

Pitts in Texas Lawbook: Haynes Boone Associate Wins First-Ever Appellate Arguments in ‘Whirlwind’ Week

March 5, 2024 Ryan Pitts

PRACTICES Appellate, Litigation

[Ryan Pitts](#), an Associate in the Haynes Boone Houston Office, was recently featured in a *Texas Lawbook* article discussing his win in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Read an excerpt below:

When Ryan Pitts learned last summer that he’d stand before a panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit to give his first-ever oral arguments in an appellate case, his initial thought was of his second child, a nearly 4-month-old baby girl.

“With a young baby, the first thing was, ‘Oh man, I need to find time to prepare,’” Pitts said with a laugh.

With the help of his wife, Alex Pitts, and extended family, Pitts was able to carve out time. Just recently, toward the end of a “whirlwind” week of back-to-back victories, the Haynes Boone associate learned that he won his first appellate argument.

But that’s not all. The same day he got word of his Fifth Circuit victory, the 32-year-old Kentucky native stepped foot inside the Texas Supreme Court for the first time. The next day was followed with news of a favorable ruling from the state’s high court in yet another case he was involved in with the firm.

“I’m grateful for the opportunities I’ve had and it’s always a fun ride,” Pitts said in an interview with *The Texas Lawbook*.

Before the Fifth Circuit panel, Pitts represented Denver-based Catalyst Strategic Advisors against Houston-based Contractors Building Supply Company in a \$4 million merger and acquisition dispute. The justices agreed with a Houston federal judge that CBS must pay Catalyst an “advisory completion fee,” after CBS sold itself to a company in 2021 that Catalyst had helped them find before the two parted ways 15 months prior.

In July, attorneys received the October date they’d argue before the justices in New Orleans. The team at Haynes Boone and the client gave Pitts the green light to argue. One by one, the thoughts began running through his head.

Many nights, he lay awake thinking about what questions the justices might ask. He practiced relentlessly — in front of the mirror and in his office chair. Knowing the Fifth Circuit’s reputation for being “active from the bench,” Pitts tried to anticipate their questions. He wrote down 10-20 core questions, but an unlimited number of possibilities entered his mind.

“You can’t stop your mind from thinking about it when you care so much and it matters to the client and you want to give the court a candid answer and a correct answer,” Pitts said.

He took it day by day. He consulted countless other lawyers. The young lawyer said he sought advice from nearly “everyone in the appellate group” and many others in Houston. He had more mentors than he could count on both hands as he prepared, he said.

“Part of what we bring at Haynes Boone is this really deep talent bench, and it’s just really beneficial for young lawyers like me to have people to bounce ideas off,” Pitts said.

To read the full article in *Texas Lawbook*, click [here](#).