



2022-2023 STATE BAR OF TEXAS

SECTION REPORTS

Section reports are included in the July/August issue of the *Texas Bar Journal* to update Texas lawyers on State Bar section activities. Section membership and dues are voluntary. These reports do not necessarily reflect the position or official policy of the State Bar of Texas, which is formulated by the State Bar Board of Directors or by the membership through referendum. For more information or to join a section, go to texasbar.com/sections or call 512-427-1420.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PUBLIC LAW

Franklin Hopkins, Chair

The Administrative and Public Law Section continued its mission to educate and support those engaged in government service and the practice of administrative law with its 17th annual Advanced Texas Administrative Law Seminar, co-sponsored by the University of Texas School of Law Continuing Legal Education on September 1-2, 2022. The 2023 seminar is scheduled to take place live at the AT&T Hotel and Conference Center in Austin and via webcast, on September 7-8, 2023, and will offer 12.75 hours of CLE credit, including 3.25 hours ethics. Please check the UTCLE website for any updates. Since 1997, the section has sponsored the annual Mack Kidd Administrative Law Moot Court Competition, which was conducted at the State Office of Administrative Hearings on October 28-29, 2022. The competition introduces Texas law school students to administrative law and provides experience in brief writing and oral argument before higher court justices and experienced administrative law practitioners. In 2022, several teams participated with St. Mary's University School of Law, providing the winning team in a championship round argued before Chief Justice Darlene Byrne, Justice Thomas Baker, and Justice Edward Smith, of the 3rd Court of Appeals in Austin. The 2023 competition is scheduled for October 27-28.

AFRICAN AMERICAN LAWYERS

Nikki Chriesman-Green, Chair

The African American Lawyers Section, or AALS, had a productive year, highlighted by activities that advanced the organization's goals. The "Pathway to Law" Pipeline Program was a major achievement, offering high school, undergraduate-prelaw, and law school students the opportunity to interact with practicing attorneys, providing insights into the legal profession during each phase of the legal journey. AALS also collaborated with AT&T to establish the "Pathway to Law Pipeline Scholarship Program," providing financial assistance to deserving students and encouraging them to pursue their passions for the law. During Black History Month, AALS hosted a three-part CLE series offering a

candid discussion on affirmative action, criminal judicial reform, and judicial diversity, emphasizing the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the legal profession. On March 25, 2023, the eighth annual Summit & Awards Luncheon provided informative CLEs and featured presentations of the Outstanding Achievement Award (U.S. Navy Capt. Richard Stewart), Trailblazer Award (Rep. Sheryl Cole) and Distinguished Jurist (Judge Yolanda Huff). The AALS finished the year with a CLE at Annual Meeting in June. The AALS's successful year positions it well to continue working toward providing opportunities to network and build relationships, supporting students, and promoting diversity in the legal profession.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Daniel Martinez, Chair

The Alternative Dispute Resolution, or ADR, Section continued its mission of educating the public about alternative forms of dispute resolution and serving as a resource for ADR practitioners. On January 12, 2023, the ADR Section sponsored "Alternative Dispute Resolution 101," a half-day program; and on January 13, 2023, the section sponsored its full-day Advanced Alternative Dispute Resolution program with four hours of ethics. The program's topics offered guidance for practitioners in civil, family law, and labor/employment mediations as well as commercial arbitration and negotiation strategies. No Frank G. Evans Award recipient was designated for 2022-2023. The ADR Section complied with all requirements of the State Bar of Texas' financial audit. The ADR Section has maintained a robust membership that promoted a diverse group of ADR professionals for leadership positions on the ADR Section Council. With the continuing recession of COVID concerns, the ADR Section's council will continue to assume an increasingly active role for 2023-2024.

ANIMAL LAW

Ashley Morgan, Chair

This past year, the Animal Law Section continued its mission of promoting the study and understanding of laws, regulations, and court decisions dealing with legal issues involving

animals. The section prioritized providing CLE courses at reasonable or no cost to its members. The section conducted its annual Animal Law Institute in-person at the State Bar facilities in Austin. Attendees learned about a variety of animal-related legal issues, including dangerous dog cases; state and federal laws relating to persons with disabilities and their animals; breed restrictions in homeowner's insurance policies; and the manner in which multiple areas of law can intersect in cases involving animals. The section also sponsored Zoom CLE events, including a presentation about prosecuting and defending civil dog bite cases. The section continued active communication on its Listserv, where section members bounce ideas off one another, discuss animal-related cases and legislation, and find referrals for cases. The section updated its website and is currently working on amending its bylaws. The section looks forward to providing additional CLEs to its members. The officers and council members of the section are grateful to have the opportunity to serve and truly appreciate the members.

ANTITRUST AND BUSINESS LITIGATION

Todd Murray, Chair

The Antitrust and Business Litigation Section of the State Bar of Texas serves Texas lawyers whose practices focus on antitrust or complex business litigation. The section sponsors seminars on topics of interest to antitrust and business litigation practitioners as well as antitrust compliance and counseling practitioners. At its annual meeting in June, the section elected a new chair, chair-elect, secretary-treasurer, and new council members to replace those with expiring terms, or those who wish to no longer serve on the section's council.

APPELLATE

Lisa Hobbs, Chair

The Appellate Section leadership strives to serve its members better. This was the focus of a long-needed leadership retreat this January. One key decision was to hire a section administrator. The section has grown so much that having a professional administrator is now critical. Another key decision was to expand the section's resources to revamp and modernize the

leadership structure of the *Appellate Advocate*. In the meantime, the section continues its member-focused work, which includes maintaining substantive content on the website (free to members) and advancing the professionalism of practice through CLEs. To that end, the section has begun collaborating with the Child Protection Law Section. CPS-related appeals are a growing area of the appellate courts' dockets, and the issues arising are both complicated and interesting. Trial lawyers in this area may not feel that they have the appellate expertise, and appellate lawyers may not feel they have the child-protection expertise. Bridging that gap provides opportunities to grow section members' practice and to expand the section's membership. This new effort will help appellate courts by elevating the advocacy in this burgeoning area of the law, while at the same time providing better representation to an oft-forgotten segment of Texas' population.

