

# SETH HOPKINS

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## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Key member of the Senior Leadership Team in the nation's third largest county attorney's office. Supervised approximately 30 attorneys and staff, handled special projects, and litigated 60 high-profile appeals in six years, including 23 in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, 13 in the Texas Supreme Court, and three in the Court of Criminal Appeals. Prior to serving Harris County, represented private clients in complex commercial, employment, contract, intellectual property, environmental, wrongful death, and civil rights cases. Represented the longest-serving exonerated Texas inmate and prevailed in the largest single-client Title II Americans with Disabilities Act case in history.

## LEGAL EXPERIENCE

### **HARRIS COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, Houston, Texas**

#### ***Special Assistant County Attorney***

***February 2022 - Present***

Appellate litigator in high-profile, complex cases for the nation's third largest county. Supervise office training and technology for more than 250 attorneys and paralegals during the selection and anticipated transition to a new case and document management system. Serve on numerous County committees, including the Joint Technology Committee. Developed a \$5.95 million program for multiple County departments to reduce nonappearance rates in criminal cases under a landmark bail bond consent decree in *ODonnell v. Harris County*, No. 4:16-cv-1414, in the Southern District of Texas.

#### ***Managing Counsel of Defensive Litigation & Real Estate***

***January 2021 - February 2022***

Supervised two division directors over approximately 30 attorneys and staff responsible for defending all litigation and property condemnation for Harris County. Rebuilt one division after it lost nearly half its staff during a pandemic by promptly hiring competent attorneys, implementing efficient policies, providing detailed performance reviews, and improving morale and quality of client representation. Supervised attorneys during jury trials, appeals, hearings, and mediation, and developed settlement procedures, litigation templates, training, and a Microsoft Teams-based library and case-monitoring application.

#### ***Assistant County Attorney, Litigation Practice Group***

***January 2017 - December 2020***

Served as lead counsel in appellate, civil rights, employment, and tort litigation for the nation's third largest sheriff's office, district attorney, medical examiner, district and county clerks, budget management office, public health department, flood control district, and juvenile justice center, as well as the county judge and district judges, commissioners, and elected officials. Maintained a heavy docket, which included:

- **Election strike team & litigation.** Successfully defended the county clerk and voter registrar before the Texas appellate courts and Supreme Court in numerous challenges to the 2020 elections.
- **COVID-19 litigation.** Successfully defended emergency COVID-19 stay-home and face covering

orders affecting 4.8 million residents. Litigation included four emergency preliminary injunction hearings, three emergency petitions for writ of mandamus to the Texas Supreme Court, and one brief to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Also developed the County's Public Health quarantine forms.

- ***Shestawy v. Conservative Club of Houston***, No. 4:16-cv-733, Southern District of Texas, Doc. 363. Awarded sanctions on behalf of Harris County at a reasonable billing rate of \$500 per hour.
- ***Green v. Harris County***, No. 4:16-CV-893, Southern District of Texas, Doc. 330 (6/26/19). Secured summary judgment in a lengthy, complex, and highly technical federal civil rights case where a jail detainee died from a rare and virulent form of meningitis caused by *Streptococcus sanguinis* bacteria.
- ***Grant v. Harris County***, 794 Fed.Appx. 352 (5th Cir. 2019). Successfully defended Harris County in the trial and appellate courts in a complex employment case involving a juvenile supervision officer.
- ***Harris County vs. Annab***, 547 S.W.3d 609 (Tex. 2018). Successfully argued significant sovereign immunity case on behalf of Harris County to the Texas Supreme Court, resulting in unanimous reversal of the appellate court. The Texas Solicitor General joined in oral argument as an *amicus curiae*.

**RALEY & BOWICK, L.L.P.**, Houston, Texas

***Commercial Litigation Associate***

***June 2013 - August 2016***

Litigated on behalf of a boutique firm that recovered \$200 million for its clients in four years.

- **Commercial litigation & insurance.** Represented clients in multi-million-dollar disputes regarding offshore oil platform assets, employment and shareholder litigation, legal malpractice, and a Louisiana legacy oilfield contamination case. Initiated arbitration on behalf of National Oilwell Varco (NOV) to recover \$19 million owed by a Kazakhstani company for offshore oilfield equipment.
- **Intellectual property.** Assisted in defense and prosecution of oilfield patent litigation for NOV and Peak Completion Technologies and patent prosecution of Kaneka Corporation's proprietary microbe and fermentation process for making Co-Q<sub>10</sub>, a pharmaceutical enzyme.
- **Civil rights.** Represented the longest-serving exonerated Texas inmate following his release after 31 years in prison. The case resulted in approximately \$5 million in compensation and benefits.
- **Government.** Represented former Houston mayor Roy Hofheinz's family after the University of Houston sought to unilaterally rename the Hofheinz Pavilion in violation of a donor agreement.

