

SUPPORTING A PASSION FOR LAW

BY BRIAN J. CATHEY



Brian J. Cathey (second from left), the high scorer on the February 2012 Texas bar examination, is pictured with (from left) Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice Wallace B. Jefferson, Texas Board of Law Examiners member Laura R. Swann, and Justice Dale Wainwright. A graduate of the University of Michigan Law School, Cathey is a litigation associate of Pierce & O'Neill, L.L.P. in Houston.

Thank you for the introduction, Chief Justice Jefferson. When I was informed I would be giving these remarks, I asked several attorneys who had previously sat through these same remarks in prior years for advice. Every attorney responded in the exact same way. First, they asked why I — the highest scorer on the bar exam — was selected to give these remarks. The bar exam is a pass/fail test, they continued. Shouldn't the person with the lowest passing score be giving everyone their advice? Second, they said that they couldn't really remember the remarks or the person who gave them.

I have no doubt these remarks and myself will be no different for any of you. Finally, they told me to just look up prior remarks on the *Texas Bar Journal's* website. Based on my review of previous remarks, there is a set formula. First, I need to say something humorous. Second, I need to say thank you to all the family and friends who have gathered here, including my own. And finally, I need to say congratulations.

Given the forum, it would only be natural for me to tell a lawyer joke. But as Chief Justice John Roberts appropriately rec-

ognized, lawyers shouldn't tell lawyer jokes. Other lawyers don't find them funny, and non-lawyers don't know they are jokes.

On a serious note, I would like to say thank you to the family and friends gathered here. Behind each one of us new lawyers

is a family and group of friends who supported us from kindergarten through law school and finally through bar preparation. Without them, we would not be gathered here today. In my case, this group includes my beautiful wife, my two loving parents, and my bosses, Jessie Pierce and Jack O'Neill, two terrific trial lawyers whose patient guidance should serve as the model for all legal employers. Specifically, without the love and support of my wife and parents, I would not be here today. My wife and parents have made immeasurable sacrifices to allow me to pursue my passion for law — or, for that matter, any passion I have ever had. To them, I would like to extend a special thank you.

Finally, I would like to say congratulations to all of the new lawyers gathered here today. Without your own hard work and dedication, you would not be here. Congratulations, and I wish you the best of luck in your chosen area of law. Thank you. ☺

FEBRUARY 2012 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 February, the number that passed the exam, and the percentage that passed.

LAW SCHOOL	TESTED	PASSED	PASS RATE
Baylor	54	50	93%
St. Mary's	62	41	66%
South Texas	83	65	78%
S.M.U.	32	29	91%
Texas Tech	21	17	81%
Texas Southern	18	8	44%
Texas Wesleyan	45	31	69%
U. of Houston	35	27	77%
U. of Texas	17	13	76%
TOTAL	367	281	77%