ASIAN PACIFIC INTEREST

Phil Kim, Chair

The Asian Pacific Interest Section of the State Bar of Texas continued its mission of serving and promoting the interests of its members as a statewide umbrella organization for attorneys of Asian American heritage. The section finally celebrated its 25th anniversary APIS Conference in Austin after a three-year hiatus due to the pandemic. Every year, APIS recognizes leaders in the Asian American community for their contributions to the legal community, judiciary, diversity, mentorship, pro bono service, and rising legal stars. APIS enjoyed reconnecting with its local chapters around the state, and the section appreciates the continued support of its sponsors, as it encourages its members to continue to stay active in the community at large and lead by example.

AVIATION LAW

Bryan David, Chair

The section began the year with its Annual Meeting/CLE held in Houston. David Norton presented "Common Causes for Illegal Charter: Trying to Avoid It and Other Legal Pitfalls." Frederick P. Alimonti presented "Tales from the Script: A Drama in Two Acts, Involving Ethics in Mediation." The following officers and at-large members

were elected for 2022-2023: Bryan S. David, chair; Stella Dulanya, vice chair; Kerry Adams, secretary; Kristin Newman, treasurer; Christa Hinckley, immediate past chair; David Denny, membership director, newsletter editor; and David Norton; Don Windle; Andrea Turner; Chip Biggers; Shannon Dugan; and Cailin Ringleman. On August 29, 2022, the Supreme Court of Texas adopted the Standards for Attorney Certification in Aviation Law. The Examination Committee has been actively working to develop and finalize the exam specifications. The first examination will occur in October 2023. In furtherance of the section's educational activities, the section has committed to co-sponsoring the "Handling Your First (or Next) Aviation Law Case" seminar, which will be tentatively presented in October 2023. The section has resumed the section scholarship, which is larger than ever, thanks to the generous donations of the membership. It was awarded at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting in June.

BANKRUPTCY LAW

Frances Smith, Chair

The Bankruptcy Law Section had another productive year thanks to its over 1,400 members. The section provided free webinars for CLE credit on topics of interest to both consumer and business lawyers and published a regular newsletter featuring articles on a variety of subjects from section members. The section continues to sponsor and organize the Elliott Cup Moot Court Competition for law students and the MoneyWise program for high school students. The section also supports pro bono bankruptcy clinics throughout Texas. In March 2023, the International Bankruptcy Seminar returned with a great conference in beautiful Barcelona, Spain, where attorneys and judges from throughout the state met for CLE, sightseeing, and socializing. In June, attorneys and judges from all districts across the state met in person in San Antonio for the biennial Texas Bankruptcy Bench Bar Conference featuring in-depth programs for business and consumer attorneys. The section is also helping with planning the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges to be held in the fall of 2023 in Austin.

BUSINESS LAW

Brent Benoit, Chair

The State Bar of Texas Business Law Section has a broad reach into all aspects of commercial law in Texas. Through the involvement of its members and the leadership of its council and committee members, the section engages in robust discussion of the laws that affect business activity within our state. Through the active engagement of many members over the past year, the section provided invaluable resources in the fields of corporate, securities, commercial, banking, and bankruptcy law for attorneys in Texas. During the past year, the Business Law Section Council embarked on a strategic review process and reorganized its committee structure. The current committees include Business Entities; Business Organization Code; Business Technology; Commercial Code; Legal Opinions; Litigation; Membership Recruitment and Engagement; Mergers and Acquisitions; Newsletter/Website Content; Privacy, Data Security, and E-commerce; Securities; and Website. The section is also actively engaged in the review of the laws of other states, which, like Texas, may have a significant impact on commerce. Members also organized and presented numerous continuing legal education programs on relevant topics.

CHILD PROTECTION LAW

Sandra Hachem, Chair

This year, the section made efforts to increase interaction with its membership. One way it did that was by offering members free roundtable breakfasts to facilitate information sharing and networking. The most recent breakfast at the section's advanced course was sponsored by the Appellate Section to kickstart a joint effort to improve appellate representation in CPS appeals. Supreme Court of Texas Justice Rebeca Huddle honored that effort by leading discussion with the judges attending. The Appellate and Immigration Law sections also co-sponsored the section in providing two free webinars: "Your First CPS Appeal" and "Nuts & Bolts with Updates on Special Immigrant Juvenile Status." As in prior years, the section provided CLE trainings at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting, an all-day workshop at Advanced Family Law, and a stand-alone Advanced Child Protection Law Course. This year the section also

added a 101 course to address basic training needs. At the section's Advanced Course, several outgoing council members were honored for excellent service, including Barbara Elias-Perciful, Hon. Derbha Jones, Hon. Michael Schneider, Alma Benavides, and Andrea Frye. The section held a reception celebrating its five-year anniversary. The section is looking forward to many more fruitful years to come.

CIVIL LIBERTIES & CIVIL RIGHTS

Kevin Davidson, Chair

The Civil Liberties & Civil Rights Section had another amazing year thanks to the hard work of the section's members. The section continued its efforts to promote discussion regarding constitutional issues and civil liberties and civil rights, which are of ever-increasing importance in the nation. The section co-sponsored the 16th annual Bill of Rights: Litigating the Constitution Course on May 13, 2022, and co-sponsored the 17th annual Bill of Rights: Litigating the Constitution Course on May 5, 2023. The section hosted a CLE at Annual Meeting in June 2023. The section also continues to support and provide members with the *Texas Journal on Civil Liberties & Civil Rights*. Further, the section is pleased to announce that the 2023 recipient of the Patrick Wiseman Award for Civil Rights is Allyson Ho, who is a partner and co-chair of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher's nationwide Appellate and Constitutional Law Practice Group and an active pro bono litigator. On behalf of the entire section, we congratulate her and thank her for all her hard work on behalf of all Texans! As you can see, things are happening in the section! Don't miss out.

COLLABORATIVE LAW

Christopher M. Farish, Chair

What a great year to be a Collaborative Law Section member. The section-sponsored Innovations Team has been exploring enhancements to the collaborative law/ADR models to make the processes more accessible, financially feasible, and attractive to a broader range of clients, and the section posted its initial report in the newsletter. The section has also solicited feedback from members regarding the report and hopes to assist the Innovations Team with their work.

