

THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS  
AND THE TEXAS YOUNG LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

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2004-2005  
VOLUNTEER  
AND  
STAFF GUIDE



Guide

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(www.schoollawsection.org)

Budget Code: 9370

Created 1970

Dues: \$25.00

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(www.texastaxsection.org)

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(www.txwomenlawsection.org)

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Real Estate, Probate,  
and Trust Law  
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Sexual Orientation and  
Gender Identification Issues  
Taxation

**2004-2005**  
**State Bar of Texas**

# SECTION REPORTS

**Section reports** are included in the July issue of the *Texas Bar Journal* to keep Texas lawyers updated on State Bar section activities. The reports do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the State Bar of Texas. State Bar policy is formulated by the State Bar Board of Directors or by the membership through referendum. For more information or to join sections, visit [www.texasbar.com/sections](http://www.texasbar.com/sections) or call (800)204-2222, Ext. 1425.

This year, the section council conducted four meetings in Lajitas, Lake Grapevine, San Antonio, and Dallas. Departing Council members who have given generously of their time and efforts on behalf of the section are Rhonda S. Jolley, Rick Triplett, R. Eric Viehman, and Harry Wolff.

## SCHOOL LAW

Lonnie F. Hollingsworth, Jr., Chair

The section newsletter continues to be published in electronic format, available by email and on the section website, [www.schoollawsection.org](http://www.schoollawsection.org). The section also publishes at least one newsletter per year by regular mail. Co-editors of the newsletter are Michael Shirk and Miles Bradshaw. One project currently underway is a law student competition for submissions to our newsletter.

The section is completing a revision of our governance documents under the guidance of Immediate Past Chair Lynn Rossi Scott. The revisions were submitted for consideration at the section's business meeting at the State Bar Annual Meeting.

The section participated in a joint CLE conference with the Government Lawyers Section at the annual meeting. The section will hold its annual School Law Retreat at the Woodlands Resort and Conference Center, July 22-23. Section members and officers Joy Surratt Baskin, Shellie Hoffman Crow, and Chris Gilbert have developed a great program. The annual retreat has always been equal parts information and fun. For more information, please visit the section website.

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTIFICATION ISSUES

Jerry Simoneaux, Chair

Judge Steven Kirkland researched and authored a report on bias in the courtroom, "Are the Judicial Canons Working to Stop Anti-Gay Bias in the Courts?" The paper focuses on bias in courtrooms after the addition of sexual orientation to the anti-bias canon in the 1990 revisions to the Model Canons of Judicial Conduct, which was adopted by the Texas Supreme Court.

In collaboration with Past President Rick Thompson, Kirkland also drafted a

resolution for the State Bar of Texas Insurance Trust to extend health care benefits to unmarried partners. The report estimates that between 0.1 percent and 0.4 percent of employees with same-sex partners would sign up for such coverage. If different-sex partners were also included, an estimated 1.3 percent to 1.4 percent would join. A cited study shows that costs per employer would increase 2.2 percent at the highest. To date, a decision has not been made.

President Jerry Simoneaux continued work on the repeal of the Texas Homosexual Conduct Law, which is now unconstitutional under the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Lawrence and Garner v. Texas*, 539 U.S. 558 (2003). The State Bar Board of Directors voted to include the proposed bill in its 2005 legislative package. Simoneaux worked with State Rep. Garnet Coleman to author the bill (HB 3215), which would repeal references to the Homosexual Conduct Code currently in the Health and Safety Code §163.002 (8).

The year ended with the section's all-day CLE course, Alternative Family Law, which took place at the State Bar Annual Meeting.

## TAXATION

R. David Wheat, Chair

*Texas Tax Lawyer*, published three times a year, includes articles on federal, state, and local taxation; current development columns authored by the section's committees; IRS Council minutes; and

other items of interest.

The section website, [www.texasbar.org](http://www.texasbar.org), contains the mission statement, committee descriptions, and activity dates; links to online resources; and a members-only area, which provides archived *Texas Tax Lawyer* publications, CLE materials, and IRS Council minutes.

The section continued its working relationship with Texas C-BAR and provided financial and work support for the Justice for All calendar. The section is establishing a new standing committee dedicated to pro bono activities.

For the first time, the section held a one-day seminar devoted solely to a recently passed tax bill. In conjunction with the State Bar, the seminar was simulcast over the Internet. We also held traditional seminars, such as the Texas Federal Tax Institute and the Advanced Tax Law Course.

The section developed procedures to allow it to comment on proposed IRS regulations. This will include establishing a new standing committee dedicated solely to such government submissions.

In addition, the section is working to communicate to its members via blast emails. It also prepared and distributed a questionnaire to solicit information from members that will allow us to improve benefits for members and to encourage member involvement.


The section continues to enhance participation between the section and tax programs at Texas law schools, contacting law school faculty to encourage articles, and placing them on the *Texas Tax Lawyer* subscription list on a complimentary basis.

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