

Rachel Elkin in Texas Lawbook, Law360 and Texas Lawyer: Haynes Boone Hires First-Ever Pro Bono Counsel

July 29, 2024 Rachel Elkin

Haynes Boone recently expanded its pro bono commitment by hiring [Rachel Elkin](#), formerly director of legal services at Genesis Women's Shelter & Support, as the firm's [first pro bono counsel](#) to oversee the firm's global pro bono program. Elkin spoke with *The Texas Lawbook*, *Law360 Pulse* and *Texas Lawyer* about her arrival at Haynes Boone and what to expect from her role.

Elkin spoke with *Texas Lawyer*, explaining that her first task is taking stock of the existing pro bono structure at the firm, and then determining how the firm can improve it by best serving pro bono clients and identifying the best initiatives for the firm's lawyers. A goal is to meet the needs of the communities where the offices are based, she said.

"That's the most important thing," she said about creating entrenched ties and roots to the local communities and finding out the specific local needs. She is also interested in asking the firm's lawyers about what kind of pro bono work they want to do, and then "serve as a matchmaking service" in that capacity.

Elkin told *Law360 Pulse* that coming from a family of attorneys, she was familiar with Haynes Boone growing up, adding that at Genesis, she worked with a number of the firm's attorneys who volunteered for the nonprofit. During her time collaborating with Haynes Boone attorneys, Elkin said, she found the firm's culture and approach to pro bono work to be similar to hers, which spurred her decision to join.

"I really developed a personal connection with the firm when I managed the pro bono partnership network at Genesis," Elkin said. "At Genesis, we always tried to find a way to get to 'yes' to help a client and I found the same thing to be true with the Haynes Boone pro bono attorneys. The deep sense of commitment to pro bono work was not lip service to Haynes Boone; it was ingrained in the culture."

In a conversation with *The Texas Lawbook*, Elkin shared, "I knew asking Haynes Boone for pro bono assistance would never be difficult, but rather a question of how they were going to get to help. I wanted to be a part of that culture. The move to Haynes Boone is one that allows me to help inspire and train other attorneys to do this work in an environment with significantly more reach and more resources while still keeping those personal connections with local agencies and communities."

"Short-term, I will be meeting with the wonderful attorneys across the firm throughout all of our 18 offices to learn about all the exciting pro bono projects that we are currently engaged in and seeing how I can assist," Elkin told *The Texas Lawbook*. "I am also engaging with our attorneys in our offices to learn what pro bono projects they are interested in and what the needs of their specific communities are. That should feed into my long-term vision, for Haynes Boone to be known as the destination for quality, impactful pro bono work. I think this is eminently possible, because for Haynes Boone, pro bono is not lip service as it is already ingrained in the culture."

HAYNES BOONE

To read the full story from *Texas Lawyer*, click [here](#).

To read the full story from *Law360 Pulse*, click [here](#).

To read the full Q&A from *The Texas Lawbook*, click [here](#).