**THE HOPKINS LAW FIRM**, Houston, Texas

***Litigation & Transaction Attorney***

***2000 - 2003 & October 2009 - June 2013***

Advised and litigated in corporate, wrongful death, civil rights, and contract disputes. Notable clients include regional entertainers, corporate and non-profit organizations, and Major League Baseball players Prince Fielder, Joseph Crede, and Bruce Chen.

- ***Covington v. McNeese***. Served as lead counsel in a 12-year landmark case argued three times to the Louisiana Supreme Court, resulting in the largest single-client Title II Americans with Disabilities Act recovery in history. The case prompted a U.S. DOJ civil rights investigation, a \$13.8 million injunction to correct 15,000 violations on a 1.3 million square foot campus, systemic changes at eight public universities, and national media coverage. *See, e.g.*, "Texas lawyer wins hard-fought fees in bitter disability case", *The National Law Journal* (9/6/2012). In awarding \$1.5 million in fees, the appellate court referred to "young Hopkins" as "eloquent," "truly devoted," "gallant," and presenting "a well-orchestrated case worthy of emulation by the most seasoned attorneys" for his "superior performance" in a "rare and exceptional" case. 98 So.3d 414 (La.App. 3 Cir. 9/5/12).

**KASOWITZ, BENSON, TORRES & FRIEDMAN**, Houston, Texas

***Litigation Attorney***

***February 2005 - October 2009***

Assisted in the defense and prosecution of complex litigation for this Am Law 250 Fast Rise to the Top national firm. Conducted all facets of trial preparation, including extensive deposition coverage (more than 100 depositions), document review and production, and substantial research, motion filings and argument. Work included assisting with the defense of a significant premises liability docket in Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Massachusetts, and Louisiana. Also assisted with a major New England soil contamination case, a significant international shipping antitrust case, a polyester staples antitrust case, a pipeline construction defect dispute, and a \$65 billion chemical company merger.

**THE HONORABLE PATRICIA MINALDI**, Federal District Judge, Western District of Louisiana

***Federal Judicial Law Clerk***

***June 2003 - November 2004***

Served as an elbow law clerk for the only active Article III judge in a six-parish area with a major federal prison and immigration detention center. Employment began on this newly appointed judge's first day of work. Duties included helping to set up new federal office, writing and editing opinions, judgments, and jury charges, scheduling dockets, research, assisting with trials, and communicating with attorneys and other federal offices on behalf of the Court. Handled docket of 450 civil suits, including a \$1 billion telecommunications RICO suit and a complex international dispute involving the Republic of Venezuela's ownership claims to an offshore research module to be placed along its disputed border with Columbia.

**14th JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF LOUISIANA**, Lake Charles, Louisiana

***Judicial Law Clerk***

***August 1999 - August 2000***

Served as a law clerk for nine judges in civil, criminal, and family matters. Prepared jury charges, orders, and opinions, and responded to post-conviction relief applications. Drafted several landmark opinions relating to the Louisiana tobacco litigation and Louisiana's legalized gaming industry.

**U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**, Middle District of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

***Federal Law Clerk***

***May 1998 - June 1999***

Assisted Criminal and Civil Division Assistant U.S. Attorneys in prosecuting defendants and representing the United States. Duties included research, drafting pleadings, and participating with prosecutors and FBI agents in grand jury target and defendant interviews. Areas of law included white collar and drug crimes, bank robbery, forfeiture, tort defense, civil rights, and environmental.

### **PROFESSORSHIPS, AWARDS, PUBLICATIONS, AND PUBLIC SPEAKING**

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LAW CENTER**, Houston, Texas

***Professor of Appellate Advocacy & Moot Court Coach***

***2020 - Present***

Adjunct Professor of Appellate Advocacy, 2021. Coached national San Diego Criminal Procedure Moot Court Competition teams in 2022 and 2020 (semi-finalists); Judged quarter-finals national championship round and brief grader at Hunton Andrews Kurth competition in 2022 and 2020.

**PURDUE UNIVERSITY GLOBAL**, West Lafayette, Indiana

***Professor and Course Developer***

***2008 - 2019***

Taught and developed law courses for undergraduate students. Courses include Constitutional Law, Intellectual Property, Torts, Contracts, Legal Ethics, Trial & Courtroom Presentation.

