TEXAS GENERAL COUNSEL FORUM

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2025

27TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

BEYOND BOUNDARIES

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20 & FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2025

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November 20-21

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Thursday, November 20, 2025

12:00–1:45 PM	**KICK-OFF WELCOME LUNCHEON: AI BEHAVING BADLY** **Karen A. Delaney** | Principal, Delaney Legal PLLC **Jennifer Judge** | Chief Legal Officer, Destination Pet, LLC
2:00–2:20 PM	**TALK 01: SHIELDS READY: PLANNING FOR NEAR- AND LONG-TERM CYBER RESILIENCE** **Ernesto Ballesteros** | Cybersecurity State Coordinator of Texas, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
2:20–2:40 PM	**TALK 02: FROM GROWTH TO CHANGE: A LOOK AT DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN TEXAS** **Monica Cruz, Ph.D.** | State Data Center Lead, Texas Demographic Center
2:40–3:20 PM	NETWORKING BREAK W/ SNACKS
3:20–3:40 PM	**TALK 03: STRONGER TOGETHER: LEADING TEAMS WITH EMPATHY** **Katharine Manning** | President and Founder, Blackbird LLC
3:40–4:00 PM	**TALK 04: TACKLING CHANGE** **Edward Stewart** | Executive Senior Associate Athletic Director, University of Southern California
4:00–4:05 PM	THANK YOU & HOUSEKEEPING ANNOUNCEMENTS
6:00 PM	MAGNA STELLA AWARDS DINNER (SEPARATE TICKET REQUIRED)

Friday, November 21, 2025

8:15–8:55 AM	NETWORKING BREAKFAST
9:00–9:10 AM	GATHERING, THANK YOU & HOUSEKEEPING ANNOUNCEMENTS
9:10–9:30 AM	**TALK 05: EVERY DEFENSE NEEDS A GREAT OFFENSE: SEEING BEYOND THE LIMITS OF TRADITIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY** **Matt Sheldon** | Senior Vice President & General Counsel, Navient
9:30–9:50 AM	**TALK 06: LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD** **Caren Lock** | Regional Vice President & Associate General Counsel, TIAA
9:50–10:10 AM	**TALK 07: BEING A CONFIDENT LEADER...ALL THE TIME!** **Robin Pou** | Chief Advisor & Strategist, Robin Pou, Inc.
10:10–10:40 AM	NETWORKING BREAK W/ SNACKS
10:40–11:00 AM	**TALK 08: AI-NATIVE JUSTICE: REDRAWING THE DISPUTE RESOLUTION MAP** **Bridget M. McCormack** | President & CEO, American Arbitration Association® - International Centre for Dispute Resolution®
11:00–11:20 AM	**TALK 09: ORCHESTRATION: UNLEASHING YOUR NEXT MOVE OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL FULFILLMENT** **Richie Butler** | Founder and Chief Visionary Officer, Project Unity
11:20–12:00 PM	**TALK 10: IN-HOUSE COUNSEL'S COMPASS: NAVIGATING PRIVILEGE, IMMUNITY, AND RISK IN TEXAS AND BEYOND** **Trey Cox** | Partner, Gibson Dunn **Alan Dabdoub** | Partner, Lynn Pinker Hurst & Schwegmann
12:00–12:10 PM	THANK YOU, EVALUATIONS, PRIZE DRAWINGS & 2026 SAVE THE DATE
12:10–2:30 PM	FAREWELL CELEBRATION LUNCH

AI BEHAVING BADLY

Karen A. Delaney

Principal, Delaney Legal PLLC

Karen Delaney is the Principal of Delaney Legal PLLC, where she conducts independent investigations into workplace misconduct, including allegations of assault, harassment, discrimination, bullying, retaliation, and embezzlement. Drawing on her wide-ranging corporate background, Karen cultivates credibility with witnesses, applies a discerning lens to evaluate evidence, and produces rigorous, defensible findings. Karen is also a trusted legal advisor to corporate clients seeking practical advice to navigate complex, ambiguous issues. Karen advises on employment and corporate governance matters and frequently assists clients in negotiating all manner of contracts. Karen's clients are in a variety of industries, including retail, liquor, automotive, oilfield services, software, and cybersecurity.

