

Haynes Boone Secures Pro Bono Victory in Fraud Case Involving Misappropriated Business Investment

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PRACTICES Trials, Litigation

Haynes Boone Litigation Associates [Sean Lewis](#) and Ashley Koos secured a unanimous jury verdict in favor of their pro bono client in a case that stemmed from a fraudulent business scheme. The case was tried in Harris County's 55th Judicial District Court.

Pro Bono Legal Case

The client, Wintley Phipps, brought claims against a Texas businessman who had induced him into investing a substantial sum on false representations. The defendant promised the investment would fund a legitimate medical testing venture focused on opioid screening and that the funds would be used strictly for business purposes. Instead, the defendant misappropriated the money—including paying himself an unauthorized, six-figure commission and making unsubstantiated payments to alleged consultants and employees.

Despite repeated requests, the defendant failed to provide complete financial records or

transparency about how the funds were used. Evidence introduced at trial demonstrated the plaintiff's capital had been misrepresented in the company's books and was diverted for the defendant's personal benefit. Lewis and Koos, representing the client without charge, methodically presented the facts to the jury, who unanimously found in favor of the plaintiff and awarded compensatory and punitive damages.

"We sought justice for an incredibly deserving client who was defrauded into investing his life savings in a sham business," Koos said. "It was easily the most rewarding moment of my career when the jury unanimously voted to hold the defendant accountable."

Both associates are recent participants in the [Haynes Boone Trial Academy](#), a rigorous three-day, in-house trial training program led by Global Trials Chair [Victor Vital](#). Developed in collaboration with renowned trial consultant Shane Read, the program simulates high-stakes courtroom scenarios and equips associates with hands-on trial experience under real-world conditions.

"This case illustrates the extraordinary value of the HB Trial Academy in preparing lawyers not just to litigate, but to lead in the courtroom," Vital said. "Sean and Ashley translated their training into a compelling and successful courtroom performance, all while serving the public interest. Furthermore, this case shows how Haynes Boone's trial lawyers are on the leading edge of trial advocacy, in that Sean and Ashley worked with jury consultant Rick Goldberg, integrating AI-

based analytics into their trial preparation and voir dire strategy. We are grateful to Rick for providing invaluable guidance to our trial team.”

Haynes Boone embraces pro bono service as a cornerstone of professional responsibility and a key component of the firm’s culture and mission. To help contribute to stronger, more self-reliant communities and to bridge the justice gap across a range of issues, Haynes Boone attorneys are committed to providing high-quality legal services to vulnerable individuals and organizations who lack access and financial resources.