-CR styled, *The State of Texas v. Patricia Foster Skelton*, in the 38th District Court of Real County. She was sentenced to one year in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice — State Jail Division. The jail sentence was suspended and she was placed on probation for two years. Skelton appealed the conviction, and on March 25, the 4th Court of Appeals affirmed the criminal conviction. Skelton is suspended from the practice of law during the term of her criminal conviction. BODA Cause No. 42223.

On Sept. 29, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals signed an interlocutory order of suspension against **Vincent W. Aldridge** [#00793244], 47, of Fresno. On July 26, Aldridge was found guilty of one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud and wire fraud, 10 counts of aiding and abetting wire fraud, one count of conspiracy to engage in monetary transaction in criminally derived property, and six counts of aiding and abetting engaging in monetary transaction in criminally derived property, intentional crimes as defined in the Texas Rules of

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Disciplinary Procedure, in Case No. 4:10CR00185-001 styled, *United States of America v. Vincent Wallace Aldridge*, in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Houston Division. Aldridge was sentenced to 63 months in the custody of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons, followed by supervised release for three years. The court ordered him to pay a \$1,900 fine and \$891,000 in restitution. Aldridge has appealed the conviction. The Board retains jurisdiction to enter a final judgment when the criminal appeal is final. BODA Cause No. 49053.

On Sept. 29, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals signed a default judgment of disbarment against **Heather Anne Glover** [#24013828], 39, of Horatio, S.C. On Jan. 7, the Supreme Court of South Carolina disbarred Glover in a matter styled: *In the Matter of Heather Anne Glover, Respondent*. Opinion No. 26908. In accordance with Part IX of the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure, Glover is disbarred. Glover did not answer or appear. BODA Cause No. 48979.

On Oct. 5, the Board of Disciplinary Appeals revoked the probation of **William Conrad Hanlon** [#24011949], 48, of Sugar Land, and suspended him from the practice of law for two years, effective Oct. 5. On Feb. 20, 2009, the District 5-A2 Grievance Committee signed a three-year, partially probated suspension against Hanlon. The default judgment found that Hanlon committed professional misconduct by violating the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct in six separate grievances and suspended him from the practice of law for three years, with the last two years probated on certain terms and conditions. The Board of Disciplinary Appeals found that Hanlon materially violated the terms and conditions of the default judgment, including, among other violations, failing to pay attorney's fees, to pay restitution, to provide affidavits to the State Bar of Texas, to surrender his law license and bar card, to remain current

on MCLE, and to return papers and other property. Hanlon did not answer or appear. BODA Cause No. 47916.

DISBARMENTS

On Aug. 13, **Laura Marie Sample Hilliard** [#24029614], 43, of Dallas, was disbarred. An evidentiary panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that Hilliard, upon termination of representation, failed to surrender papers and property to which the complainant was entitled and to refund advance payments of a fee that had not been earned. Further, Hilliard failed to timely furnish a response to the grievance or assert any privilege for her failure to do so.

Hilliard violated Rules 1.15(d) and 8.04(a)(8). She was ordered to pay \$1,329.50 in attorney's fees and costs and \$2,500 in restitution.

RESIGNATIONS

On Sept. 8, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation, in lieu of discipline, of **Ryan Pannell Wray** [#24060855], 33, of Keller. At the time of Wray's resignation, there were 15 pending matters against him alleging neglecting legal matters; frequently failing to carry out completely the obligations owed to his clients; engaging in conduct involving fraud, dishonesty, deceit, or misrepresentation; practicing law when his license to practice law was administratively suspended; and failing to communicate with his clients, to place client funds in a trust account, to promptly remit funds owing to the client, to return client files and unearned fees at the end of the representation, and to timely furnish a response to the Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel.

Wray violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and (b)(2); 1.03(a); 1.14(a) and (b); 1.15(d); and 8.04(a)(3), (a)(8), and (a)(11). He was ordered to pay \$18,376 in restitution.

On Aug. 23, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation, in lieu of discipline, of **Russell E. Mackert** [#12761700], 52, of Bellaire. At the

time Mackert submitted his resignation, there was one grievance pending against him. The Court found that Mackert pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit mail fraud, a Class C felony involving moral turpitude, as well as bulk cash smuggling, a Class D felony. On July 22, Mackert was sentenced to imprisonment for these offenses, with terms of 188 months and 60 months to run concurrently. The U.S. District Court ordered Mackert to pay \$27,548,572.70 in restitution. Furthermore, on Sept. 1, 2010, Mackert was administratively suspended from the practice of law for non-payment of dues or fees and for failure to satisfy MCLE requirements, but continued to practice law.

