

Nina Cortell Celebrated at 28th Annual Dallas Bar Foundation Fellows Luncheon

April 4, 2019 Nina Cortell

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On April 3, at the Belo Mansion in Dallas, Haynes Boone Partner [Nina Cortell](#) was honored with the Dallas Bar Foundation's Fellows Justinian Award, which recognizes lawyers who excel in the practice of law and have shown a demonstrated commitment to volunteer and professional service.

Cortell is the fourth Haynes Boone partner to receive the prestigious award, following in the footsteps of George W. Bramblett Jr. in 2008 and Founding Partners [Mike Boone](#) (2004) and Richard Haynes (1989). Haynes Boone was honored to host Norine Haynes and Pedie Bramblett at the Fellows Luncheon, along with many current and former firm lawyers.

Haynes Boone Partner Anne Johnson introduced Cortell at the event, tracing the arc of her pioneering career, including some of her high-profile litigation victories and her many contributions to Haynes Boone and the greater legal community.

Cortell's clients are among her most "adoring fans," Johnson said, noting that Cortell even has an oil well named after her in Southeastern New Mexico, courtesy of Matador Resources. "Not surprisingly, it's doing very well."

Johnson also offered impressions of working closely with Cortell for more than 20 years. "Ask any of our 16-member appellate group, and we will all say the same thing – Nina makes us better lawyers every day and she is the gold standard that we aspire to," she said. "We do have a little support group that we call the 'I thought I wrote something pretty good and then Nina read it' Society. It's a secret society, although it is the majority of our law firm."

Cortell expressed gratitude for the award, for Haynes Boone, and for her mentors and role models at the firm and in the Dallas legal community.

She also discussed how the Dallas legal industry has evolved over the course of her career. When she interviewed for Dallas law jobs in 1974, the industry was almost entirely male and white; women were not allowed to be members or even dine as guests in downtown business clubs' main dining rooms. She then noted the profession's enormous strides in diversifying its ranks, as illustrated by the Dallas Women Lawyer's Association recent 50th Anniversary celebration. That event was "a visual reminder of the enormous strides made by both women in the legal profession and by the profession itself," she said, adding that excitement at the event "was palpable."

Cortell closed with an apt quote from a Jewish text. "It is not our responsibility to complete the task of perfecting the world, but neither are we free to refrain from trying."