The section awarded the first Ruth Rickard Scholarship to Monique Sapp, a South Texas College of Law student, to pay a portion of her tuition for attending the Collaborative Law Training Course. The section is working on developing an observers list of collaboratively trained professionals to observe a collaborative case and is planning to team with Collaborative Divorce Texas in this endeavor. At June's State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting, the section featured a panel of practitioners who presented on changes and innovations in the collaborative process. This presentation addressed how the collaborative process continues to evolve. The section anticipates next bar year will contain opportunities to improve collaborative skills and spread the word about the collaborative process and its benefits. Make sure to renew your membership.

COMPUTER & TECHNOLOGY

Pierre Grosdidier, Chair

This year, the Computer & Technology Section focused on improving both the quantity and quality of its CLE. The section held its sixth annual Technology and Justice for All CLE at the Texas Law Center on December 2, 2022 (offering 5.25 CLE hours). Speakers presented on a variety of topics that highlighted how computer and technology issues now permeate every area of the law, including labor and employment, mergers and acquisitions, and of course, litigation, just to name a few. Two members of the section developed a one-hour boot camp on technology and the law for attorneys starting their solo practices. The section also inaugurated and implemented a plan to offer three free one-hour virtual CLE webinars during each year, open to all bar members. Two of these seminars have already taken place and a third is scheduled for April. Separately, the section moved its annual retreat from spring to early fall to improve its on-boarding of new section council members and comply with the bar's recommendation. Finally, the section continues to offer its members its quarterly *Circuits* e-newsletter and invites its members to download its app, which provides access to current Texas statutes.

CONSTRUCTION LAW

Gregory Cokinos, Chair

The Construction Law Section continues to thrive with membership

exceeding 2,700. Two of the greatest assets of the section are the semi-annual publication of the *Construction Law Journal* and monthly caselaw updates titled the Change Order. The *Construction Law Journal* is a scholarly publication delving deep into current issues impacting construction law. The section keeps its members abreast of recent caselaw impacting construction through the monthly Change Order. As a member of the section, if you are not aware of the changes impacting construction law, it's not for lack of effort by the section. The publications are available to members to provide continuing legal education for those who are focused on construction law. Countless and tireless hours are contributed by section members to make these publications a reality. This year's annual Construction Law Conference CLE program, held in March of every year, attracted over 1,100 practitioners from around and outside the state. While the focus is maintaining the highest educational level for its members, the section also supports worthwhile charitable organizations such as the Folds of Honor Foundation and Tunnels to Tower. The section wants to "pay it forward" in unique ways and not limited to construction law.

CONSUMER AND COMMERCIAL LAW

Gregg D. Stevens, Chair

The Consumer and Commercial Law Section is revamping its website and hopes the enhanced website goes live shortly. The 18th annual Consumer and Commercial Law CLE Course was live again this year and took place September 22-23 at the Texas Law Center in Austin. Chad Baruch won the Richard Alderman Award for CLE Excellence for his Legal Writing presentation. The 19th annual Advanced Consumer and Commercial Law Course will be held September 21-22 in Austin. The section's council met in person in San Antonio in late April, and then the entire section met in Austin in June at the State Bar Annual Meeting, where the section announced the Craig Jordan Writing Competition winner. Finally, section members continue to receive their acclaimed *Journal of Consumer & Commercial Law*, edited by Richard Alderman, and published by the University of Houston Law Center; the Lexology news feed;

and discounted attendance at section CLE programs.

CORPORATE COUNSEL

Emma Cano, Chair

The Corporate Counsel Section has been working hard and is doing great things! The section continues to emphasize pro bono and since 1997 has awarded more than \$900,000 in pro bono grants. The re-launch of the Champions of Pro Bono program is off to a great start as the section partners with generous law firms throughout the state that are committed to furthering these efforts. The section encourages other law firms to join in these efforts as the section continues the momentum! The section continues to plan great CLE offerings, with the next one being the In-House Counsel 101 Course on August 2, 2023, and the Advanced In-House Counsel Course on August 3-4, 2023, in San Antonio. The Corporate Counsel Section is led by a tremendous group of hard-working, dedicated council members committed to making this the best section it can be! If you are not a member, please consider joining today. The section would love to have you!

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Hon. Lisa Michalk, Chair

The Criminal Justice Section had a productive year. In October, the governing council met in The Woodlands to plan activities and member services for the year. Because of the section's commitment to improving criminal justice, it again sponsored four mentoring programs at Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law, Texas A&M University School of Law, SMU Dedman School of Law, and Baylor Law School for law students interested in practicing criminal law. For members, the section prepared two laminated Survival Guides: Evidence Checklist and Sex Crimes Checklist and will be distributing more Survival Guides soon. In January, the section began presenting virtual one-hour "Lunch & Learns" free for section members. In March 2023, the section partnered with Baylor Law School and the Court of Criminal Appeals. The CCA heard two oral arguments, and the section presented a half-day CLE for local attorneys and students. The section provided scholarships for section

members who might not otherwise be able to attend the Dawson Criminal Appeals, the Rusty Duncan, and the Advanced Criminal Law conferences. The section presented a track at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting and conducted its own annual meeting and elections at the Advanced Criminal Law Course.

ENTERTAINMENT & SPORTS LAW

Brent A. Turman, Chair

What a year! 2022-2023 was the section's first "normal" term in quite a while, finally back to holding in-person events across the state. From events with professional sports teams to relaxed social outings, the section is enjoying catching up. The section also has big changes coming up with the annual symposium, the Entertainment Law Institute. Save the date: The 2023 Entertainment Law Institute will be held November 8-10, 2023, at the AT&T Hotel and Conference Center in Austin. The section will feature cutting-edge CLE presented by presenters from across the country, as well as unique social events and a "101" program for those who are new to the industry. Over the past year, the section has also launched a webinar program. In addition to providing free CLE credit, the section has enjoyed connecting with TESLAW members across the state.

ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES LAW

Peter K. Wahl, Chair

The Environmental & Natural Resources Law Section, or ENRLS, has been diligently working on advancing its objectives and strategic vision. ENRLS had another successful annual Texas Environmental Superconference in August 2022, and the section is looking forward to its next superconference, the 35th annual, to be held August 2-4, 2023 in Austin. The two-day superconference has been a success for many years, bringing in several hundred attendees to see high-quality speakers and sponsorships that fund the section's Buck J. Wynne Memorial Scholarships given at all Texas law schools and eight Prof. Corwin W. Johnson summer internships with Texas environmental regulatory agencies. ENRLS continued its tradition of working with Texas law schools to host in-person environmental

law career seminars. In 2022, ENRLS, in partnership with the *Texas Environmental Law Journal*, held its first Symposium on Legal System Changes to Address Climate Change and the Energy Transition. The symposium, which takes place at the Bullock Texas State History Museum, brought together thought leaders from various backgrounds ranging from law students and government experts to practicing lawyers and academics and will occur again in 2023. ENRLS hopes to leverage the early success of the symposium and make this a regular event.

FAMILY LAW

Joe Indelicato Jr., Chair

The Family Law Section's mission is "to promote the highest degree of professionalism, education, fellowship, and excellence in the practice of family law." Through the 2022-2023 bar year, the section has once again excelled in fulfilling this mission thanks to the tireless efforts of volunteers working on more than 13 committees and at more than four major conferences. Section members enjoy benefits including the Family Lawyer's Essential Toolkit, the Quarterly Section Report containing articles and recent case summaries, the annual Texas Family Law Bibliography, the Legislative Report published in legislative years, and discounts on many family law seminars and select State Bar publications. The Publications and Formbook committees ensure section members stay informed with tools to support their practices, including forms, checklists, summaries, and videos covering initial client intake through trial (available online at the section store). The Pro Bono Committee hosts six pro bono seminars each year, bringing CLE to rural jurisdictions at no cost to participants in exchange for accepting two pro bono cases. All are encouraged to join the section and to join the army of volunteers who continue to make this section great through its service to the family bar.

GENERAL PRACTICE, SOLO, AND SMALL FIRM

Cho Sherwood, Chair

The General Practice, Solo, and Small Firm Section remains committed to assisting general practitioners, solos, and members of small firms (five attorneys or less) across the state in any way possible. The section encompasses many areas of

the law and tries to stay up to date on State Bar activities while promoting policies that are helpful to solos and small firms. The section regularly publishes a *General Practice Digest*, sponsors the Annual General Practice Institute at Baylor Law School, and hosts a popular CLE event at the State Bar Annual Meeting. The section is focused on providing more CLE opportunities for its members this coming year as well as hosting live networking events in an effort to get people back together. Please let us know how we can help you.

GOVERNMENT LAW

Kimberley Mickelson, Chair

The Government Law Section is committed to providing resources, education, and services for its members who represent governmental entities across Texas. Take a minute to consider the variety of government lawyers there are at all levels of government, all with different regulations to apply and interpret. The section sends out e-blasts to its members with caselaw updates and upcoming CLEs for government lawyers. The section is also continuing its work with the State Bar to establish legal specialization in local government law to recognize this distinct practice area and the breadth of knowledge required for government law practitioners. The council established a 2023 schedule of three Road Show CLEs around the state, with the first being planned for the Rio Grande Valley, likely in McAllen. In 2023, the section is co-hosting the annual Government Law 101 and Advanced Government Law courses August 2-4 at the DoubleTree by Hilton on Interstate 35 in Austin. A wide range of engaging speakers and useful presentations are planned, including foundational topics for new government lawyers, caselaw and legislative updates, and emerging issues for seasoned practitioners. The section will have its business meeting, and the Outstanding Government Lawyer and Rising Star awards will be presented there.

HEALTH LAW

Kristi Duske, Chair

The Health Law Section of the State Bar of Texas is dedicated to supporting health law practitioners across the state in every practice setting. The section's signature event continues to be the annual Texas Health Law Conference, co-sponsored by the Texas Hospital

Association, in which it offers an estimated 13 hours of quality health law CLE for those interested in maintaining their practice focus or specialization certification. This year's conference will be at the AT&T Hotel and Conference Center in Austin on October 8-10, 2023. The Health Law Section provides stipends for law students to attend the conference to encourage those who want to explore a possible career in health law. The Health Law Section's website, containing helpful information about the council and the annual conference, may be accessed at texhealthlaw.org. Weekly e-newsletters provided by the section tracking proposed and adopted Texas rules and regulations are easily accessible on the website as well. In 2023, the section will continue to offer in-person educational and outreach programs.

HISPANIC ISSUES

Novert Morales, Chair

The Hispanic Issues Section, or HIS, has had a very active year with initiatives and CLE programming. Starting with "LAW"tería, HIS and the Texas Access to Justice Foundation hosted the third annual virtual fundraiser. This event is based on the popular lotería game of chance played by Mexican families for decades. The night of fun took place via Zoom on November 1, 2022, on Día de Los Muertos. "LAW"tería successfully raised more than \$46,000 in much-needed funds for civil legal aid in Texas and has raised \$112,400 in funds to date. All proceeds from "LAW"tería will benefit Texas legal aid programs helping vulnerable members of our communities who are struggling with civil legal needs such as evictions and benefits for veterans and the elderly. HIS continues to keep its members informed of the section's activities and benefits with its newsletter *HIStoric* and through its Facebook page. On March 8, 2023, HIS, along with the Mexican American Bar Association of Texas, hosted a Legislative Day and CLE at the Texas Law Center. The Legislative Day and CLE were well attended by attorneys and judges from across the state with excellent programming and a tour of the Texas State Capitol.

IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY LAW

Roy Petty, Chair

The Immigration and Nationality Law Section has launched an enhanced

and redesigned website at texasimmigrationandnationalitylaw.com. Section members have collaborated to produce an in-depth report addressing the Texas Access to Justice Commission's study regarding the permitting of certain non-attorneys, to be known as paraprofessionals, to practice in specific legal areas. The report highlights that the practice of immigration law, including the selection and completion of immigration forms, is governed by federal regulations; and therefore, only those authorized by federal law may practice immigration law. Paraprofessionals would not be authorized to practice immigration law. The section continues to provide resources to its members. The section completed its spring legal writing workshops and is preparing its fall workshops. The section made updates to the Immigration Consequences of Criminal Convictions Chart originally created by Jodi Goodwin and Thomas Esparza. Upon completion, the section anticipates that criminal defense attorneys, prosecutors, and judges will utilize the revised chart to complement legal opinions, informing noncitizens about the potential immigration consequences of criminal convictions. Finally, the section encourages bar members interested in pursuing a career as an immigration judge to apply for the many available positions. No immigration experience is required to apply. More details are available at justice.gov/eoir/Adjudicators.