Before launching her firm, Karen was Associate General Counsel at Half Price Books, where she led the Legal Department. Prior to that, Karen was Senior Counsel at GameStop, where she managed most of the company's litigation, triaged employment issues related to GameStop's more than 6,000 global employees, helped form and lead GameStop's cybersecurity incident response team, negotiated countless contracts, and advised on the company's charitable endeavors. Karen began her legal practice as a business litigator at Gardere Wynne Sewell, LLP (now Foley & Lardner LLP) in Dallas, Texas.

Karen received her Bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin (Hook 'em!). She then begrudgingly left Austin for the Gateway to the West, where she received her J.D. from Washington University School of Law in St. Louis. Karen spends much of her free time exploring her new home in Minnesota, digging into fresh podcast material, and reading.

Jennifer Judge

Chief Legal Officer, Destination Pet, LLC

Jennifer is the Chief Legal Officer at Destination Pet, LLC, a company that owns and operates pet boarding, day care, and grooming facilities, along with animal hospitals and veterinarian clinics. Destination Pet also owns and launched Yourgi, Inc., which includes the Yourgi app as a new means for pet parents to find safe and reliable pet care. Prior to Destination Pet, Jennifer owned her own fractional General Counsel firm and was in-house at a large home improvement retailer and a non-bank mortgage company.

SHIELDS READY: PLANNING FOR NEAR- AND LONG-TERM CYBER RESILIENCE

TALK 01

Ernesto Ballesteros

Cybersecurity State Coordinator of Texas,
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)

Mr. Ballesteros serves as the Cybersecurity State Coordinator (CSC) for the State of Texas at the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) in Region 6. As the CSC for the State of Texas, he serves as the principal point of contact for non-Federal entities to engage with the Federal Government on cybersecurity matters, pursuant to 6 United States Code, Section 665(c) (2021).

Previously, Ballesteros served the State of Texas, as the State Cybersecurity Coordinator and Chair of the Texas Cybersecurity Council, at the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR). As the State Cybersecurity Coordinator, his primary charge was to oversee cybersecurity matters for the State of Texas and lead the Texas Cybersecuity Council to collaborate on matters of cybersecurity concerning Texas, pursuant to Texas Government Code, Sections 2054.511 and 512. During his tenure, he contributed to the development and implementation of statewide initiatives, such as the Texas Information Sharing and Analysis Organization (TxISAO), the Statewide Cybersecurity Awareness Training Program, and more.

Prior to serving in state government, Ballesteros' career spanned several industries, including academia, financial services, private consulting, and public utilities. Of note, his prior professional roles included the following: Information Security Officer for the Alamo Colleges District (San Antonio, Texas); Information Security Officer at Jefferson Bank (San Antonio, Texas); Information Security Consultant at Omnikron Systems (Woodland Hills, California); Assistant Professor of Computer Information Systems and Security at Our Lady of the Lake University (San Antonio, Texas); Director of the Center for Information Assurance Management and Leadership at Our Lady of the Lake University (San Antonio, Texas); and Information Systems Auditor for CPS Energy (San Antonio, Texas).

Currently, Ballesteros is an Adjunct Professor of Law at St. Mary's University School of Law (San Antonio, Texas), where he teaches cybersecurity, information systems, and law.

Academically, Ballesteros holds several degrees and professional certifications pertaining to cybersecurity, law, and information systems. Ballesteros holds a Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Computer Information Systems and Security (CISS) from Our Lady of the Lake University; an NSA/DHS-designated Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education (CAE-CDE). Additionally, Ballesteros completed his legal education at St. Mary's University School of Law, where he received his Doctor of Jurisprudence , specializing in cyber and privacy law.

Lastly, Ballesteros is an (ISC)2 Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), ISACA Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA), and CompTIA Security+ certified professional.

