

Noelle HICKS

HOMETOWN: HOUSTON

POSITION: SHAREHOLDER IN ROBERTS MARKEL WEINBERG
BUTLER HAILEY

BOARD MEMBER: AT-LARGE DIRECTOR SINCE 2023

INTERVIEW BY **WILL KORN**
PHOTO COURTESY OF **NOELLE HICKS**



I'VE KNOWN I WANTED TO BE A LAWYER SINCE I WAS 5. I had a lot of positive influences in my life, including my parents and close family friends (who were also lawyers and judges). Their example left an impression on me, and a legal career was the clear path for me early on.

HONESTLY, I HAD NO INTENTION OF SPECIALIZING IN EITHER PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION LAW OR REAL ESTATE. My mother is a realtor, but that never really appealed to me. I stumbled into this role in 2017 because I was looking for a new firm home and a friend of a friend let me know there was an opening at her firm. I applied, got an offer, and accepted. Since then, I've grown to really appreciate and understand POA and real estate law. They are both essential industries, especially here in Houston. Now here I am, speaking on topics, considered an expert in the field, and enjoying this practice. I also appreciate the room I have to litigate and practice on the transactional side of things. When I became a

shareholder at my firm, I didn't want to leave the courtroom altogether. As a result, I'm one of the only hybrid attorneys in the firm who practices both POA law and insurance defense litigation with some real estate matters sprinkled in.

I REALLY WANTED TO GET MORE INVOLVED WITH THE BAR AND LEARN MORE ABOUT ITS INNER WORKINGS. I am also keenly aware of the need for representation, so I reached out for the at-large director position. Engagement is important, and I wanted to help the bar to engage more attorneys from minority and underrepresented groups. It's been impactful for me to be a part of the conversations that affect Texas lawyers and lawyers that look like me. I've also been able to see firsthand how diligent and hardworking our State Bar of Texas staff is. Literally, nothing the board does is possible without its direction and guidance.

I BELIEVE IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE REPRESENTATIVES from our respective districts who want to be involved at a high level. We want to make sure that we represent our fellow attorneys well and make decisions that will enhance their experience as an attorney in Texas. When we are in these board meetings deliberating over various issues, we are bringing all our years of experience together but also our knowledge of the attorneys in our practice areas, ethnic groups, and geographic regions. We're all doing our best to make the best choices for the profession and asking the tough questions when necessary.

AGING ATTORNEYS AND ENGAGEMENT FROM YOUNG ATTORNEYS are some of the top issues. I believe that the bar is collectively demonstrating that these issues are important. For example, Laura Gibson's endeavors for succession planning. Also, the Texas Minority Counsel Program (TMCP) is an excellent conference that brings minority and young attorneys together to network and help attorneys get jobs. I'm proud to be a member of the Steering Committee for TMCP, and the recent conference was amazing. Of course, we have to keep this same energy going so everyone has the same opportunities but there have been efforts made toward that end. In this remote-work era, engagement is difficult, but the various bar groups and committees are constantly having conversations and brainstorming ideas on how to improve.

GIVE YOURSELF GRACE AND HAVE PATIENCE BUT WORK HARD AND MAKE CONNECTIONS. My journey to becoming the attorney I am today wasn't easy. I experienced a lot of ups and downs, so it was important to give myself some grace and be patient. Things eventually work out if you stick with it. It's also important to note that I had a lot of help from people who were willing to give me their time and expertise—a reliable support system is invaluable. Because of that, I make it my mission to help and mentor others when I get the chance. **TBJ**