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Hometown: Wilmette, Illinois

Position: Senior counsel to Gray Reed & McGraw in Dallas

Board Member: District 6, Place 5 since 2016

[INTERVIEW BY ERIC QUITUGUA]

I WAS INSPIRED BY THE CHARACTERS OF ATTICUS FINCH AND PERRY MASON WHEN READING BOOKS AS A CHILD.

But my desire to become a lawyer actually did not bloom until my senior year at SMU when every other career I then considered seemed lacking in the kind of meaningful impact I wanted to have in the lives of people and in my community.

I SPENT MOST OF MY CAREER IGNORANT OF THE VARIED AND NEARLY LIMITLESS BENEFITS OF THE STATE BAR BY ONLY TAKING PART IN SECTION MEMBERSHIP AND CLES.

My later deeper involvement in the Dallas Bar Association opened my eyes to the great work done for our profession by those who dedicate themselves to it in bar leadership. The more I participated, the deeper my respect for our profession grew and the more rewarding the relationships with like-minded servant-lawyers became. I was hooked.

SEEKING GREATER BAR INVOLVEMENT, I ASKED STATE BAR LEADERS ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES.

I was encouraged to run by stories of how they found the pinnacle of professionalism and dedication to our profession among State Bar leaders, and how the relationships forged there were among their strongest and most cherished. They could not have been more right.

MY MORE RECENT EXPERIENCE AS AN ADVISER TO COMMITTEES DEALING WITH ETHICS AND PRACTICE MANAGEMENT HAVE LED TO HELPING DEVELOP SOUND SUCCESSION PLANNING RESOURCES AND PRESENTATIONS ESSENTIAL FOR SOLO AND SMALL FIRMS FACING THAT CHALLENGE.

This is something I have always done for clients as an estate planner, so I am glad for this opportunity to leverage that experience for our lawyer colleagues.

I AM MOST PROUD OF THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF THAT PRECEDED ME ON THE INSURANCE/MEMBER BENEFITS SUBCOMMITTEE, WHOSE WORK I HOPE TO CONTINUE.

While still a project in process, we are now exploring ways the bar can support solo and small firms with benefits related to business succession planning. This is an area of great concern with our aging bar, and so I am glad to see the State Bar added succession planning in its strategic plan and a focus on solutions that will help lawyers achieve it for the benefit of their families and their clients.

ALL DIRECTORS AND STAFF JEALOUSLY GUARD THE PRIVILEGE WE HAVE BEEN GRANTED BY THE LEGISLATURE TO SELF-GOVERN, WHICH REQUIRES WE DEMONSTRATE WE CAN MEET OUR MISSION TO PROTECT LAWYERS, THEIR CLIENTS, THE PUBLIC, AND OUR JUDICIARY.

This requires many meetings and substantial time and energy from our officers and directors working together toward those purposes with no compensation and certainly no enticing perks other than the intrinsic reward that comes from that work. I hope with better communication, our members will become more engaged themselves to see the benefit they and their clients reap from it. **TBJ**