TALK 02

FROM GROWTH TO CHANGE: A LOOK AT DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN TEXAS

Monica Cruz, Ph.D.

State Data Center Lead, Texas Demographic Center

Dr. Cruz supports the work of the Texas Demographic Center through its network of statewide affiliates and the Texas Legislature. She has worked as a legislative aide for the Texas Senate, as director of a welfare-to-work program for the City of San Antonio and with other non-profit organizations as a policy analyst and researcher. She also serves on the research team to conduct community assessments and focus group facilitation through the work of the Institute of Demographic and Socioeconomic Research at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Her research interests include housing, economic development, poverty, and employment.

TALK 03

STRONGER TOGETHER: LEADING TEAMS WITH EMPATHY

Katharine Manning

President and Founder, Blackbird LLC

Katharine Manning has more than 25 years of experience at the intersection of law, trauma, and organizational response. For 15 years, she served as a Senior Attorney Advisor at the U.S. Department of Justice, where she counseled U.S. Attorneys' Offices nationwide on their response to victims in some of the most high-profile and complex cases in the country. Her portfolio included matters such as the Boston Marathon bombing, the Madoff investment fraud, the South Carolina AME Church and Pulse nightclub shootings, the federal case against Larry Nassar, and the Charlottesville uprising. In that role, she provided legal and strategic guidance to prosecutors, law enforcement, and senior leadership on balancing the rights of victims with the demands of complex prosecutions.

Prior to her federal service, Ms. Manning practiced law at Pillsbury Winthrop in San Francisco, where she represented Fortune 500 companies in class actions, insurance coverage disputes, and media litigation. She is admitted to the bar in both California and Washington, D.C.

Today, as President of Blackbird, Ms. Manning advises corporations, government agencies, law firms, and nonprofits on how to prepare for and respond to issues involving trauma in the workplace. Her clients rely on her deep legal expertise and practical experience to help them navigate sensitive matters involving employee well-being, compliance, and organizational resilience.

She is the author of *The Empathetic Workplace: Five Steps to a Compassionate, Calm, and Confident Response to Trauma on the Job* (HarperCollins Leadership, 2021), a guide for leaders seeking to respond effectively to crises affecting their workforce. Her insights have been featured in outlets including the *Harvard Business Review*, *Fast Company*, *Newsweek*, *Business Insider*, and *CNBC*.

Ms. Manning is a graduate of Smith College and the University of Virginia School of Law. She teaches at American University and serves as a Senior Fellow at the Center for Excellence in Public Leadership at George Washington University.

Edward Stewart

Executive Senior Associate Athletic Director,
University of Southern California

Edward Stewart is a seasoned athletics administrator with 28 years of experience in intercollegiate athletics. He currently serves as the Executive Senior Associate Athletic Director at the University of Southern California (USC). As a key member of USC's executive staff, Stewart serves as a sport administrator for six sports, leads health, wellness and performance for the athletic department, and plays an integral role in the university's athletics vision and leadership.

Stewart is widely recognized for his expertise in guiding major institutions and conferences through complex transitions and realignments. His extensive career includes leadership positions in a Power Four conference office and at three prominent Division I Football Bowl Subdivision institutions. Stewart has a specialized background in football administration, including a 16-year tenure as the Executive Associate Commissioner for Football at the Big 12 Conference. In this capacity, he was part of the senior leadership team, overseeing policy governance, sport and game operations for both regular-season and post-season competition. He was also responsible for orchestrating the return of the Big 12 Football Championship Game and managing officiating operations. His leadership in football also extended to negotiating more than $200 million in stadium and bowl game contracts. Additionally, Stewart served on several key committees, including the College Football Officiating Board of Managers, the College Football Competition Committee, and the NCAA Football Rules Committee.