On Aug. 23, the Supreme Court of Texas accepted the resignation, in lieu of discipline, of **Alonzo Ramos** [#00797279],

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41, of Laredo. At the time of his resignation, Ramos had been convicted of a serious crime.

Ramos violated Rule 8.04(a)(2).

SUSPENSIONS

On Sept. 13, **Stephen James Frost** [#24002112], 39, of Austin, agreed to a two-year, fully probated suspension effective Sept. 15. An evidentiary panel of the District 9 Grievance Committee found that on July 17, 2007, the complainant hired Frost for representation in a claim against BASA Resources for fire damage to his property. Frost misrepresented to the complainant that a lawsuit was filed. Frost did not file a lawsuit in the matter and the statute of limitations ran out on the complainant's claim. On June 3, 2010, the complainant wrote Frost a letter requesting information

about his case. Frost failed to respond to the letter and failed to keep the complainant informed about the status of his case.

Frost violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), and 8.04(a)(1) and (a)(3). Frost was ordered to pay \$644.19 in attorney's fees and expenses.

On Aug. 16, **Omar Orlando Collin** [#24048185], 40, of Kingsville, received a one-year, fully probated suspension effective Sept. 28. An evidentiary panel of the District 11 Grievance Committee found that Collin neglected a client matter and failed to communicate with a client, to return an unearned fee, and to respond to the grievance.

Collin violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a) and (b), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$2,143.40 in attorney's fees and direct expenses and \$2,000 in restitution.

On Aug. 22, **Russel L. Robinson** [#17108100], 63, of Amarillo, received a one-year, fully probated suspension effective Aug. 12. An evidentiary panel of the District 13 Grievance Committee found that in representing the complainant and her daughter, Robinson frequently failed to carry out completely the obligations Robinson owed to them and failed to keep the complainant reasonably informed about the status of her personal injury matter and to explain the matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the complainant to make informed decisions regarding the representation. Robinson engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation. In addition, Robinson failed to respond to the complaint.

Robinson violated Rules 1.01(b)(2), 1.03(a) and (b), and 8.04(a)(3) and (a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$2,313.75 in attorney's fees and \$461.56 in costs.

On Sept. 22, **Mark E. Garcia** [#00796601], 41, of Premont, agreed to a one-year, fully probated suspension effective Oct. 1. The 79th District Court

of Jim Wells County found that Garcia failed to hold funds separate from his own property and to properly disburse funds owed to a third person.

Garcia violated Rules 1.14(a) and (c). He was ordered to pay \$500 in attorney's fees and expenses.

On Aug. 30, **Victor Yang** [#22123325], 49, of Dallas, received a two-year, partially probated suspension effective Sept. 1, with the first six months actively served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 1 Grievance Committee found that in representing the complainant, Yang neglected the legal matter entrusted to him and failed to keep the complainant reasonably informed about the status of her personal injury matter. Yang failed to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information from the complainant about her matter.

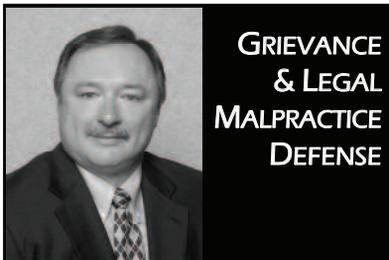
Yang violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and 1.03(a). He was ordered to pay \$2,926.47 in attorney's fees and costs.

On Sept. 26, **Rene Segundo** [#17996999], 49, of Mission, accepted a 14-month, fully probated suspension effective Feb. 28, 2014. An evidentiary panel of the District 12 Grievance Committee found that Segundo neglected a client matter and failed to communicate with a client and to respond to the grievance timely.

Segundo violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$1,200 in attorney's fees and expenses.

On Oct. 4, **Shawn R. Roberts** [#00794540], 41, of Tomball, accepted a five-year, partially probated suspension effective Jan. 1, 2011, with the first year actively served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 4 Grievance Committee found that Roberts neglected a legal matter entrusted to him and failed to keep the client reasonably informed about the status of his criminal matter. Upon termination of

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the representation, Roberts failed to refund any advance payments of fee that he had not earned. During the representation, Roberts was administratively suspended from the practice of law.

Roberts violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(11). He agreed to pay \$10,000 in attorney's fees and costs and \$48,000 in restitution.

