

with a campus program. The section expanded its scholarship program in 2019 and funded eight summer internships at various governmental agencies.

## FAMILY LAW

*Chris Nickelson, Chair*

The mission of the Family Law Section is “to promote the highest degree of professionalism, education, fellowship, and excellence in the practice of family law.” The section attempts to fulfill its mission by publishing practical literature to educate and assist attorneys, by generating legislation to keep the law predictable, by working with TexasBarCLE to produce some of the best CLE in the nation, by sponsoring socials so attorneys from across the state can become better acquainted, and by promoting pro bono representation through pro bono seminars. The section’s publications include the *Family Law Checklists*, *Predicates Manual*, *Family Law At Your Fingertips*, the *Family Lawyer’s Essential Toolkit*, and *The Client Handbook*. The section updates and the State Bar of Texas publishes the *Texas Family Law Practice Manual*, an essential tool for family law attorneys. If you are interested in purchasing any of these publications, go to [sbotfam.org](http://sbotfam.org). Membership in the section is only \$40 a year, and members receive the *Family Lawyer’s Essential Toolkit*, a quarterly Family Law Section Report, and discounts on State Bar family law seminars. If you are already a member, thank you. If not, please join.

## GENERAL PRACTICE, SOLO AND SMALL FIRM

*Carmen Samaniego, Chair*

Staying up to date on State Bar activities is an important goal for the General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Section. The section represents general practitioners, and as the economy changes, it sees more firms moving toward a general practice. The section also sees a growing trend of solos and small firms across Texas. The section wants to make sure the State Bar takes into consideration solo and small firm needs and challenges that are often quite different than those of larger firms or governmental organizations. The section continues to offer relevant CLEs including a half-day seminar at the State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting. The section is also working on a statewide CLE road show presentation of *Technology: Old Dogs, New Tricks*,

highlighting free or inexpensive programs that are helpful in a practice and for court presentations. Given the current climate of remote access and use of programs such as Zoom, the section finds this CLE is most relevant. The council is working hard to produce and publish an annotation to the *Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct*, which is anticipated to be another on-going project, just as the *General Practice Digest*, which is published three times a year.

## GOVERNMENT LAW

*Ryan Henry, Chair*

The Government Law Section provides services and resources for members working with state and local governments. One of the section’s major initiatives this year has been to explore certification of local government law as an area of legal specialization. Many standard rules and understandings apply differently when dealing with a governmental entity, and this—along with a broad understanding of other areas of law that are recognized as specialties in their own right—have driven our efforts with the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. The section provides education to help lawyers understand the unique rules in this area of law and provides a monthly newsletter to members, along with routinely emailed case summaries and changes in law related to the section. The section also continues to update its website, bringing current resources and information to readers. Finally, the section provides traveling roadshows to bring affordable, live CLE to different parts of Texas. The section plans to host the 2020 Advanced Government Law Seminar in July on the San Antonio River Walk. Speakers will present topics useful for new government lawyers as well as material that will interest those who have been practicing in government law for many years.

## HEALTH LAW

*Lisa L. Hill, Chair*

The Health Law Section continues to focus on creating better understanding and cooperation among attorneys and other professions involved in the health care industry, including attorneys who represent hospitals, doctors, and life sciences industries. The section provided a webinar on new and proposed federal and state legislation to its members in

February and is planning the 33rd annual Texas Health Law Conference: [texhealthlaw.org](http://texhealthlaw.org). The conference, which offers an estimated 13 hours of quality CLE, is co-sponsored by the Texas Hospital Association and is scheduled for October 4-6 at the AT&T Hotel and Conference Center in Austin. If an in-person gathering is not practicable, the conference will occur as a live, virtual event. We will be monitoring the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and will make alternative arrangements if necessary. Major initiatives of the section include recruiting and attracting future talent by offering opportunities for law school students to learn more about the practice of health law. The section also provides a weekly e-newsletter for all members that tracks proposed and adopted health law-related rules and regulation published in the *Texas Register*.

## HISPANIC ISSUES

*Valerie Ann Carrillo, Chair*

This past year has been an extremely challenging one, starting with the tragic Walmart shootings in August 2019 targeted toward people of Hispanic ethnicity and today we are in the midst of having to deal with the coronavirus pandemic in the United States and across the world. In spite of these events, the Hispanic Issues Section has been able to focus on outreach efforts to recruit new leadership to the section. Because of this, the section has a strong, diverse group of officers and council members from across the state. This year, the Hispanic Issues Section reached out to the El Paso Bar Association to offer its support and assistance in providing resources to the El Paso community following the shootings. Additionally, the section participated in the Texas Access to Justice Foundation 35th anniversary dinner fundraiser, where John Grisham was the keynote speaker. It was an extremely successful event and an important fundraiser as TAJF serves as the lead funding source for legal aid in Texas. Finally, Judge Victor Villarreal (vice-chair) hosted five mock trials and a networking event in Webb County. Stay healthy, everyone.