INSURANCE LAW

Stephen Melendi, Chair

The Insurance Section Council had several in-person meetings and networking events across Texas. The section's networking events have provided opportunities to involve new section members, provide mentoring, and promote the exchange of ideas among members. The section also has continued to educate membership and the bar with the publication of the *Journal of Texas Insurance Law*, which remains the preeminent law review dedicated to Texas insurance law. Additionally, regular "Right Off the Press" email updates provide summaries and links to the latest decisions from Texas state and federal courts on insurance law, as well as current listings of insurance-related employment opportunities. The section's website, insurancelawsection.org, also continues

to offer new content. Additionally, the Texas Insurance Law Student Writing Competition continued this bar year. The competition allows students from all 10 accredited Texas law schools to submit articles on insurance-related topics and compete for scholarships. Finally, the section's annual Advanced Insurance Law Course returned to the Hyatt Hill Country Resort & Spa in San Antonio for its traditional two-and-a-half-day insurance course May 31-June 2, 2023.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW

Joe F. Cleveland Jr., Chair

The Intellectual Property Law Section hosted an outstanding lineup of speakers at the Advanced IP CLE in Houston. From start to finish beginning with the Women in IP Law breakfast program to the rich content from various speakers, the IP Section presented an excellent two-day seminar for its members. I want to extend special thanks to all those who helped put these programs together, including Carlyn Burton, Nik Sallie, Rachel Greene, and Vice Chair Thomas Kelton. With the help of Roshan Mansinghani and Rachel Greene, the IP Section now has a LinkedIn page for the section. For members, here is the link to the IP Section LinkedIn group—please join if you haven't already: [linkedin.com/groups/14155242/member-s/](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/14155242/member-s/). The IP Section held its Annual Meeting on June 22-23, 2023, in Austin. Chair-elect Devika Kornbacher put together a terrific lineup of speakers for the Annual Meeting CLE at the Annual Meeting luncheon, where the section announced the Inventor of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, the Fritz Lanham Trademark award winners, and other important awards and scholarship recipients. On behalf of the IP Section, I want to thank everyone for all the work they do for the section and for realizing the possibilities of spring.

INTERNATIONAL LAW

Eric F. Hinton, Chair

The International Law Section emerged from the pandemic by implementing in-person, hybrid, and online programming on international law developments and practice. This included webinars on international human rights and careers in international law for law students and

in-person programming on the business and human rights implications of the invasion of Ukraine. The section reinstated the International Law Institute, featuring former Senator and U.S. Ambassador to NATO Kay Bailey Hutchison. Other topics included: Current Issues in Export Controls and Sanctions; Nearshoring Trends for U.S. and Mexican Companies; Update on CIFIUS; Immigration Reform and Healthcare Staffing; State of Human Rights in 2023; Russian Membership and Expulsion from the Council of Europe; and Ethics for International Compliance Lawyers and Officers. The ILS continued to publish its *International Newsletter*, awarded a law student a scholarship to a law school in the Thomas H. Wilson Human Rights Essay Contest, and offered the ILS Podcast Series. The section also mourned the loss of former ILS Chair Tom Wilson, who passed away in October 2022. He was a dynamic international law leader and founder of the International Human Rights Committee. To learn more about the section, go to ilstexas.org or follow the section on LinkedIn.

JUDICIAL

Hon. Melody Wilkinson, Chair

Judges across Texas came together last month at the State Bar Annual Meeting in Austin. The Judicial Section proudly sponsored the annual Bench Bar Breakfast featuring Supreme Court of Texas Senior Justice Debra H. Lehrmann and Timothy Berg, chair of the Executive Committee of the Uniform Law Commission. The Legislative Committee chaired by Hon. Alfonso Charles remains the section's most active committee during the legislative session. The Legislative Committee spends countless hours monitoring legislation including judicial compensation issues. The judiciary provided testimony on bills and served as a resource to our legislators. The Ethics Committee, under the leadership of Chair Hon. Lee Gabriel, offers quick ethics advice to members. Membership in the section allows judges to search for ethics opinions on a variety of subjects and obtain advice when needed. The Judicial Section's hard working Membership Committee Chair Hon. William "Bill" Miller increased membership to its highest level in recent memory. The

section welcomed new judges at the Texas Center for the Judiciary and Judicial Section Annual Meeting in September where almost 700 judges participated in specifically designed curriculum for the judiciary. Last year, the Judicial Section presented former Hon. Linda Chew with its highest honor, the Lifetime Achievement Award.

JUSTICE COURTS

Scott H. Fournier, Chair

The Justice Courts Section maintained its mission of furthering the administration of justice in justice courts, providing a forum for the exchange of information on matters of practice and procedure in justice courts, providing information and educational opportunities for its membership, and cooperated closely with the State Bar of Texas and other professional organizations in developing, supporting, and promoting legal and professional activities affecting justice courts. During 2022-2023, the section changed its name from "Justice of the Peace Courts Section" to the "Justice Courts Section" to reflect the 500 series of the rules in the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, which were adopted by the Supreme Court of Texas almost a decade ago. Section officer Marty Leewright represented the section well when he attended the State Bar of Texas Council of Chairs meeting in October 2022. During 2022-2023, the section continued to provide virtual one-hour lunchtime CLEs, including offering some ethics credit. The section reconnected in person at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting in June and provided a legislative update CLE presentation. I extend my sincere gratitude to my fellow officers and directors for their outstanding contributions and efforts in helping make the 2022-2023 term a success.

