

Coldwell, Gerhardy, Mallick and Kara in The Texas Lawbook: Haynes Boone Pro Bono Team Secures Tax Relief for Dallas Habitat Homeowner

August 21, 2026

Haynes Boone's [Pro Bono Impact Report](#) featured the story of a Dallas Habitat for Humanity homeowner whose case was recently covered by *The Texas Lawbook*. Partner [Deborah Coldwell](#) and Associates [Austria Arnold Gerhardy](#), [Sam Mallick](#) and [Mishan Kara](#) spoke with the publication about their pro bono work after their client's home was appraised at nearly twice the \$160,000 maximum amount she is permitted to sell it for under her deed restriction.

The team obtained an agreed judgment requiring the Dallas Central Appraisal District to recognize the homeowner's deed restriction when determining the property's taxable value, establishing the home's market value at \$160,000 for the 2025 and 2026 tax years.

Read an excerpt from *The Texas Lawbook* below.

"The result ensures that Ms. Seymoore is not penalized by excessive appraisals that undermine the very affordable housing programs designed to help," said firm Partner Deborah Coldwell. ...

"Her career has just taken off since getting this Habitat home. She's active in her community. She's somebody who goes out of her way to help other people," Gerhardy said. ...

"Even if we did a tax protest case, it would usually be a commercial tax case, and that's really important for our clients, and it's really important that we do a good job for them. But this is somebody's home, and that just changes the stakes a little bit, and it makes it feel more personal," Mallick said. ...

"By getting a good result for Tracy for 2025 and 2026, we're also helping her for 2027 and into the future to make sure she's not priced out of her house," Mallick said. ...

"Pro bono cases like this allow us to get involved early and hopefully make change now that will benefit Tracy's life for the next 10 years, and also potentially benefit the lives of other Habitat homeowners," Gerhardy said, "That's important for us both from a training perspective, but also from the perspective of our law degree has power and influence now, and how can we put it to good use, even as associates within the first few years of practice?"

Read *The Texas Lawbook* article [here](#).