

Austin Bar Honors Jeff Civins with Mentoring Award

By Jeff Civins, Mary Simmons Mendoza | November 12, 2018

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The Austin Bar Association has selected Haynes Boone Senior Counsel [Jeff Civins](#) as the recipient of the 2019 Larry F. York Mentoring Award.

The award honors an Austin-area lawyer or judge who has practiced at least 10 years and “has demonstrated exceptional skill and generosity in mentoring young members of the bar . . . distinguishing themselves as leaders of their profession, while fully embracing life’s experiences.”

It’s an apt description of Civins who has advised hundreds of high school, college and law students over the course of his 40-plus year legal career. In nominating Civins for the award, Haynes and Partner [Mary Mendoza](#) had this to say: “Jeff has been my mentor for 26 years . . . [He] has guided my career, provided opportunities to take a leadership role on important cases, and created a workplace that allowed for the elusive work-life balance. He was a champion for me when I was considered for partnership and has continued to mentor and provide advice to me when I was the managing partner for our office and in my current role as the head of our firm’s Environmental Practice Group.”

Civins began his professional life in New York City where he taught science for three years to junior high and high school students. After graduating from law school and forging a practice in environmental law, he resumed his teaching career at UT Law School, where he has taught a seminar on environmental litigation for more than 25 years. He encourages his students to reach out to him for advice on how to pursue a successful career in law, and many of his former students have accepted the invitation. In addition to mentoring his former students, Civins has introduced countless young professionals to lawyers in the environmental law field and given them recommendations for prospective jobs.

“As a teacher and beneficiary of excellent mentors – as well as the father of two accomplished lawyers who themselves benefited from excellent mentors – I know what a difference it makes to pay it forward,” Civins said. “For that reason, I am especially honored to receive an award for mentoring and, in particular, one named in memory of Larry York, who epitomized the concept of paying it forward.”

Civins will receive the award at the annual Austin Bar Foundation Gala on Jan. 26, 2019, held at the Fairmont Hotel in Austin.

A regent of the American College of Environmental Lawyers, Civins helps clients find pragmatic solutions to tough problems involving all aspects of environmental law, including counseling them on regulatory issues, helping them manage environmental risks in business transactions, and advocating for them before agencies and courts. He makes it a point to learn about technical topics — from groundwater hydrology to air dispersion modeling to toxicology — and about clients’ businesses, including oil and gas exploration and development, power plants, refineries, chemical plants and other manufacturing facilities, and real estate sales, leasing, development and financing.

He is the standing chair and organizer of the Texas Environmental Superconference, one of the most popular environmental law programs in the nation, and is organizer and co-editor of the Thomson Reuters Texas Practice two-volume treatise on Texas Environmental Law. He also is a former chair of the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Section of the State Bar of Texas and an advisory board member of UT's Kay Bailey Hutchison Center for Energy, Law, and Business.

The Austin Bar Association's publication *The Austin Lawyer* included news of the honor in its [Dec. 2018/Jan. 2019 issue](#).