Stewart's contributions extend beyond football, supporting Olympic sports and having been a vital liaison for medical professionals regarding student-athlete health and safety. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he led the Big 12's efforts to safely return to athletics competition, ensuring the well-being of student-athletes across all sports.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Stewart is a committed community leader and public speaker. He has spoken at international conferences, including the International Association of Defense Counsel's annual meeting on International Sports Law and The Evolution and Challenges of NIL Rights for College Athletes.

A native of Chicago, Stewart earned his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Nebraska and his Master of Arts in Adult and Continuing Education from Michigan State University. As a student-athlete, he was the team captain and starting linebacker on Nebraska's 1994 national championship football team, where he was named Big Eight Conference Defensive Player of the Year, a consensus All-America, and a finalist for the Butkus Award. Stewart also played two seasons of professional football in the NFL and NFL Europe before transitioning into collegiate athletics.

TALK 05

EVERY DEFENSE NEEDS A GREAT OFFENSE: SEEING BEYOND THE LIMITS OF TRADITIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

Matt Sheldon

Senior Vice President & General Counsel, Navient

Matt is a Senior Vice President & General Counsel at Navient Corporation, based in Herndon, Virginia. He is responsible for a wide variety of matters, including corporate transactions, secured and unsecured financing, securities, litigation, intellectual property, employment and benefits matters, and regulatory compliance.

Prior to joining Navient, Matt was a partner at the international law firm of Reed Smith LLP, with a concentration on litigation matters. In 2013, Matt joined the legal department at Sallie Mae, formerly a government-sponsored enterprise (GSE) that originates and manages a portfolio of student loans. In 2014, Sallie Mae underwent a corporate restructuring, resulting in the separation from Sallie Mae of the company's student loan servicing and asset management businesses (Navient). Matt eventually became head of Navient's litigation team, and was later promoted to Deputy General Counsel (2022) and General Counsel (2024).

Matt has been recognized as one of Virginia's "Legal Elite," including under the Young Lawyers and Intellectual Property categories. He has written and lectured many times on the attorney-client privilege and work product doctrine, particularly as those protections apply to the role of in-house counsel. Matt also served for 15 years on the board of one of the largest regional homeless shelters in the Washington, DC area.

Matt obtained his Bachelor of Arts from Boston College and graduated with honors from the George Mason University School of Law. He and his wife reside in Northern Virginia and have two adult children.

LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD

TALK 06

Caren Lock

Regional Vice President & Associate General Counsel, TIAA

Caren K. Lock is the Regional Vice President and Associate General Counsel of TIAA. In her role at TIAA, Caren is the primary interface for the company and its subsidiaries on all legislative, executive, regulatory, and administrative matters for the South and Midwest regions. Her expertise includes board governance and risk, policy development, regulatory compliance, government relations and crisis management.

Prior to joining TIAA, Caren was general counsel with a consumer financial company. Before entering the corporate world, Caren spent over a decade litigating complex business matters including copyright and trademark infringement, employment discrimination, shareholder and partnership disputes, aviation, and toxic tort.

Caren serves on The Dallas Mavericks Advisory Board, State Bar of Texas Board, Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum Board and President's Advisory Board of UT Southwestern Medical Center. She is Past President of The Dallas Assembly and Past Board Chair of The Texas Bar College. In 2015, Caren co-founded The Orchid Giving Circle which provides community grants to support social change and services to the North Texas Asian Community. Her community engagement includes past service on multiple nonprofit and bar association boards including Past Board Chair of The Texas Women's Foundation. Caren is a sought-after speaker and has received multiple awards for her diversity and inclusion efforts including from The State Bar of Texas Asian Pacific Interest Section and The Texas Diversity Council to name a few.

Caren lives in Allen, Texas with her husband and mother. She is the proud mother of two adult sons and a rambunctious puppy.

BEING A CONFIDENT LEADER... ALL THE TIME!

TALK 07

Robin Pou

Chief Advisor & Strategist, Robin Pou, Inc.

Robin Pou is an Executive Coach, Author, and Founder of a leadership development firm with a mission to make bad leadership extinct by building people into high-achieving leaders who grow meaningful businesses and value their teams in the process.

