

TEXAS Law

Alumni News & Notes

SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

AN E-NEWSLETTER FOR TEXAS LAW ALUMNI

ALUMNI NEWS

Click on headlines to read more.



Mentor of the Year: Cassandra Gonzalez '19

She goes “above and beyond,” says Angelina Ramirez '26 of her mentor. Gonzalez, an attorney with the Texas Civil Rights Project, will be recognized in November.



Jack Balagia '76 Joins KBH Center

The alumnus, professor, and longtime energy industry executive takes the helm of UT's leading center for energy policy and research.



Wallace Jefferson '88 Portrait Unveiled

The Supreme Court of Texas honored its first African-American chief justice with an unveiling of a beautiful new portrait in the courtroom.

[Read More Alumni News](#)

Your Gift Can Make a Difference

Your gift supports students by funding the programs and opportunities that make Texas Law the best place in the world to be a law student, in the classroom and in the community.

To learn more, contact Chloé Dwyer at chloe.dwyer@law.utexas.edu.



[Give to the Fund Today](#)

We're Hiring for a Director of Gift and Estate Planning with Alumni Development

The successful candidate will work closely with the Texas Law Alumni Relations and Development staff by providing guidance to donors, prospects, advisors, and colleagues on planned giving strategies for completing significant charitable gifts at the \$1M and above level.

[See Job Description to Apply](#)

LAW SCHOOL NEWS

Click on headlines to read more.



The Best Place to Learn

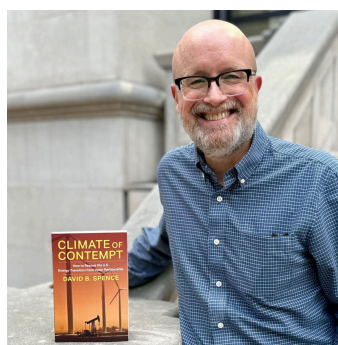
We know Texas Law is great—but don't take our word for it! Hear what our students say about the Texas Law experience.

[Watch Video](#)



Meet the Class of 2027

We've welcomed the 282 members of the Class of 2027 to The Forty Acres, and they're an amazing bunch. Here are six for you to get to know.

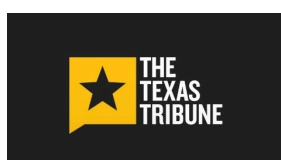


David Spence Wants to Lower the Temperature

We spoke to Prof. David Spence about his new book, *Climate of Contempt*, covering the state of energy politics and how to build consensus.

[Read More Texas Law News](#)

FACULTY IN THE MEDIA



Texas Law faculty experts were recently quoted in leading national and state news outlets. Click below to see what these thought leaders had to say: **Richard Albert, Philip Bobbitt, Steven Collis, Michele Deitch, Ariel Dutilzky, John Golden, Tara Grove, Adam Klein, Lee Kovarsky, Jennifer Laurin, Susan Morse, Maria Ponomarenko, Amy Sanders, Elizabeth Sepper, Charles Silver, David Spence, Michael Sturley, and Wendy Wagner.**

[Read Faculty in the Media](#)

ALUMNI EVENTS

Sept. 20 – [Scholarship Celebration](#) in Austin *(by invitation only)*

Oct. 3 – [Texas Law on the Island](#) on South Padre Island | **RSVP**

Nov. 8 – Alumni Association Executive Committee Meeting Fall 2024

Nov. 8 – [Alumni Awards 2024](#) in Austin *(by invitation only)*

Nov. 9 – [Alumni Tailgate Extravaganza](#) (Florida Gators vs. Texas Longhorns)

[View More Texas Law Events](#)

CLASS NOTES

Ordered by class year, then by last name.



Pictured (top, from left): Nick Pesina '12, Allison Standish Miller '04, Nour Haikal '23, David Coligado '95; (bottom, from left): Scott White '92, Andrea Fair '11, Hon. Xavier Rodriguez '87, and Nicole S. LeFave '12.

David J. Beck '65 was recognized in The Best Lawyers in America in six different categories.