On Sept. 28, **David Arie DeGroot** [#24044444], 49, of McAllen, agreed to a two-year, fully probated suspension effective Oct. 1. An evidentiary panel of the District 9 Grievance Committee found that in November 2006, the complainant hired DeGroot to represent him in a civil case. DeGroot filed an answer on the complainant's behalf, but subsequently failed to timely respond to discovery requests, which resulted in deemed admissions against his client. DeGroot failed to file a response to the plaintiff's motion for summary judgment, to notify the complainant of the summary judgment hearing, and to appear at the hearing on behalf of the complainant. On March 2, 2009, a summary judgment was entered against the complainant. DeGroot failed to furnish a written response to the complaint as directed.

DeGroot violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), and 8.04(a)(1) and (a)(8). DeGroot was ordered to pay \$1,386.54 in attorney's fees and expenses.

On Sept. 9, **Behzad Saffary-Khozani** [#24041846], 39, of Houston, received an 18-month, partially probated suspension effective Oct. 1, with the first six months actively served and the remainder probated. An evidentiary panel of the District 4-B Grievance Committee found that, in three matters, Saffary-Khozani failed to keep his clients reasonably informed about the status of their legal matters, to comply with reasonable requests for information, and, upon termination of representation, to refund advance payments of fee that had not been earned. In two of those matters, he also neglected the legal matters entrusted

to him. In all three matters, Saffary-Khozani failed to timely furnish to the Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel responses or other information as required by the Texas Rules of Disciplinary Procedure.

Saffary-Khozani violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.15(d), and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$2,305 in attorney's fees and expenses and \$1,590 in restitution.

On Oct. 12, **Andrew Gass** [#07747800], 61, of Houston, accepted a one-year, fully probated suspension effective Nov. 1. An evidentiary panel of the District 4-F Grievance Committee found that Gass was hired for representation in a personal injury matter. Gass settled his client's med-pay claim with her own insurance carrier and promptly paid himself and his client, but failed to promptly remit payment of the remaining funds to any medical providers. Gass permitted the balance of his trust account to fall below the amount belonging to his client. Gass also failed to file a response to the grievance.

Gass violated Rules 1.14(b) and 8.04(a)(8). Gass agreed to pay \$1,500 in attorney's fees and costs.

On Sept. 14, **Calvin Deshon Parks** [#24027592], 36, of League City, received a one-year, fully probated suspension, effective Oct. 1. An evidentiary panel of the District 5-B Grievance Committee found that Parks was hired for representation in a divorce matter, but neglected the case when he failed to prepare the necessary documents to transfer title of properties awarded to his client in the divorce and further failed to file a QDRO on behalf of his client.

Parks violated Rule 1.01(b)(1). He was ordered to pay \$1,752 in attorney's fees and costs and \$3,548 in restitution.

On Oct. 12, **Bassey Otu Akpaffiong** [#24006745], 45, of Sugar Land, accepted a one-year, fully probated suspension, effective Nov. 1. An evidentiary panel of the District 5-A Grievance Committee found that, in one matter, Akpaffiong,

upon conclusion of his contingent fee representation, failed to provide his client with a written statement describing the outcome of the matter and showing the remittance and method of its determination. In a second matter, Akpaffiong, upon termination of representation, failed to surrender papers to his client. In a third matter, Akpaffiong neglected the legal matter entrusted to him and failed to keep his client reasonably informed about the status of her legal matter and to promptly comply with her reasonable requests for information.

Akpaffiong violated Rules 1.01(b)(1), 1.03(a), 1.04(d), and 1.15(d). He agreed to pay \$650 in attorney's fees.

REPRIMANDS

On July 11, **Jeffrey Rollins Davis** [#05508350], 45, of San Antonio, accept-

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ed a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 10 Grievance Committee found that Davis distributed an advertising brochure that did not contain limiting language regarding the staffing of his Amarillo office and that in his Amarillo and Tyler offices, Davis failed to ensure that his non-lawyer staff's conduct was compatible with the professional obligations of a lawyer.

Davis violated Rules 5.03(a) and (b)(1) and 7.04(j). He agreed to pay \$7,500 in attorney's fees and direct expenses.

On Aug. 24, **Carl N. White** [#24026524], 49, of Denison, received a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 1 Grievance Committee found that in representing the complainant's daughter in a negligence suit against a school district, White neglected the legal matter

entrusted to him and failed to keep the complainant reasonably informed about the status of her daughter's legal matter.

White violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and 1.03(a). He was ordered to pay \$1,237.50 in attorney's fees.

White did not file an appeal.

On June 9, **Ronald Ray Higgins** [#00795784], 49, of Weslaco, received a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 10-3 Grievance Committee found that Higgins settled his client's case without consent.

Higgins violated Rule 1.02(a). He was ordered to pay \$3,053.60 in fees and direct expenses.

