

David SERGI

HOMETOWN: SAN MARCOS **POSITION:** CIVIL, TITLE IX, AND
CRIMINAL LAW AT SERGI & ASSOCIATES IN SAN MARCOS
BOARD MEMBER: DISTRICT 15 SINCE 2019

INTERVIEW BY **ERIC QUITUGUA**
PHOTO COURTESY OF **DAVID SERGI**



I PRACTICED INTERNATIONALLY WITH A LARGE MULTINATIONAL FIRM AND WOUND UP IN ASIA. I SHOWED UP AT MY OFFICE IN THE MORNING AND WAS TOLD THAT I HAD TO FLY TO LONDON AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE. I didn't even have time to go home and get my clothes. When I arrived in London, I had a suit, shirt, and a change of clothes waiting for me. I was there for two days and returned. At that point, I realized I wanted something different and started thinking about returning home to Texas and working with individuals as opposed to large corporations.

I LOVE PRACTICING CRIMINAL LAW CASES AS WELL AS TITLE IX CASES. My love of criminal law came from my early years when my firm sent me to the San Francisco Public Defender's Office, which was the only way for young associates to get some real courtroom experience. I found that defending people's rights was

far more important to me than I had thought, and I loved the thrust and parry of the courtroom. My interest in Title IX work developed from my time as national president of a fraternity and my role as general counsel. I was introduced to the effect that Title IX cases were having on campuses and students across the country.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO TAKE CHANCES.

If I had not taken a chance, I would not have clerked for a federal judge but taken a job in Houston. If I had not taken chances, I would not have wound up being one of the first non-Ivy League lawyers at Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro. If I had not taken a chance, I would not have practiced around the Pacific Rim. If I had not taken a chance, I would not have left Big Law behind to find my true calling as a local lawyer. If I had not taken a chance, I would not have had the incredible experience of working on an International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia trial team in the Hague in a war crimes case. If I had not taken a chance, I would not have served on the State Bar Board of Directors. If I had not taken a chance, I would not be the lawyer and mentor that I am today.

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN THE STATE BAR.

I started off as a critic when I was recruited to run for the board. However, as I became immersed in the way that the State Bar is run and what it accomplishes for its members, I realized that the State Bar does far more good than most lawyers think.

I AM MOST PROUD OF

the work of the Grievance Review Task Force and the DCAAP Committee for their thorough review of the grievance process so that we can continue working to ensure the grievance system provides the members clear rules and continues to protect the public.

THE TOUGHEST DECISION THAT I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH IS OUR STANCE ON "SWORN GRIEVANCES."

While I think that it's a good idea in principle, the idea needs more work, and I won't have time before my term is up to finish working on it.

THE BAR IS A LARGE SPRAWLING OPERATION THAT WORKS WELL—IT STRIVES TO SERVE ALL LAWYERS IN TEXAS. It's amazing to consider that we have not raised dues since 1990.

IF AN ATTORNEY TAKES THE TIME TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THEIR LOCAL BAR, THEY BEGIN TO SEE HOW THE STATE BAR OFFERS SERVICES TO A WIDE VARIETY OF LAWYERS.

Once an attorney begins the journey at the local bar, it becomes apparent that the idea of servant leadership is the prevailing ethos of the State Bar. The State Bar offers many opportunities to get involved, from serving on a variety of committees, to presenting at CLEs, to serving on panels. By serving you learn, and by using the services, you become a better lawyer.

WE NEED TO MAKE BAR SERVICE PART OF THE DNA OF BEING A LAWYER.

During COVID-19, I saw firsthand how the bar reacted as a community, how we were when lawyers struggled, and how we dealt with issues like burnout, substance use, depression, and suicide. **TBJ**