Limitless Opportunities

BY ADAM MILASINCIC

Thank you, Mr. (Bob) Black and Ms. (Natalie Cobb) Koehler for your words of encouragement and thank you to the members and staff of the Board of Law Examiners for organizing today's ceremony.

As I begin my remarks, you will be glad to know that I intend to follow Franklin Roosevelt's three rules for speechmaking: Be sincere, be brief, and then be seated.

As you can imagine, this moment is quite unexpected. While leaving the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston on July 28, I had many thoughts, but the possibility of being asked to address you today was certainly not among them.

Adam Milasincic (center), the high scorer on the July 2011 Texas bar examination, is pictured with (from left) Texas Board of Law Examiners (BLE) member Augustin Rivera, Jr., Texas Supreme Court Justice Dale Wainwright, Chief Justice Wallace B. Jefferson, and BLE Executive Director Julia Vaughn. A graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law, Milasincic is an attorney with the Litigation Department in the Houston office of Baker Botts, L.L.P.

What I appreciate most about this opportunity is the chance to speak on behalf of all of us who join the ranks of the Texas Bar this morning. Specifically, it is my honor to thank everyone who provided us with critical support and encouragement during three years of law school and two months of exam preparation. For each of us in this room, there are countless family members, friends, teachers, and mentors who made today possible. So, from all of us to all of you, I say "Thank you; we won't forget it."

I would like to personally thank my parents and grandparents, my colleagues at Baker Botts, L.L.P., and my friends from the University of Virginia. I especially thank Judge Lynn Hughes of the Federal District Court in Houston, who provided my first opportunity to live and work in Texas as an intern two summers ago. Absent the chance he gave me, it is unlikely that I would be standing here this morning.

JULY 2011 BAR EXAM
PASS RATE INFORMATION

The table below shows the number of graduates from each Texas law school that took the bar exam for the first time in July, the number that passed the exam, and the percentage that passed.

LAW SCHOOL	TESTED	PASSED	PASS RATE
Baylor	97	93	96%
St. Mary's	210	178	85%
South Texas	257	230	89%
S.M.U.	230	200	87%
Texas Tech	158	143	91%
Texas Southern	114	76	67%
Texas Wesleyan	156	137	88%
U. of Houston	220	203	92%
U. of Texas	268	251	94%
TOTAL	1,710	1,511	88%

I feel quite fortunate not only to be a newly licensed lawyer, but to be one in Texas in 2011. I believe there is no better place to live, work, and practice law than Texas at this moment. Beyond the quality of life, the cost of living, and the fact that you don't have to shovel humidity, we are privileged to be entering the legal profession in one of the nation's fastest growing, most thriving, and most diverse states. These trends present unparalleled opportunities and challenges for members of the bar in decades to come.

As our careers develop, it will also be our privilege to help shape the policies and institutions that have made Texas such an attractive destination for entrepreneurs, innovators, and hard workers all over the United States and the world. There are no doubt future judges and legislators among those gathered here today. In addition, each of us will have opportunities in ways large and small to participate in the exciting legal environment associated with growth of the scope projected. Some will work on seminal cases, some will facilitate the transactions that keep our economy moving, and — perhaps most important — each of us will have the chance to help those who need legal services but cannot afford them.

In short, Texas offers limitless opportunities to both do well professionally and do good in our communities. It's a journey that I am happy to begin with all of you.

Thank you again to our event organizers and to the family and friends who celebrate with us this morning. Most of all, congratulations to my fellow examinees and future colleagues on a job well done. Thank you.