

## Laura Prather Receives Prestigious Fulbright Scholarship

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**PRACTICES** Media Entertainment and Sports, Government Relations, Litigation, Social Media, Public Law, Anti-SLAPP and First Amendment Rights, Intellectual Property Litigation, Media and Entertainment Litigation, Sports Law, Streaming Media

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Haynes Boone Partner [Laura Prather](#) has been selected to be a Fulbright Scholar. She will spend the fall of 2022 in Paris working with Reporters Without Borders to research how Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) have impacted core human rights in the European Union — and to help advocate for solutions to the problem.

Laura will evaluate the trends, cultural influences and legal systems that contribute to the rise of SLAPPs. She will further compare proposed EU solutions to those in the U.S., all the while considering methods to increase cross-border collaboration against SLAPPs.

In a letter congratulating Laura for winning the award, Paul Winfree, chair of the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, said: “Your grant is a reflection of your leadership and contributions to society.”

Antoine Bernard, Director of Advocacy and Strategic Litigation for Reporters Without Borders, called Laura’s research on SLAPPs “extraordinarily timely.” In a letter inviting her to work with his organization, he said: “The incidence of judicial harassment through lawsuits targeting public interest journalism and citizen watchdogs is on the rise in Europe (and throughout the world) and impedes the ability of the general public to obtain necessary and accurate information.” He added that Laura will be a valuable contributor to the 70 organizations that have formed the Coalition Against SLAPPs in Europe (CASE), which are in the process of working toward the implementation of an EU-wide Anti-SLAPP Directive formally proposed by the EU Commission just last month.

The head of Haynes Boone’s Media Law Practice Group, Laura has worked for decades to advance and protect freedom of expression. Nationally recognized by Chambers USA for First Amendment Litigation, 2017-2022 (Chambers and Partners), Prather has defended the freedom of expression rights for a broad array of clients at the trial and appellate level. Beyond her 30 years of practice as a media and entertainment litigator she was instrumental in the passage of Texas’s Anti-SLAPP law, the Texas Citizens Participation Act, which has served as a template for other states. She also served as an Advisor to the Uniform Law Commission in its drafting of a Model Anti-SLAPP Law, the Uniform Public Expression Protection Act. Anti-SLAPP laws have now been passed in 33 U.S. states.

In recognition of her free-speech advocacy, *The National Law Journal* in 2020 included Laura in its inaugural list of First Amendment Rights Trailblazers. In 2019, she received *The American Lawyer’s* Tony Mauro Media Lawyer Award for her successful efforts to strengthen First Amendment rights in Texas.

“I have spent much of my career trying to remedy a grave problem: the use of the judicial system to harass, punish and silence those who speak truth power,” Laura said. “I am deeply honored to receive the Fulbright award, which will enable me to study how the EU is addressing this problem,

use that knowledge to re-ignite efforts at federal protection in the U.S., and ultimately facilitate a global discussion about universal standards for protection of these important human rights.”

The Fulbright Program is the U.S. government’s flagship international educational exchange program. Since 1946, the Fulbright Program has provided more than 400,000 participants from over 160 countries the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas, and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns. Fulbrighters engage in cutting-edge research and expand their professional networks, often continuing research collaborations started abroad and laying the groundwork for forging future partnerships between institutions. Fulbright alumni include 60 Nobel Prize laureates, 88 Pulitzer Prize recipients, and 39 who have served as a head of state or government.

Haynes Boone is an international corporate law firm with offices in Texas, New York, California, Charlotte, Chicago, Denver, Washington, D.C., London, Mexico City and Shanghai, providing a full spectrum of legal services in energy, technology, financial services and private equity. With 600 lawyers, Haynes Boone is ranked among the largest U.S.-based firms by *The National Law Journal*, *The American Lawyer* and *The Lawyer*. It was recognized in the BTI Consulting Group’s 2022 “A-Team” report, which identifies the law firms that in-house counsel commend for providing superior client service.

The following news sources reported on Laura's Fulbright scholarship:

*Bloomberg Law* - "[Texas Free Speech Lawyer Takes Lessons From Depp Case to Europe](#)"

*Texas Lawyer* - "[Austin First Amendment Lawyer Tapped to Study How SLAPP Suits Affect Human Rights in EU](#)"

*Law360* - "[With Fulbright, BigLaw Atty Aims To Boost Free Speech In EU](#)"