As an executive coach and frequent keynote speaker on leadership trends, he works with Fortune 500 executives and CEOs of high-growth organizations. Robin has also authored two books, and shares his latest leadership insights in a popular weekly newsletter called The Confident Leader.

Robin's leadership development programs operate to inspire, teach, and train leaders to become confident leaders who build businesses that matter by overcoming their doubts to reach their potential.

Robin lives in Dallas, Texas with his wife Karen. They have three kids: Robert, Cate, and Boyd.

TALK 08

AI-NATIVE JUSTICE: REDRAWING THE DISPUTE RESOLUTION MAP

Bridget M. McCormack

President & CEO, American Arbitration Association® - International Centre for Dispute Resolution®

Bridget M. McCormack is the President and CEO of the American Arbitration Association® - International Centre for Dispute Resolution® (AAA-ICDR®), the preeminent global provider of alternative dispute resolution services. She has an extensive background in judicial service, court administration and scholarship and a track record of advocacy for innovation and technology in dispute resolution. Before her tenure at AAA-ICDR, which commenced in February 2023, McCormack served as the Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court from 2019 to 2022 after being an associate justice since 2013. Her leadership led to pioneering reforms in Michigan's court system, notably the launch of the state's first online dispute resolution platform and an eviction diversion program, both crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic.

McCormack's dedication to education and legal reform is evident in her academic roles. As an esteemed educator at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, she has been instrumental in exploring the implications of artificial intelligence in the legal sector and advocating for responsible AI practices within the profession. Her leadership as the chair of the American Bar Association's Section on Legal Education and Admission to the Bar and her involvement with key legal education and reform committees have been pivotal in modernizing legal education and practice.

Her early career began in New York City, where she worked as a trial attorney at the Legal Aid Society and then at the Office of the Appellate Defender, followed by academic positions at Yale and the University of Michigan Law Schools. Notably, she co-founded the Michigan Innocence Clinic, the first non-DNA innocence clinic in the country, which has led to the exoneration of 41 individuals as of April 2024.

McCormack's achievements have been widely recognized, earning her numerous awards, including the Sunshine Award from the Michigan Press Association for promoting transparency in public service and the Rebuilding Justice Award, acknowledging her dedication to legal reform. Her influential work earned her the title of "Influential Woman in Law" by Michigan Lawyers Weekly in 2022.

A graduate of Trinity College and New York University Law School, where she was a Root-Tilden Scholar, McCormack's professional journey reflects a pursuit of justice, innovation and education in the legal field. She is married to Steven Croley, Ford Motor Company's general counsel and chief policy officer, and they have four adult children.

ORCHESTRATION: UNLEASHING YOUR NEXT MOVE OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL FULFILLMENT

TALK 09

Richie Butler

Founder and Chief Visionary Officer, Project Unity

Richie Butler is a multi-faceted leader who builds people, builds community, and solves problems. He is committed to finding solutions to society's most daunting problems.

As a business leader, he has over 25 years of experience in private equity real estate investment, development and institutional asset management that has resulted in nearly $1 billion of urban development and workforce housing in 23 U.S. metro markets. He currently leads an impact investment team actively seeking investment opportunities in real estate and strategic growth enterprises.

As a faith leader, Richie Butler is Senior Pastor of the historic St. Luke "Community" United Methodist Church in Dallas, where he is leading the congregation in a multimillion-dollar strategic expansion to multiply its current $6 million annual community impact.

As a community innovation leader, he is the founder of Project Unity. Under his visionary leadership, Project Unity offers community building and societal problem solutions through its "Together We" programs including Together We Ball, Together We Dine, Together We Learn, and Together We Sing.

Examples of Richie's innovative leadership include the launch Together We Test and Together We Vaccinate, two community health initiatives that helped address the lack of COVID-19 testing and vaccinations in low-income communities over the span of two and half-years. With his leadership and community partnerships, these programs tested and vaccinated over 10,000 individuals. In 2020, he co-launched the Together We Can initiative to address the question many people had of "what can I do" in response to the death of George Floyd. The Together We Can program attracted Fortune 500 companies, universities, foundations, and grassroot organizations as partners.