JUVENILE LAW

Cyndi Porter Gore, Chair

In February, over 350 juvenile law practitioners descended upon Horseshoe Bay Resort for the 36th annual Juvenile Law Conference. The event provided a Nuts & Bolts Review of Juvenile Law on Sunday followed by two and half days of specialized juvenile law topics. The conference is designed to promote and improve all facets of the juvenile system and its collaborative nature. Attendees

included judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation/detention officers, law enforcement, and mental health practitioners. Regional caucuses allowed everyone the opportunity to meet and discuss locally relevant issues while offering input and perspectives from each respective position. The council updated the section bylaws and is working to update relevant juvenile law forms to be utilized by the state and defense, led by John Gauntt Jr. and Terrance Windham. In April, forms for regular indeterminate proceedings, detention hearings, and inter-county transfer matters were added to the section website. The section will follow with forms covering determinate sentences, determinate sentence transfer hearings, certifications, Chapter 55 issues, sex offender registration, and sealing of juvenile records. I want to give a big thanks to council members for their hard work and service to the field of juvenile law!

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAW

Jason Boulette, Chair

The Labor and Employment Law Section consists of more than 3,200 licensed labor and employment attorneys in the state of Texas, representing a diverse set of clients, including employees, employers, nonprofits, governmental entities, labor unions, and public interest groups. The mission is to promote and enhance the practice of law by any attorney interested in labor and employment law. In pursuit of this mission, the section gathers (and makes searchable) verdicts in Texas labor and employment cases, publishes a quarterly newsletter summarizing legal developments and section activities, promotes outreach programs with Texas law schools, and provides grants to pro bono organizations focused on labor and employment matters. The section also presents high-quality continuing legal education conferences at affordable rates, which are discounted for section members. Most recently, the section hosted its Advanced Employment Law Conference in Dallas in January, and the section looks forward to its upcoming 33rd annual Labor and Employment Law Institute to be held in San Antonio in August. If you are not a section member and have any interest in labor and employment, consider joining today to get access to jury verdicts, labor and

employment updates, discounted CLE, and more.

LAW STUDENT DIVISION

Kaylie Morgan, Chair

The Law Student Division worked to meet its goal of increasing law students' access to State Bar resources in different ways during the 2022-2023 academic year. Representatives from Texas law schools hosted a variety of free programs for students at their respective schools, including student outreach events and educational and legal career related panels. For a \$15 annual membership fee, the Law Student Division provides many benefits to its student members, including exclusive scholarship opportunities, free membership in select State Bar of Texas sections, a monthly subscription to the *Texas Bar Journal*, member discounts, free registration for TexasBarCLE live seminars, and—new this year—free publications and online resources from Texas Bar Books. The Law Student Division also awarded over \$4,000 in scholarships to its members. Law Student Division representatives from several Texas law schools continue to encourage their law school administrations to cover the cost of first-year law students' annual membership. Texas Tech University School of Law is leading the way in providing this benefit to its students once again this year.

LEGISLATIVE AND CAMPAIGN LAW

J Pete Laney, Chair

The Legislative and Campaign Law Section, founded in 2014, is still the State Bar's newest section and continues to grow each year. The section is made up of attorneys who work in and around the Legislature, state agencies, elections, and campaigns, and those who are interested in those processes. In December, the section held a pre-legislative session CLE, which was a great success. The section was honored to hear from the experts at the Sunset Commission and especially grateful to have the chiefs of staff to the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house share their insight and wisdom with attendees. The section is planning a post-session CLE, regarding legislative changes that will affect practitioners. The section is proud to have shepherded one of the nation's first-ever legislative and campaign law legal specialization areas into existence. Since implementation, 13 attorneys have

become board certified, and many others are busy prepping and studying for the next round of exams. If you are interested in legislative or government processes, election law, campaign law, or any of the ethical issues that pop up in those areas, please consider joining the section. You can learn more by visiting legislativeandcampaignlaw.com.

LGBT LAW

Brian Klosterboer, Chair

The LGBT Law Section celebrated its 25th anniversary this year with a full-day CLE program, dinner, and reception in Dallas on April 15. At that event, presented by Kastl Law, the section honored its founders, gave the 2020 Judge Black Award to the late John Loza, and delivered a section lifetime achievement award to Hon. Christopher Walter for his many years of work for the section. At the State Bar Annual Meeting in June, the section held a full-day CLE and reception, awarding the 2022 Judge Black Award to Maddy Dwertman. The section also established a self-sustaining LGBTQ+ service and leadership scholarship at Texas Tech University School of Law, hosted a virtual CLE about providing high-quality legal services to LGBTQ+ clients, worked to include LGBTQ+ demographics data in state bar surveys, and sponsored and contributed to local bar association and law school events across the state.

LITIGATION

J. Paul Manning, Chair

The Litigation Section continues to find new ways to come alongside its members to assist in the ever-challenging practice of law. In December, the section presented the Litigation Update Institute in Houston and hosted a mentor/mentee fellowship following. Council members presented an "Ethics Jeopardy" CLE to several local bar associations and inducted Ray Barrera Sr. and David J. Beck into the Legal Legends program. At the 2022 State Bar Annual Meeting, the section presented an outstanding CLE track with great speakers and topics. Of course, the *Advocate* once again knocked it out of the park with issues titled "Client Confidentiality" and "Discovery Disputes." The Spring 2023 edition devoted to appellate law issues for trial lawyers is a must read for all Texas litigators. This year the

section instituted its free online “Lunch and Learn” CLE series program with overwhelming success. Members, please visit the section website, www.litigationsection.com, to explore further member benefits, such as the membership directory, searchable issues of the *Advocate* and News for the Bar, Texas Legislature updates, Legal Legend interviews, access to State Bar benefits coupon codes and of course other great free online CLE. Thank you for being a member of the Litigation Section!

MILITARY AND VETERANS LAW

Julie Glover, Chair

After a hiatus from in-person events, the Military and Veterans Law Section held its fall CLE event on October 14-15, 2022, in San Antonio at the Hotel Valencia. A varied and impressive panel of speakers presented 12 hours of CLE, including three hours of ethics. Topics included: obtaining and using VA records in criminal and other courts; forensic psychological and neuropsychological evaluations of veterans with PTSD and traumatic brain injury; credentialing, privileging, and adverse actions in Defense Health Agency; classified information and admissibility of evidence in terrorism prosecutions; transgender policy in the military; and malpractice avoidance. MVLS also co-sponsored the Veterans Justice Clinic with the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association in Houston on February 3, 2023. Topics in the 7.25 hours of CLE included defending veterans in criminal prosecutions, understanding the “unseen” battle wounds of post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury, a look into the Panhandle Regional Veterans Treatment Court, VA law for the non-VA lawyer, and the intersection of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and state prosecutions. At the State Bar Annual Meeting in Austin in June 2023, MVLS offered three hours of additional CLE on military and veterans’ law topics and held a membership meeting.

