

Sylvia Borunda Firth

FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS



IT'S TIME TO RAISE THE BAR TOGETHER



**FOR
PRESIDENT-ELECT
OF THE STATE BAR
OF TEXAS**



El Paso, Texas

DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES:

I am running for President-Elect of the State Bar of Texas for one simple reason: I want to be of service to the profession that has given so much to me. Not so long ago I was like many lawyers - I paid my annual dues, made sure I completed the requisite CLE and did not worry about the State Bar. Sitting out in El Paso, it was easy for me to avoid dealing with the Bar. But even out in the far reaches of West Texas, I began to hear rumblings and questions from fellow lawyers about the relevance of the Bar and the lack of inclusiveness. Curious to see if there was a place in leadership for someone like me, I applied to be a Minority Director and was selected. During my interviews for the Board, I made my case for the position by pointing out that Bar leadership should more accurately reflect the demographic makeup of our 21st Century legal community.

There are over 103,000 of us. Depending on our types of practice and where we may be in our careers, we face different professional challenges and have various ideas about the services our State Bar should provide. The solo practitioner or attorney in a small group won't necessarily view the Bar in the same ways as the associate or partner in a large firm. In-house corporate and government lawyers no doubt have other perspectives to share.

I have been blessed in my career to have worked in all these practice arenas. I started with a two-person group out of law school, moved to a big firm, then had the opportunity to serve as in-house counsel for a large corporation. I shifted into municipal law, and now have my own solo practice. Because of my experiences, I can be the voice for many.

I have a vision of a more unified Bar - one in which we recognize the Bar is more than the Board and the staff. It is all 103,000+ of us working together to cultivate an environment that is supportive of our lawyers and their wide-ranging practices.

I look forward to my travels across Texas to meet with many of you. I will, of course, share my ideas, but I am even more interested in hearing from you and learning how the Bar can be of better service to you and the public.

I am very honored to be a candidate. I hope you will take the time to get to know me and ultimately vote for me in April.

Sincerely,

www.sylviaaborundafirth.com

A life of service to the profession and community

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Texas City Attorneys Association: President - 2019
- Texas City Attorneys Association: Board Member 2009 - Present
- State Bar of Texas
 - Government Law Council: 2016 - Present
 - Local Bar Services Committee: Vice Chair 2019
 - Board of Directors: 2014 - 2018 (Minority Director, term extended)
 - Executive Committee, Budget Committee, Discipline & Client Attorney Assistance Committee, Ad Hoc Committee for Selection of Executive Director, Public Services & Education Committee - Legislative Policy
- Texas Bar Foundation: Board of Trustees 2018 - June 2019
Sustaining Life Fellow
- El Paso Bar Association: Board of Directors 2017 - Present
President's Award for Exemplary Service to the El Paso Bar 2017
- Texas Bar College - multiple years and present member
- Texas Land Title Institute: Associate Member 2018 - Present
- El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce - 2019
- Harvard Kennedy School - Urban Policy Impact Forum: 2009 - 2010

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Member of Executive Forum Board of Directors since 2016
- Executive Forum V.P. of Programs 2019
- REALIZE Board Training Volunteer Consultant 2018 - Present
- United Way Vello Program Online Tutor 2018 - Present
- Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Volunteer Atty. 2018 - Present
- Women's Fund of El Paso: Board of Directors 2009 - 2011
- Girl Scouts of the Rio Grande: Board of Directors 2007 - 2009
- El Paso Psychiatric Center: Chair, Board of Directors 1996 - 2001
- El Paso MH/MR: Board of Directors 1991 - 1996
- Texas Association of Business and Chambers of Commerce: Board of Directors 1993 - 1995
- KCOS-TV (Local PBS Station) Board Member: 2008 - 2010
- Loretto Academy: Board of Trustees 1995 -1998

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

- University of Texas at Austin School of Law J.D. 1981 - 1984
- St. Mary's University B.B.A. (Magna Cum Laude) 1977 - 1981

Sylvia's career has included working in a large firm, as in-house corporate counsel, for government and as a solo practitioner. She understands the challenges of an everyday lawyer.

MORE ABOUT SYLVIA

In addition to her legal work for the City of El Paso, Sylvia also served as Chief of Staff for the Mayor and Director of Governmental Relations. She has testified before numerous governmental agencies and legislative committees at both the State and Federal levels. On numerous occasions she was called upon to present matters to media outlets in both English and Spanish.

Sylvia is well versed in open government laws and fully understands the requirements of both the Texas Open Meetings Act and the Public Information Act. Having spent more than 20 years working for a governmental entity, transparency is second nature to her.

This unique skill set will serve the State Bar of Texas well.

NOT JUST A LAWYER

Understanding there is more to life than work, Sylvia has endeavored to create a life full of joy and adventure with her husband, fellow attorney Victor Firth. She met Victor the very first day of law school at the University of Texas and they have been married 33 years. They share their home with 3 dogs and 3 cats, most of whom have come to the household by way of rescue. In her leisure time, Sylvia enjoys participating in sprint distance triathlons and traveling with Victor for his “second job” as a Division 1 collegiate football official.



IT'S TIME TO RAISE THE BAR TOGETHER

Let's work together to accomplish the following for lawyers:

- **Statewide courthouse badge access**
- **Verification of grievances**
- **Free ethics CLE programs**
- **Expand TLAP services**
- **Attorney wellness programs**
- **Increase live CLE programs in remote areas of the State**

To provide better access to justice, let's work to:

- **Increase awareness of and participation in the NOVA Pro Bono Program**
- **Provide incentives for lawyers who provide pro bono services**
- **Expand the Texas Opportunity and Justice Incubator Program (TOJI) to areas of the state that are underserved by lawyers**
- **Create incentives for lawyers who return to underserved areas of the state to practice after law school**
- **Strengthen pipeline to support diversity in our profession**





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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Voting Begins:
April 1, 2020

April 1, 2020

Voting Ends:
April 30, at 5pm

