

AWA FOUNDATION
2025 “PREMIER WOMEN IN THE LAW” AWARD

The AWA Foundation is seeking nominations for its “Premier Women in the Law” award, focusing on exceptional women attorneys in Houston. These awards will be presented at its annual luncheon at The Hilton Americas on April 3, 2025.

Award Definition and Criteria: In support of the mission of the Houston Association of Women Attorneys and the AWA Foundation, the Premier Women in the Law award is presented to women attorneys who have contributed to Houston’s legal community through their professional achievement and community involvement and by actively seeking to advance other women in the law.

- Nominees must practice in Houston or have strong professional links to Houston’s legal community.
- Nominees should demonstrate outstanding professional achievement and success in their practice area—be it government service, private practice, nonprofit, academics or business—through a record of ethical advocacy on behalf of their clients, causes or organizations.
- Nominees should demonstrate a commitment to promoting women in the legal profession, examples of which include creating opportunities to advance women lawyers; actively hiring, seeking to retain and promote and mentoring women attorneys; and/or involvement in professional or community activities designed to promote women within the legal profession.

The Rising Star Award is awarded to a woman who meets the above criteria and is within her first ten years of practice.

Note: Current AWA board members and AWA Foundation trustees and volunteers are not eligible for these awards. The AWA Foundation respectfully requests that nominees not be notified of their nomination. Once selected, honorees must commit to attend the AWA Premier Women in the Law cocktail reception in the spring of 2025 and the AWA Foundation Premier Women in the Law luncheon on April 3, 2025. Honorees will have an opportunity to briefly address the audience at the luncheon with the goal of inspiring others through their achievement.

Nomination Instructions: To nominate a deserving woman attorney, please provide a nomination letter that addresses the following:

1. Please specify the nominee’s name, title, organization and contact information.
2. Please provide the basis for the nomination, which may include specific actions taken by the nominee that you believe merits her recognition, such as achievement, persistence, resilience, creativity, entrepreneurialism and/or overcoming obstacles in the legal profession.
3. Please provide a personal anecdote that illustrates how the nominee has demonstrated outstanding professional achievement and success in their practice area, and/or demonstrated a commitment to promoting women in the legal profession.
4. What do you most admire about the nominee and why?
5. What one word best describes the nominee and why?
6. Please provide any additional information you believe would assist the Nominations Committee in reaching its decision.

Nominations will be accepted through 5:00 p.m. CT on December 6, 2024. Please e-mail your nomination letters to AWA Foundation Nominations Committee Chair Emily Harbison at eharbison@reedsmith.com.

PAST AWA FOUNDATION PREMIER WOMEN IN THE LAW AWARD HONOREES*

2024

Tara Grigg Green, Co-Founder & Executive Director, Texas Foster Care Advocacy Center
Sarah Morton, Partner, FordHarrison LLP
Cassandra Mott, Partner, Blank Rome LLP
Kindel Nuno, EVP & General Counsel, Mattress Firm, Inc.
Kathryn Roark, VP Diversity & ESG, Patterson UTI
Rising Star – Amy Farish, Partner, Yetter Coleman LLP

2023

Brandy Copley, Deputy Regional General Counsel, JERA Americas Inc.
Courtney Ervin, Partner, Hicks Thomas LLP
April Greenhouse, Deputy General Counsel for the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas
(METRO)
Nicole DeBorde Hochglaube, Partner, Hochglaube & DeBorde P.C.
Rising Star - Mia Lorick, Locke Lord LLP

2020

Demetra Liggins, Partner, McGuireWoods
Kimberly Phillips, General Counsel, Litigation, Shell Oil Company
Ann Ryan Robertson, Partner, Locke Lord LLP
Kelly Sandill, Partner, Hunton Andrews & Kurth LLP

2019

Burke Butler, Special Counsel, Phillips Black, Inc.
Betsy Kamin, Member, Clark Hill Strasburger
Amanda McMillian, Executive Vice President and General Counsel, Anadarko Petroleum Company
Phyllis Young, Partner, Akin Gump Hauer & Feld LLP

2018

Debra Tsuchiyama Baker, Managing Partner, Baker • Wotring LLP
Linda Broocks, Partner, Kean Miller LLP
Phyllis Randolph Frye, Partner, Frye Benavidez and O'Neil PLLC
Cristina E. Rodriguez, Partner, Hogan Lovells US LLP

2017

The Honorable Keith P. Ellison, United States District Court, Southern District of Texas
Veronica Foley, Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary, Precision Drilling
Alissa Rubin Gomez, Executive Director, Houston Volunteer Lawyers
Hillary Holmes, Partner, Baker Botts L.L.P.
Kathryn M. Kase, Senior Counsel and Director of the Capital Trial Project, Texas Defender Service

2016

Belinda Hill, First Assistant District Attorney, Harris County
Allyson N. Ho, Partner, Morgan Lewis
Diane E. Marshall, Principal, Marshall & Lewis L.L.P.
Beryle McHenry, Legal Director, Sun Coast Resources, Inc.
Marjorie A. Meyers, Federal Public Defender, Southern District of Texas
Aida Josephine Nelson, in memoriam

2015

Laura E. Arnold, Co-Chair, Laura and John Arnold Foundation
Claudia Wilson Frost, Co-Chair, Patent Litigation Practice, DLA Piper LLP (USA)
Holland N. O'Neil, Chair of the Board of Directors, Gardere Wynne Swell LLP
Kathy D. Patrick, Partner, Gibbs & Bruns
The Honorable Lee H. Rosenthal, United States District Court, Southern District of Texas

2014

Devon Anderson, Harris County District Attorney
Chief Justice Kem Frost, 14th Court of Appeals
Justice Eva Guzman, The Supreme Court of Texas
Susan Barrington Sanchez, ExxonMobil Corporation
Lauren Waddell, The Waddell Law Firm, P.C.
Ruthie White, Jackson Lewis PC

2013

Wendy Daboval, General Counsel, Chevron North America E&P
Clare Doyle, Deputy General Counsel, Reliant Energy
Kimberly Frye, General Counsel, Key Energy Services
Charlotte Rasche, General Counsel, Prosperity Bank
Charlene Ripley, General Counsel, Linn Energy, LLC

2012

Lisa Pennington, Managing Partner, Baker Hostetler
Maria Boyce, Partner-in-Charge, Baker Botts
Christine B. LaFollette, Partner-in-Charge, Akin Gump
Katherine (Kit) E. Flanagan, Office Managing Shareholder, Littler Mendelson
Ileana Blanco, Managing Partner, DLA Piper
Shauna Johnson Clark, Partner-in-Charge, Fulbright & Jaworski
Nancy MacKimm, Partner-in-Charge, Jones Day
Mary-Olga Lovett, Managing Shareholder, Greenberg Traurig
Rachel Giesber Clingman, Partner-in-Charge, Sutherland Asbill & Brennan
Lisa Meyerhoff, Managing Partner, Baker & McKenzie
Marie R. Yeates, Managing Partner, Vinson & Elkins
Teresa S. Valderrama, Resident Manager, Jackson Lewis

*Listed position at the time of the award