As a civic leader, in response to the five Dallas police officers who were ambushed in 2016, Richie launched the Year of Unity in 2017, a community wide initiative to help bridge racial divides in Dallas. The initiative included support from the 43rd President of the United States, George W. Bush, who served as the Honorary Chair.

Current board appointments include Southern Methodist University Board of Trustees, Communities Foundation of Texas Board of Trustees-Immediate Past Chair, Texas Methodist Foundation Board of Trustees, and an Independent Board of Director of Brookshire Grocery Company.

He is a recipient of the Dallas Business Journal's Leaders in Diversity Award and the Collin County Business Alliance Leadership Award. He is also a past recipient of the SMU Distinguished Alumni Emerging Leader Award, the Minority Business Leader award from the Dallas Business Journal, National Bar Association Heman Sweatt Award and the Dallas Bar Association Martin Luther King, Jr. Justice Award.

Richie is a proud graduate of Southern Methodist University and Harvard University with extended studies in Urban Planning at MIT. He is happily married to Neisha Strambler-Butler who is an accomplished corporate executive. They are the proud parents of two young adults, Emily and Ford.

TALK 10

IN-HOUSE COUNSEL'S COMPASS: NAVIGATING PRIVILEGE, IMMUNITY, AND RISK IN TEXAS AND BEYOND

Trey Cox

Partner, Gibson Dunn

Trey Cox is Co-Chair of Gibson Dunn's Global Litigation Practice Group and Co-Partner-in-Charge of the Dallas office. Widely regarded as one of the nation's top trial lawyers, he represents clients across diverse industries in complex, high-stakes disputes. He is consistently ranked Band 1 in Chambers USA for Trial Lawyers and General Commercial Litigation, with clients calling him "a super-dynamic trial lawyer" and "incredible in court and also incredible with clients." He has been honored by Benchmark Litigation, Best Lawyers in America, Super Lawyers, and was named to D CEO's 2025 Dallas 500 as one of the region's most influential business leaders. His work has appeared in The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Bloomberg News, and others. Trey has tried more than 35 cases, covering trade secrets, fiduciary duties, securities fraud, product liability, and energy litigation. Highlights include a $667 million jury verdict for Energy Transfer LP in North Dakota, a biometric privacy case for Meta Platforms Inc., a high-value contract dispute for GameStop Corp., bellwether opioid litigation for Purdue Pharma, and a full defense jury verdict for the world's largest wind farm in Texas, later upheld by the Texas Supreme Court. He also represented Dakota Access Pipeline in a defamation suit against Greenpeace International. Beyond the courtroom, Trey is a leading voice in trial strategy and legal communication, known for leveraging technology to enhance jury understanding. He frequently lectures at law schools including the University of Virginia, the University of Texas, and Southern Methodist University, and authored The Jury Rules, a practical guide for trial lawyers based on post-trial juror interviews. He is double Board Certified in Civil Trial and Civil Pre-Trial Law by the National Board of Trial Advocacy and is a fellow of both the American Board of Trial Advocates and the Litigation Counsel of America. Trey earned his Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, from Washington & Lee University and his Juris Doctor, with honors, from the University of Virginia School of Law. He began his legal career clerking for the Honorable Jacques L. Wiener, Jr. on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Alan Dabdoub

Partner, Lynn Pinker Hurst & Schwegmann

Alan Dabdoub, Partner at Lynn Pinker Hurst & Schwegmann, represents plaintiffs and defendants in high stakes commercial disputes. Clients credit his outstanding results to his meticulous preparation, creativity, and courtroom presence.

Alan is a first-chair trial lawyer with experience trying cases to juries, judges, and arbitrators, including winning a $12 million dollar judgment for his client in a large commercial dispute after a week-long trial in one of the few cases tried during the COVID-19 pandemic. He possesses expertise in business torts, contract disputes, trade secrets litigation, fiduciary duty litigation, partnership disputes, and bankruptcy litigation. Alan has handled complex disputes in the energy, healthcare, financial, banking, real estate, retail, technology, telecommunications, manufacturing, logistics, and construction industries.

