

Dallas Bar Foundation Selects Nina Cortell for Prestigious Fellows Justinian Award

By Nina Cortell | February 25, 2019

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Haynes Boone Partner [Nina Cortell](#) is the winner of the 2019 Fellows Justinian Award, the Dallas Bar Foundation's most prestigious honor, which recognizes lawyers who excel in the practice of law and have shown a demonstrated commitment to volunteering and professional service.

The award is named after the sixth century Roman Ruler Justinian, whose works known as Corpus Juris Civilis, formed the basis for law codes in many countries.

Cortell is the fourth Haynes Boone partner to receive the Justinian Award, following in the footsteps of George W. Bramblett Jr. in 2008 and Founding Partners [Mike Boone](#) (2004) and Richard Haynes (1989).

In an article posted on the Dallas Bar Association's website, Haynes Boone Partner Anne Johnson profiles Cortell's remarkable career, which includes serving as a leader at Haynes Boone and in the Texas appellate bar, while also devoting countless hours to mentoring young lawyers and promoting diversity in the bar.

Here is an excerpt of the article:

Nina credits Haynes Boone, where she has worked her entire career, for mentoring her and giving her the platform to accomplish so much. When she graduated from the University of Texas Law School in 1976, it was very difficult for women to land jobs at corporate law firms in the state—regardless of the candidates' credentials. She often recounts her great luck in meeting Dick Haynes at a 1974 recruitment interview, which led to a summer clerkship, a permanent offer, and the opportunity to work with such great lawyers as Dick, Mike Boone, and George Bramblett.

Nina was the first female lawyer at Haynes Boone. She became a formidable litigator, trying many lawsuits with Mr. Bramblett and growing Haynes Boone's litigation department in size and reputation. In 1989, she joined the firm's fledgling appellate practice and quickly distinguished herself thanks to her impressive skills as a writer, oral advocate, and strategist. . . .

It is little surprise that the appellate group that Nina helped start 30 years ago now boasts nine *Chambers*-recognized appellate partners—more than any other previously recognized Texas law firm.

Beyond mentoring generations of lawyers at Haynes Boone, Nina has worked diligently throughout her career to make the legal profession more open and hospitable to women and minorities.

To cite one example of her many efforts to promote diversity, she is a founder and the former president of the University of Texas Law School's Center for Women in Law (CWIL), which was launched in 2009 and is the premier legal educational institution dedicated to the success of the entire spectrum of women in law—from first-year law students to the most experienced attorneys. . . .

Nina always is quick to point out that the bedrock of her success, personally and professionally, is her marriage of 43 years to Dr. Robert L. Fine, a renowned expert in medical ethics and palliative care, and the unsurpassed joy she has derived from raising three wonderful daughters and doting on her four grandchildren.

Few of us achieve lasting professional distinction, let alone find the time to also serve as a role model, mentor, inspiration, philanthropist, and devoted wife, mother, and grandmother. Nina is the kind of person, not just the kind of lawyer, who we all aspire to be. I can think of no worthier standard bearer of the prestigious Fellows Justinian Award.

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