MUNICIPAL JUDGES

Hon. J. Elaine Marshall, Chair

COVID-19 has finally ceased to control the operations of our courts. We are all completely open and able to conduct business as usual. Masks and

social distancing are now optional, and judges are conducting in-person hearings and trials. The section is enjoying the live training opportunities offered by the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center. The major focus of last year for this section was Senate Bill 6, which required magistrates across Texas to complete an eight-hour mandatory judicial education training for on-going problems that concern bonding, release, and the regulation of jails. This training is necessary for the magistrates to be able to set bail for defendants who have been charged with Class B misdemeanors or higher offenses. The section was trained on how to review and consider a person’s criminal history and create a Public Safety Report, or PSR. The compliance of this bill gave the section until December 1, 2022, to complete the training. Municipal courts across the state are enjoying the return to normalcy in our courtrooms.

NATIVE AMERICAN LAW

Lisa Tatum, Chair

The Native American Law Section strives to maintain awareness about the law and proposed legal changes impacting Native Americans. 2023 has seen a high volume of proposed legislation that would impact Native Americans in Texas—those recognized by the federal government, enrolled tribally outside of Texas, and members of tribal groups not yet recognized by the government. Bills reflect awareness of the impact of expanded gaming on Texas tribes, ICWA, repatriation, cultural heritage, tribal membership and membership significance, and the effect of state recognition. The section will monitor legislation and provide an end of session report to the section regarding such legislation. While the section does not recommend legislation, it provides educational background and context on the relevant laws. Section members served as judges in the 2023 Opening Round Championship Series Mock Trial Tournament hosted by UT Arlington in March. Students from Texas to Massachusetts competed at the Tim Curry Criminal Justice Center. The section invites members and others who have written substantive articles on Native American law to share their work with the section. The 2022-2023

elected officers were: Lisa Tatum, chair; Stephen Jon Moss, vice chair; Ruth H. Soucy, secretary; and Sandy McCorquodale, treasurer.

OIL, GAS, AND ENERGY RESOURCES LAW

Katy Wehmeyer, Chair

The Oil, Gas, and Energy Resources Law, or OGERL, Section, established in 1938, is the oldest section of the State Bar of Texas. The section sponsors numerous CLE events annually in collaboration with the State Bar or the University of Texas, including the Advanced Oil & Gas Law Course; Oil & Gas Disputes; the Renewable Energy Law Institute; the Ernest E. Smith Oil, Gas, and Mineral Law Institute and Fundamentals courses; and the Oil, Gas and Mineral Title Examination Course. Three times a year, the section publishes a journal of legal articles that also includes a recent caselaw update in each edition. In 2022, the section published its second bi-annual journal focused solely on renewable energy issues. OGERL also funds awards and internship opportunities for law students. For summer 2023, the section will fund law student internships at four Texas state agencies: the Electric Reliability Council, the Public Utility Commission, the Railroad Commission, and the General Land Office. During each academic semester, OGERL grants scholarships to law students who achieve the highest grade in each basic oil, gas, and energy law course at each Texas law school. Learn more about OGERL at oilgas.org.

PARALEGAL DIVISION

Lisa Pittman, President

The purpose of the Paralegal Division, as adopted, is “to enhance legal assistants/paralegals participation in the administration of justice, professional responsibility and public service in cooperation with the legal profession.” Since its humble beginnings, the division has grown and now has 12 districts throughout the state. The Paralegal Division has a quarterly digital publication, *The Paralegal Journal*, and a monthly digital e-Newsletter, the *Paralegal Pulse*. Both publications offer informative articles, hot topics,

spotlights of vendors and members, and happenings in each district. The June 24-25, 2022, outgoing/incoming board meeting was held in Dallas. The 2022 Texas Advanced Paralegal Association, or TAPS, was held September 28-30, 2022, in Fort Worth. The annual meeting was held September 30, 2022, in conjunction with TAPS. The keynote speaker was Hon. Ada Brown, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, and her presentation was titled “Own Your Choices: Bold Choices Bold Rewards. Perspectives from the Bench.” The fall board meeting was held September 30-October 1, 2022, in Fort Worth. The winter/spring board meeting was held February 10-11, 2023, in Dallas. The 2023 TAPS will be held September 27-29, 2023, in Frisco.

POVERTY LAW

Katherine Saldana, Chair

The Poverty Law Section continues serving low-income Texans. The section supports its members’ interests by offering free monthly First Friday CLEs in housing, family, benefits, consumer, probate, estate planning, and voting rights as well as other areas of law that affect impoverished Texans. At the section’s 2022 Annual Meeting, the section honored outstanding attorneys for their accomplishments in significant poverty law cases that impacted the lives of low-income Texans. Richard Tomlinson received the Noble Lifetime Achievement Award for his 40-plus years in practice committed primarily to serving low-income Texans while mentoring a generation of legal aid lawyers throughout Texas. Julie Balovich received the Impact Award for devoting her legal career with Texas RioGrande Legal Aid, serving vulnerable and marginalized populations throughout their 68-county service area. Her latest victory was a lawsuit for disability discrimination under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. After four years, the case settled. Finally, at this year’s State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting, the section presented a CLE titled “It’s a Win-Win! How Using Pro Se Resources and Forms can Benefit Your Practice While Serving Both the Profession and the Public.”

