

Carmen ROE

HOMETOWN: CLEAR LAKE **POSITION:** OWNER | ATTORNEY | BOSS
AT CARMEN ROE LAW FIRM **BOARD MEMBER:** DISTRICT 4, PLACE 5
SINCE 2018

INTERVIEW BY **ERIC QUITUGUA**
PHOTO COURTESY OF **CARMEN ROE**



WHEN I WAS YOUNG I LEARNED THAT THE POWER OF THE POLICE OVER THE PEOPLE CAN BE LIMITLESS AND WITHOUT OVERSIGHT.

That knowledge empowered me to act because I knew instinctively that I could even the playing field in a system that seemingly only respects power.

I AM PROUD TO BE A CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYER.

I decided I wanted to be an advocate for others after witnessing an illegal/random search that was conducted on my entire high school class. This event invoked a passion for advocacy and ensuring the rights of others are always respected.

FOR YOUNG LAWYERS, I WOULD SAY

that while it's good to have lawyers and mentors around you that you respect and admire, the most important thing to remember is that you have to be true to yourself. Each person brings something creative and unique to the practice of law. Don't sell yourself short trying to emulate anyone else—even if it's Rusty Hardin.

IN 2018, I WAS INVITED BY A COLLEAGUE TO RUN TO BE A STATE BAR DIRECTOR FOR HOUSTON.

At that time, there was no one on the board from the criminal bar and I recognized the importance of having representation in the bar leadership. #representationmatters

IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME

to elevate the bar as a whole through diverse leadership as well as to ensure representation for underrepresented groups like the criminal bar.

I AM MOST PROUD OF MY ELECTION BECAUSE I RAN AGAINST A LARGE-FIRM LAWYER WITH MANY CONNECTIONS IN HOUSTON. MOST SAID I COULD NOT WIN.

As a criminal practitioner, I welcomed this challenge and the criminal bar rallied behind me. After a runoff, I won by just 30 votes. I was honored to represent the criminal bar and to increase representation of solo practitioners at the State Bar of Texas.

THE HARDEST THING I'VE HAD TO DO AS A DIRECTOR

is effectively represent the bar in difficult times that involve diversity issues, matters of equality, and how to best advocate for those who feel they do not have a voice in the bar.

A SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE FOR ALL DIRECTORS IS THE LIMITATIONS OF OUR POSITION

as well as the difficulty in bridging the gap between what members want and what can be accomplished by the State Bar of Texas. Keys to facing these obstacles include a better understanding of the role the bar plays in membership as well as empowering directors through participation within the bar.

THE ONE THING I AM CERTAIN OF AS A DIRECTOR IS HOW LITTLE I KNEW,

and how little most members know, about all the opportunities and benefits provided by the State Bar of Texas. A few of importance include the wealth of resources and information on the Law Practice Management website, the free advocacy and benefits afforded all members in the health care marketplace, and free online seminars and resources.

WITHOUT QUESTION THE TOP ISSUE OF 2020 IS COVID-19.

Not only has it changed the way we interact with others; the coronavirus has changed the way that we practice law. Because justice delayed often manifests itself in the denial of justice, we as a bar must find a way to ensure justice for our clients while remaining safe during the global pandemic. Our president, executive director, and board of directors have worked together and will continue to do so to provide resources and information to help lawyers struggling during this difficult time. **TBJ**