

Koos and Lewis in Texas Lawbook and Law360 Pulse: Haynes Boone Trial Academy Sets Up Associates for the Win

December 11, 2025 Sean Lewis

PRACTICES Trials, Litigation

Haynes Boone Litigation Associates Ashley Koos and [Sean Lewis](#) secured a [unanimous jury verdict in favor of their pro bono client](#) in a case that stemmed from a fraudulent business scheme. They spoke with *The Texas Lawbook* and *Law360 Pulse* about the [Haynes Boone Trial Academy](#) that led to their success.

Read an excerpt of each article below.

The Texas Lawbook:

“Our primary theme was that this was a case about trust and what happens when it’s exploited,” Koos said. “It really was a truly chilling fraud case of someone who went to a friend that he’d known for decades at a really difficult time in his life and he wanted to invest his life savings, he wanted to prepare his family for retirement, and the defendant saw vulnerability and an opportunity to exploit that, and he did.”

A secondary theme, Lewis said, was about following the money.

“We methodically went through every single transaction, and encouraged the jury to use their common sense to know that the transactions they saw in the bank statements did not further this so-called business,” Lewis said.

Lewis called Beale adversely and questioned him for about 80 minutes on direct and another half hour on re-direct. Looking back, Lewis said questioning Beale was his favorite task at trial, as well as the most challenging. Beale was charismatic but also dishonest, Lewis said, and the examination forced him to be nimble and rely on split-second decision-making over what was worth going further on or what was worth moving on from.

“It really required me to understand our theory of the case and have a good grasp of the facts so we could get our point across to the jury,” Lewis said.

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

Law360 Pulse:

Prior to going before jurors in the Harris County matter, Sean Lewis, a fourth-year associate, and Ashley Koos, a fifth-year associate, received a crash course in being a trial attorney during the three-day academy in late May. During the program in Dallas, Lewis, Koos and 14 other associates received a fact pattern and split into teams to work on different components of a trial.

The academy's first day was held at the firm's Dallas headquarters and the second and third days at the University of North Texas at Dallas College of Law, where the firm utilized the school's mock courtrooms.

The associates worked on opening statements, direct examination, cross-examination and closing arguments, Lewis and Koos said. At the end of the academy, the teams faced off in a mock trial, with summer associates serving as jurors.

"The trial academy got us ready for this trial," Lewis told Law360 Pulse. "It's hard to know what to do [in a trial] if you haven't gone through it. The trial academy provides the perfect simulation and the perfect opportunity for us young litigators to get that experience."

The experience appeared to have paid off when Lewis and Koos put on their case on behalf of Wintley Phipps, a nonprofit CEO and pastor who went to businessman and longtime friend Vincent Beale in 2016 for help building a retirement nest egg.

[Read the full Law360 Pulse article here.](#)