On Sept. 28, **James P. Grissom** [#08511900], 64, of McAllen, accepted a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel

of the District 12 Grievance Committee found that Grissom failed to keep his client reasonably informed and to state the method by which a fee was to be determined.

Grissom violated Rules 1.03(a) and 1.04(d). He agreed to pay \$800 in attorney's fees and expenses.

On July 27, **Paul D. Rich** [#16842500], 67, of Dallas, received a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 6 Grievance Committee found that in representing the complainant, Rich failed to abide by the complainant's decision whether to accept an offer of settlement. Rich failed to explain a matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the complainant to make informed decisions regarding her probate matter. Rich failed to promptly notify the complainant of settlement funds received on behalf of the decedent in the probate matter.

Rich violated Rules 1.02(a)(2), 1.03(b), and 1.14(b). He was ordered to pay \$1,465.50 in attorney's fees.

On July 25, **Robert E. Zepeda** [#22258550], 62, of San Antonio, accepted a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 10 Grievance Committee found that Zepeda neglected a client matter and failed to respond to his client's requests for information.

Zepeda violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and 1.03(a). He agreed to pay \$800 in attorney's fees and direct expenses and \$2,500 in restitution.

On July 25, **Lenis William Pierce III** [#15999200], 55, of Lindale, received a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 2 Grievance Committee found that Pierce made a statement that he knew to be false or with reckless disregard as to its truth or falsity concerning the qualifications or integrity of a judge. Pierce failed to respond to the grievance.

Pierce violated Rules 8.02(a) and 8.04(a)(8). He was ordered to pay \$2,000 in attorney's fees and costs.

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On Aug. 8, **Olivero E. Canales** [#03737200], 59, of Laredo, accepted a public reprimand. An evidentiary panel of the District 12 Grievance Committee found that Canales neglected a client matter and failed to communicate with a client.

Canales violated Rules 1.01(b)(1) and 1.03(a). He agreed to pay \$800 in attorney's fees and direct expenses.

PRIVATE REPRIMANDS

Listed below is the breakdown of rule violations for 17 attorneys, with the number of attorneys violating each rule in parentheses. Please note that an attorney may be reprimanded for more than one rule violation. Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct (TDRPC): 1.01(b)(1) — for neglecting a legal matter entrusted to the lawyer (six); 1.01(b)(2) — for failing to carry out completely the obligations owed to a client (two); 1.03(a) — for failing to keep a client reasonably informed about the status of a matter and to promptly comply with reasonable requests for information (seven); 1.03(b) — for failing to explain a matter to the extent reasonably necessary to permit the client to make informed decisions regarding the representation (one); 1.04(d) — for failing to reduce a contingency fee agreement with a client to writing (one); 1.04(f) — for dividing or agreeing to a division of a fee between lawyers who are not in the same firm (three); 1.04(g) — for failing to confirm an arrangement conforming to paragraph (f) that allows a lawyer or law firm to associate other counsel in the representation of a person, or to refer the person to other counsel for such representation, and that results in such an association with or referral to a different law firm or a lawyer in such a different firm, shall be confirmed by an arrangement conforming to paragraph (f) (one); 1.14(a) — for failing to hold funds and other property belonging in whole or part to clients or third persons in a lawyer's possession separate from the lawyer's own property (one); 1.14(b) —

for failing, upon receiving funds or other property in which a client or third person has an interest, to promptly notify the client or third person and render a full accounting upon request (two); 1.15(d) — for failing, upon termination of representation, to reasonably protect a client's interests, give notice to the client to seek other counsel, or surrender papers and property that belongs to the client (four); 5.03(b)(2) — a lawyer shall be subject to discipline for the conduct of a non-lawyer employed or retained by the lawyer that would be a violation of the rules if engaged in by a lawyer if the lawyer is a partner in the law firm in which the person is employed, retained by, or associated with; or is the general counsel of a government agency's legal department in which the person is employed, retained by, or associated with; or has direct supervisory authority over such person (one); 8.04(a)(1) — violating the TDRPC, counseling or assisting another to violate the Rules, or violating the Rules through the acts of another (three); 8.04(a)(8) — for failing to timely furnish a district grievance committee a response or other information as required unless he/she timely asserts a privilege or other legal ground for failure to do so (one); and 8.04(a)(11) — for engaging in the practice of law when the lawyer is on inactive status or when the lawyer's right to practice has been suspended or terminated, including but not limited to situations where a lawyer's right to practice has been administratively suspended for failure to timely pay required fees or assessments or for failure to comply with Article XII of the State Bar Rules relating to Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (two). ❖

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