Joe W. Redden, Jr. '75 was named a 2025 "Lawyer of the Year" in the specialty area of Personal Injury Litigation–Defendants by The Best Lawyers in America.

J. Cullen Aderhold '79 has joined Hallett & Perrin in Dallas as a shareholder.

Sol Villasana '83 is a 2024 recipient of the Stan Golden Men of Action Award from the Southwest Jewish Congress.

Philip I. Danze '84 has joined Hallett & Perrin in Dallas as a shareholder.

The **Hon. Xavier Rodriguez '87** will be honored by the San Antonio ISD Foundation at the 13th Annual Inspire Awards in October.

Alistair B. Dawson '89 was recognized in The Best Lawyers in America for Commercial Litigation and Litigation–Antitrust.

Jennifer Parker Ainsworth '92 has been inducted as a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers.

Fields Alexander '92 was recognized in The Best Lawyers in America for Commercial Litigation, Litigation–Labor and Employment, Personal Injury Litigation–Defendants, and Product Liability Litigation–Defendants.

Scott White '92 has joined the board of trustees at Pasadena Ronald McDonald House.

Cameron McBride '93 has joined Davis Hartman Wright LLP as a partner in the firm's civil litigation, internal investigations, and white-collar criminal defense and government investigations practice groups.

Warigia Bowman '94 has been named the director of the Natural Resources and Environmental Law program at the University of New Mexico School of Law.

E. David Coligado '95 has been elected as the next chief executive officer of Munsch Hardt Kopf & Harr effective January 1, 2025.

Geoff Gannaway '02 has been recognized in the 2025 Best Lawyers in America for Commercial Litigation and Litigation–Health Care.

George J. Hittner '02 has been appointed to executive vice president, general counsel and corporate secretary at W&T Offshore, Inc., an independent oil and natural gas producer.

Allison Standish Miller '04 was named a 2025 "Lawyer of the Year" in Legal Malpractice Law–Defendants by The Best Lawyers in America.

Sarah Keyton '05 has been appointed as interim commissioner by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Andrea Fair '11 has been selected as a finalist by the Texas Legal Awards for Intellectual Property Attorney of the Year.

Nicole S. LeFave '12 has been selected to lead Littler Mendelson's SOAR Program, previously known as the Investment for Success program.

Nick Pesina '12 was honored as a 2024 Outstanding Texas Ex by the Texas Exes Tyler-Smith County Chapter.

Jackie M. Furlow '13 was recognized in Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America for Commercial Litigation and Energy Law.

Parth S. Gejji '13 was recognized in Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America for Appellate Practice.

Nicholas Bruno '15 was recognized in Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America for Appellate Practice and Commercial Litigation.

Mary Kate Raffetto '15 has been recognized by Law.com and Texas Lawyer as an On the Rise winner in the 2024 Texas Legal Awards.

Garrett Brawley '16 was honored in the fifth edition of Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America for Commercial Litigation, Litigation–Antitrust, and Litigation–Trusts and Estates.

Ralph Molina '19 was appointed deputy first assistant to Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton.

Nour Haikal '23 was featured in the "Volunteer Spotlight" by the Houston Volunteer Lawyers, the pro bono legal aid arm of the Houston Bar Association.

[Read Full Class Notes Entries](#)

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IN MEMORIAM

Ordered by class year, then by last name.

Jack Brandon '54
Reagan Burch '57
James Walters '62
Pete Winstead '65
Russell Barron '66
Harry Brants '66
John Stayton '66
Ben Vaughan '67
Richard Prinz '69
Roger Evans '72
Mike Markley '72
Robert Scheske '75

Ronald Scott '75
Michael Richardson '76
Caroline Benediktson '77
Ralph Huston '78
Obie O'Brien '78
Dennis McClendon '82
Allison Baker '84
Chris Riley '89
David Sweeney '90
Cathy Burch '93
James Walker '94

[Read In Memoriam Notes](#)

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Alumni News and Class Notes are compiled based on the information we receive and edited for space. If you have professional news to share, please submit a class note online.

Feedback? Email us at alumni@law.utexas.edu.