PUBLIC UTILITY LAW

David Dwyer, Chair

The Public Utility Law Section, or PULS, serves all sectors of the utility law bar. Members include practitioners in electric, oil and gas, telecommunications, and water utility law. PULS provides opportunities for section members to interact, learn from each other, and keep abreast of developments in relevant laws, government regulations, and court decisions. In the past year, thanks to the efforts of PULS council members, we held a happy hour, resumed publication of a newsletter, and hosted the section’s in-person and virtual 2022 annual meeting and seminar. Presentations and panel discussions covered a wide range of topics, befitting a section with diverse areas of expertise. Those topics included regulatory authority regarding the wholesale gas market, broadband deployment, updates regarding the work of the Public Utility Commission of Texas, or PUCT, the Texas Railroad Commission, or RRC, and updates on recent development in water law as well as PUCT and RRC decisions. For 2023-2024, the PULS council is planning additional socials, continuing publication of the member newsletters, and holding the 2023 annual meeting and seminar. Recent years have been particularly busy for members, and the section looks forward to sharing and learning from one another regarding the work being accomplished.

REAL ESTATE, PROBATE, AND TRUST LAW

Denise V. Cheney, Chair

The Real Estate, Probate, and Trust Law Section, or REPTL, remains the largest practice section of the State Bar and has had a busy year. As a result of *McDonald v. Longley*, 4 F. 4th 229 (5th Cir. 2021), the section did not have a legislative package. REPTL contracted with the Texas Real Estate and Probate Institute to provide the section with information on significant bills affecting the section’s practice areas and will continue to provide legislative updates through e-blasts and posts on the REPTL website. The REPTL Council has worked to improve the REPTL website by creating the REPTL Website Committee to update and add information to the website.

Two new liaison positions were created to assist the State Bar CLE Section and the State Bar Real Estate Forms Committee in accessing the real estate expertise of REPTL members when seeking speakers, course directors, and committee members. REPTL honored two lawyers with the 2022 Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Awards—Gerry W. Beyer (Probate) and G. Roland Love (Real Estate). REPTL has continued to provide discounts on TexasBarCLE events, maintain its online CLE library, publish the *REPTL Reporter*, and support the growth of young attorneys through the REPTL Leadership Academy.

SCHOOL LAW

Andrea Slater Gulley, Chair

The School Law Section, or SLS, is dedicated to providing information related to legal issues arising in Texas public schools, junior colleges, and universities to a variety of education law related practitioners. SLS membership includes attorneys representing the interests of parents, students, employees and employee organizations, educational institutions and their governing bodies, and education-related agencies and associations. Section members benefit from being able to work collaboratively with each other for the benefit of Texas students. The SLS is proud of its recent initiative, School Law 101, which is a cross-disciplinary effort by the section to educate law schools and law students on the unique practice and myriad employment opportunities that exist in the world of education law. The SLS will host the 37th annual School Law Section Retreat July 21-22, 2023, at the Gaylord Texas Resort & Convention Center in Grapevine. This family friendly retreat is an excellent opportunity to receive high-quality CLE and get to know fellow school law practitioners in a non-adversarial setting. The section encourages all interested attorneys to join this outstanding group.

TAX

Henry Talavera, Chair

This year the Tax Section continued its initiative to educate its members in federal, state, and local tax laws through numerous live online webinars

and in-person programs. The Tax Section partnered with the American Bar Association and hosted a Tax Controversy CLE at its October 14, 2022, meeting in Dallas. The Tax Section's committees provide several free webinars each month for members on recent developments and significant tax issues that are timely and accessible via the internet. Additional section CLE benefits include the free 24/7 CLE library accessible anytime on the Tax Section's website, textaxsection.org. Tax Section pro bono volunteers assist taxpayers across the country in tax court hearings and docket calls on a regular basis and members also serve as Volunteer Income Tax Assistance volunteers. Each year Tax Section members visit each of the Texas law schools where they interact with students interested in tax law. The section graduated its Leadership Academy this spring and is establishing a new committee for its tax lawyers and students. And the Tax Section awards up to four scholarships to law students each year showing an interest and ability in

taxation reflected through prior class work and written tax articles.

WOMEN AND THE LAW

Denise Paul, Chair

This year, the Women and the Law Section introduced its inaugural celebration of International Women's Day in collaboration with local bar associations in 13 different cities across Texas. The section was also busy preparing for the in-person Annual Meeting at which it presented the CLE panel titled "Why Are We Losing Women?" covering the topics of gender equity and policies in the workplace to retain women, allyship and mentorship, implicit and unconscious bias, and psychological safety. During 2022-2023, other WAL Section accomplishments included: (1) monthly CLE programs; (2) utilization of the members-only CLE video library; (3) incentivizing Texas law school students to tackle legal and societal challenges through an annual writing competition in honor of Harriet E. Miers; (4) publication of newsletters;

(5) sponsorship of Hispanic Issues Section's "LAW"Terfa fundraiser; (6) recognizing lifetime achievement and ongoing contributions to women through the Sarah T. Hughes, Louise B. Raggio, and Barbara Culver Clack awards; (7) service by a section leader on the State Bar's Task Force on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with other affinity section leaders; and (8) improvement to data retention for future section leaders.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Jeremy A. Lunn, Chair

The Workers' Compensation Section has enjoyed more changes, development, and growth this year. Benefit Review Conferences are now fully virtual, where contested case hearings remain live. New procedures are in process to streamline the administrative proceedings and the designated doctor process. The Division of Workers' Compensation has been engaging in brown bag seminars to encourage additional system participation and input from medical providers, workers' compensation insurance carriers and workers' compensation claimants, as well as the legal representatives of these parties. The Workers' Compensation Section continues to support Kids Chance, a charity dedicated to providing educational opportunities and scholarships for the children of workers seriously or fatally injured on the job. The 2022 Barbed Wire Award, the section's Lifetime Achievement Award, was presented to Bob Graves, a former State Bar Workers' Compensation Section chair and a respected insurance defense attorney. This is the highest honor bestowed by the section, and the section is proud of his lifetime of service in this field. The 2023 Barbed Wire recipient will be announced during the upcoming Advanced Workers' Compensation Course. The section looks forward to another successful Advanced Workers' Compensation Course, annual meeting, and section socials taking place August 30-September 1, 2023, in Austin. **TBJ**

TBJ

GO TO TEXASBAR.COM/TBJARCHIVES

ACCESS ANY
TBJ ARTICLE

The State Bar of Texas and HeinOnline provide the complete TBJ archive dating back to 1938. Take advantage of this free service.