**LOUISIANA STATE BAR JOURNAL**, New Orleans, Louisiana

**Editorial Board**

**2003 - 2005**

Wrote and edited articles for the award-winning Louisiana Bar Association journal, distributed to nearly 20,000 attorneys six times per year. (“Local Justice: What every lawyer should know about Louisiana’s justices of the peace” Parts 1 and 2, Seth B. Hopkins, 52 La. B.J. 16 (2004); “Lee Hargrave’s LSU Law: The Louisiana State University Law School from 1906 to 1977”, Seth B. Hopkins, 52 La. B.J. 198 (2004)).

**SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA BAR ASSOCIATION**, Lake Charles, Louisiana

Edited *The Sidebar*, the Association’s official journal, from 2002 until 2005. Won the President’s Award in 2002 and 2003, and served on the Executive Committee from 2003 until 2005.

**KPLC-TV**, Lake Charles, Louisiana

**2001 - 2005**

Rotating attorney for NBC affiliate’s Sunrise Show’s “Ask the Expert” live call-in show for legal advice.

**OPENINGSTATEMENT.COM & WRITEMYSPEECH.COM**

Developed the first online speech writing service and trial communication consulting service and operated it between 1999 and 2005.

## PROFESSIONAL LICENSES AND TRAINING

### **ADMISSIONS**

Admitted in Texas and Louisiana, the United States Supreme Court, Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, Texas Northern, Southern, and Western Districts, Louisiana Eastern, Middle, and Western Districts, Court of Federal Claims, Tax Court, Court of International Trade, and Federal Circuit Court of Appeals.

### **ADDITIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS**

Member of the Texas Bar College and Texas Bar Foundation, Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Bar Association, Houston Bar Association, Texas District and County Attorneys’ Association, and Southwest Louisiana Bar Association.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR TRIAL ADVOCACY**, Boulder, Colorado

Attended NITA National Session and received highest mock trial jury verdict in 2017.

**MEDIATOR**, Dallas, Texas

Received 40-hour basic mediation training.

**LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY LAW CENTER.**

Juris Doctor and B.A. in English. Also attended McNeese State University and Harvard University.

## NON-PROFIT SERVICE

**HOUSTON HOSPICE**, Houston, Texas

**Board of Directors & Governance Committee Chair**

**2021 - present**

Serve on a working board of directors for the only non-profit hospice in the greater Houston area.

**EAST DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY & TIRZ 15, Houston, Texas**  
***Board of Directors & Communications Committee*** ***2020 - present***

Serve on the East Downtown Redevelopment Authority and Tax Increment Reinvestment District 15, a quasi-governmental board with a \$15 million budget responsible for capital improvement and development in East Downtown Houston.

**GOVERNOR'S PROGRAM FOR GIFTED CHILDREN, Lake Charles, Louisiana**  
***Board of Directors & Governance Committee*** ***2000 - present***

Board member to Friends of the Governor's Program, which advises a quasi-public entity that operates the nation's second oldest residential summer institute for gifted children. The Board makes legal, legislative, curriculum, and logistical recommendations and organizes major multi-generational reunions for alumni graduating over a 60-year period. Developed a social media presence that connects more than 400 alumni.

**ARTISTS' CIVIC THEATRE & STUDIO, Lake Charles, Louisiana**  
***Board of Directors*** ***2000 - 2005***

Assisted with acting, production, stage management, press relations, grant writing, casting, set production, light design and execution, and web site and e-commerce development for one of Louisiana's oldest community theatres, which operates in a 300-seat building constructed in 1903.

**SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA VOLUNTEER CENTER, Lake Charles, Louisiana**  
***Board of Directors*** ***2003 - 2005***

Served on board of community volunteer center that assisted in matching grants and other funding to local non-profit groups. Assisted in the early phases of developing the community's 211 network.

**BRIMSTONE MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Sulphur, Louisiana**  
***Board of Directors*** ***2002 - 2005***

Served on the board of a local museum dedicated to preserving the history of Southwest Louisiana and explaining the Frasch sulfur mining process.

**PRE-LAW EXPERIENCE**

**THE WHITE HOUSE, Washington, D.C.**  
***Intern***

***Summer 1995***

Worked in the Presidential Personnel Office and helped maintain the Clinton administration's resume database, worked on special projects, and drafted letters on behalf of Bob Nash and President Clinton. Also worked in the News Analysis Office, evaluated news and opinion stories from national media, and prepared and delivered daily media summaries to the Vice-President, Chief of Staff, and West Wing advisors. Edited *The Internet*, the White House intern newsletter.

**SENATOR J. BENNETT JOHNSTON & CONGRESSMAN JIMMY HAYES, Washington, D.C.**  
***Intern***

***Summer 1993***

Assisted with press and constituent services. Drafted press releases, prepared position papers on legislative issues and White House nominees, such as Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, provided Capitol tours, and handled visitors and callers such as Ross Perot and President Clinton.