

# Drew SPANIOL

**HOMETOWN:** OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA  
**POSITION:** DEPUTY CHIEF OF GENERAL LITIGATION,  
 CITY OF DALLAS  
**BOARD MEMBER:** DISTRICT 6, PLACE 2 SINCE 2024

INTERVIEW BY **WILL KORN**  
 PHOTO COURTESY OF **DREW SPANIOL**



**ALTHOUGH I CONSIDERED GOING TO LAW SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY AFTER UNDERGRAD, I ENDED UP GETTING A JOB TEACHING AT A HIGH SCHOOL IN FRANCE FOR A YEAR.** When I came back to the U.S., I taught at a private school for a few years and tried to write the Great American Novel (which, it turns out, no one wanted to publish). As much as I enjoyed teaching, it wasn't my calling. When I realized that I would need a new car someday but wouldn't be able to afford one, I decided that I was ready to become a lawyer.

**FROM THE MOMENT I STEPPED INTO A COURTROOM, I KNEW THAT'S WHERE I WANTED TO BE.** A colleague once described trial work as "competitive storytelling," and I think that's a good way to look at it. I enjoy figuring out how best to tell the story—who the characters are and which ones would best depict a particular scene or aspect of the story as a whole.

**I'VE GOTTEN SO MUCH FROM THE LEGAL PROFESSION—A REWARDING CAREER, A LIFETIME OF LEARNING, AND A HOST OF GREAT FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES.** State Bar of Texas board service is a great way for me to give back. I've been fortunate to serve on the boards for the Dallas Asian American Bar Association and the Dallas Bar Association. Becoming a State Bar of Texas district director has allowed me to learn from, share with, and give back to the profession on a statewide basis.

**ALTHOUGH LAW AND LEADERSHIP ARE OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH "SPEAKING UP,"** I've realized how much time and effort State Bar leaders put into listening and how important a skill that is. The best lawyers and leaders take the time to listen to their colleagues and constituents, especially when they disagree on an issue. My mother used to say, "You can't talk and listen at the same time. If you listen first, what you say will have a lot more weight."

**SHOWING UP FOR COMMITTEE AND SECTION MEETINGS IS CRITICAL. THAT'S WHERE YOU LEARN ABOUT THE ON-THE-GROUND ISSUES** facing members across the state, and that's where so much of the heavy lifting gets done for our members. To be responsible stewards of the bar, we need to understand what our members care about and what they need from the State Bar, and that starts at the committee and section levels.

**GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS ONE OF THE TOP ISSUES FACING TEXAS ATTORNEYS TODAY.** We've already seen how much it has changed the practice of law in both positive and negative ways, from increased efficiency in document review (positive) to hallucinated legal authority in briefing (negative). The board took a huge step in forming a task force to study the issue and preparing the State Bar of Texas AI Toolkit. In 2025, the task force was replaced by the Emerging Technology Committee, which is considering projects, including refining the toolkit to keep pace with developments in AI. We need to stay focused on the issue.

**STATE BAR OF TEXAS DIRECTORS WORK TO MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY AND IMAGE OF THE PROFESSION.** Ultimately, the legal/judicial system is a function of the people participating in it. As practitioners, we need the community at large to believe that justice is possible and that, however flawed the system may be, its members are trying to do the right thing. As State Bar directors, we work to foster that public confidence by holding ourselves and our profession to account.

**I WOULD TELL A LAW STUDENT OR A YOUNG ATTORNEY THAT YOUR REPUTATION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASSET YOU HAVE IN THIS PROFESSION.** Guard it jealously. Whether you're in a big city or a small town, the legal community is pretty small, and lawyers talk to each other. When your name gets mentioned, what do you want people to say about you? **TBJ**