

Matthew Deffebach in Texas Lawbook: Punam Kaji is a 'Gem of the Profession' and Future of GC Suite

January 21, 2020 Matthew Deffebach

PRACTICES Labor and Employment

Haynes Boone Partner [Matthew Deffebach](#) talked extensively with *The Texas Lawbook* about former firm colleague Punam Kaji, who is a finalist for the 2019 DFW Outstanding Corporate Counsel Awards.

Deffebach worked closely with Kaji during her five years in Haynes Boone's Labor and Employment Practice Group. Today, Kaji serves as Assistant General Counsel of Ben E. Keith Company and is "widely viewed as one of the brightest young stars of the corporate in-house legal community," according to *The Texas Lawbook*.

The Association of Corporate Counsel's DFW Chapter and *The Texas Lawbook* are honoring Kaji and other finalists at the 2019 DFW Outstanding Corporate Counsel Awards on Jan. 30 at the George W. Bush Institute.

Below is an excerpt of *The Texas Lawbook* article:

"What truly sets Punam apart and what I witnessed at the firm was her natural ability to connect with clients and form strong bonds in terms of being a trusted advisor," says Haynes Boone Partner Matthew Deffebach.

"On many of my matters, Punam was exceptional at truly understanding the client's expectations and building strong personal relationships," says Deffebach, who Kaji describes as a mentor. "She equally applied this skill as a natural advocate when dealing with opposing counsel who knew they could trust her and that she was going to treat them with respect while at the same time zealously representing her clients."

Upon graduating from law school in 2012, Kaji joined the Dallas office of Haynes Boone. She found a connection with labor and employment work.

"Lawyers know labor and employment attorneys get the best facts – crazy things that happen at work," she says. "But, more than that, I believe that people are deeply connected to their jobs. They spend most of their time there and need the income to create the rest of their life. I like that the legal work I do touches a significant part of the everyday human experience."

To read the full article, click [here](#).