



PHOTO BY MATEO MARTINEZ

Sarah C. Keathley

Hometown: Corsicana

Position: Managing partner in Keathley & Keathley in Corsicana

Board Member: District 2 since 2016

[INTERVIEW BY ERIC QUITUGUA]

FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, I WANTED TO BE A LAWYER.

My father is a lawyer and my grandfather was a lawyer. My father also served in the Texas Senate. Civics was a central part of my upbringing. Some of my earliest memories are with my father, watching him prepare for trial, work on cases, and work at the Capitol. He would often bring home a Bankers Box of documents filled with papers to organize, usually on our dining room table. I watched him methodically review documents and then formulate a game plan. He would start to connect the dots between the pieces of paper, the client, and the witnesses and ultimately solve a puzzle. I really was impacted by my father's ability to help people from all walks of life to solve problems. As a lawyer, I truly enjoy identifying the legal issue and then working with my clients to discover how to solve their problems, facilitate resolution, and ultimately help them.

I COULD SEE THAT THE PEOPLE MY DAD WAS HELPING WERE UPSET OR FEARFUL AND WERE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO HELP THEM.

Helping people at a time of crisis impacted me, and that's what I do now. I want my clients to know that I

care about them and that I will do my best to help them with their legal problems.

THE PAST TWO YEARS HAVE BEEN A TIME OF TRANSITION FOR THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS.

There has been a strong initiative for us to be aware of State Bar finances, be fiscally responsible, and continue transparency in all workings of the State Bar. As a result, I have worked with the directors to make sure all lawyers have the opportunity to be included—not only in the decisions that the directors make for our constituents, but also to include anybody who wants to get involved in our State Bar, whether it's serving on a committee, participating in CLE, or running for State Bar director.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE MISSION OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS,

which is to support the administration of the legal system, assure all citizens equal access to justice, foster high standards of ethical conduct for lawyers, enable its members to better serve their clients and the public, educate the public about the rule of law, and promote diversity in the administration of justice and the practice of law. As bar directors, we have a unique opportunity as ambassadors to bring to the board of directors the experiences and concerns from our constituents as we work on policies to support our legal system and promote access to justice for everyone. We also are charged with the responsibility of fostering professionalism, ethical standards, and diversity and inclusion in all of our dealings. We represent the State Bar of Texas and we serve as a voice to our constituents to the board of directors.

I WANT TO CONTINUE TO USE THE RESOURCES OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS TO DIRECTLY CONNECT WITH OUR MEMBERS.

We are doing quite a bit with online publications, emails, and now, video-recorded board meetings. But it seems to me that the best work is done one-on-one, and I would like the directors to be able to personally connect with our constituents. I hope to see town hall meetings throughout Texas where the directors are going to the lawyers to hear ideas, concerns, and provide resources and information in real time. **TBJ**