Alan earned his Bachelor of Arts with honors, *cum laude*, as a scholarship recipient from Louisiana State University, where he achieved Dean's List recognition for seven consecutive semesters. He then earned his Juris Doctor from Louisiana State University's Paul M. Hebert Law Center, excelling academically and twice receiving the Corpus Juris Secundum Award for achieving the highest grades in Torts I and Torts II.

Alan has repeatedly been recognized by his peers in *D Magazine* as one of the "Best Lawyers in Dallas" (2016, 2020-2022, 2024-2025). Alan was also selected as a Rising Star (business litigation) by "Texas Super Lawyer" (2011) and has repeatedly been selected as a Super Lawyer (business litigation) (2023-2024). Alan has also been recognized by Best Lawyers in America since 2024 for his exceptional representation of clients in business litigation.

Alan is admitted to the State Bars of Texas, Louisiana, and Tennessee, and is a prolific speaker on cutting-edge topics in business litigation. He served as a Planning Committee Member for the Texas State Bar inaugural CLE in December 2024: "Handling Your First (or Next) Business Court Case".

Alan lives in Dallas with his wife Michelle Ackal Dabdoub and their three children, Grant, Ava, and Sloane.

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IN LOVING MEMORY

LYNN SWITZER BOZALIS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

2016 - 2025

On March 5, 2025, Texas General Counsel Forum lost our Chief Executive Officer Lynn Switzer Bozalis after a fearless battle with ovarian cancer. Lynn was an outstanding leader and bright light in the Texas legal community. Below are some kind words from some of her closest friends and Forum members.

"Lynn had an unending capacity to be friends with so many people and she brought those people together. She was always a force for good, whether as a litigator at BakerBotts or as a friend. She was intelligent and street smart, strong, positive, witty and full of life — even up until the end. She told you what you needed to hear in a way that made sense and made you want to hear it. She focused on what mattered to members: connections, learning, and community. She was humble in her leadership style yet never afraid to take a stand and trust her judgment. She had some terrible, nearly unspeakable, tragedies in her life yet remained positive and lived with a 'glass half full' mentality all the 35-plus years I knew her. She loved life and always made the best of it. And, as mentioned before, she had a LOT of friends! I, and so many, will miss her so much."

– Betty Ellsworth Ungerman

"Lynn was a loyal friend who took the time to invest in personal relationships. She inherited a 'good' organization, and made it 'great' by perfecting its operations. She continued to modify the Annual Conference until she got it 'just right.' She infused financial discipline. And she was certainly a Hall of Famer at raising money through sponsors and underwriters. Lynn should be remembered as someone who generated an infectious attitude of optimism and positivity."

– John Torres

"Lynn was committed to and passionate about Dedman Law. She helped shape the current leaders of the legal community, particularly in Dallas. Her innovative and bold ideas helped Dedman Law become one of the top law schools in the country. She was also a caring friend. She will be missed by many."

– Jason Nance

"Lynn was such a bright light — such a vivid light now gone. She brought energy, good humor and drive to succeed to the Forum, and we will deeply miss her."

– Dena DeNooyer Stroh

"Lynn had such an incredible spirit and was a big reason for the success of the Forum. Despite her many accomplishments in private practice, academia and in the non-profit space, Lynn remained humble. She was so down to earth. Her interactions with each of us seemed perfectly curated for the individual. She knew I wanted to lead the Forum; yet, she also knew that I did not take myself too seriously. She matched that energy. She encouraged, she challenged, she celebrated."

– Kelvin Sellers

"Lynn was a natural leader who really loved seeing others succeed. She was a people person of the highest magnitude and she genuinely cared about those she met. It was a pleasure to see her skillfully operate as a superb CEO, always with a smile."

– Paul Genender

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