

Pinkston Program Shows Students Many Sides of the Law

December 4, 2017 Brent Beckert

At least 37 students from L.G. Pinkston High School in West Dallas might never have known that a career in law is available to them, were it not for a group of Dallas professionals that includes lawyers from two Texas firms.

Twice a week for the last six weeks, students from Pinkston's law magnet have been visiting the Dallas offices of Haynes Boone, learning both about the practice of law and the business of operating a firm. Earlier in the year, they made similar bi-weekly visits to the offices of Jones Day.

Lawyers involved say the program is mutually beneficial. Students gain exposure to a corporate environment they may not have known existed. But it also gives the lawyers involved the opportunity to improve the persistent diversity shortage in the system's professional pipeline.

"If we are going to confront the lack of diversity in the legal profession, it's important to expose students to the practice of law as early and often as possible," said [Brent Beckert](#), one of the associates leading Haynes Boone's involvement in the Pinkston partnership. ...

"A big chunk of students have never met a lawyer before, and of those who have met lawyers, very few have met any other than family or criminal lawyers," said Beckert. "The biggest thing I think we've been able to achieve is to expose them to types of law ... in the corporate context. They see attorneys who look like them, and picture themselves in the boardroom at the office."

A couple students in the program have already expressed interest in going to law school, said Kenric Narcisse, Pinkston's campus law magnet lead teacher. He said one student originally thought she wanted to become a criminal lawyer but is now expressing interest in civil litigation after visiting Haynes Boone. ...

Lawyers at Haynes Boone have taught students about various types of law, including business litigation, real estate, intellectual property and white collar defense. In mid- November, the firm took the students to observe a hearing in state District Judge Tonya Parker's courtroom. ...

Paralegals and non-lawyer employees at Haynes Boone from the business development, marketing, recruiting and library resources also talked to students about their day-to-day duties and their roles in helping a law firm operate.

"We do understand that not all of the students want to become attorneys, so we wanted to expose them not only to different areas of the law, but also other types of professions," said corporate associate Courtney Chouinard, who is co-leading Haynes Boone's program with Beckert.

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

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[Diversity](#) is an important and integral part of the culture at Haynes Boone. Learn more about our firm's commitment to diversity and inclusion [here](#).