

## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF DEBORAH HANKINSON

Deborah graduated at the top of her class at Southern Methodist University's Dedman School of Law. In 1995, she was appointed, and later elected, to serve as a Justice on the Fifth District Court of Appeals in Dallas. From 1997 to 2002, Deborah served as a Justice on the Supreme Court of Texas before returning to private practice as an appellate lawyer. While on the judiciary and as an attorney, Deborah gained extensive substantive experience with a myriad of legal issues in numerous types of lawsuits involving different industries and settings. Her breadth of experience gives her exceptional facility when dealing with the intricacies of effective conflict resolution, whether in the role of mediator, arbitrator, or consulting attorney.

An important feature of Deborah's practice involves litigation avoidance, which includes providing early neutral evaluations when hired by both parties to analyze the merits of their dispute as a predicate to potential settlement, conducting presuit mediations, and helping clients to actively develop early settlement strategies. Deborah also consults on settlement issues at later stages of litigation, including post-trial, and she can be retained as special settlement counsel as well. Deborah is proficient at facilitating both business and legal objectives in settlement situations.

Deborah sits on the Board of the American Arbitration Association (AAA), has trained arbitrators, and speaks on key arbitration-related topics. She leverages this experience to advise clients on how to optimize operative arbitration provisions, take advantage of the arbitration process, and choose arbitrators. She also provides guidance on drafting and revising arbitration clauses.

As a mediator, Deborah is particularly renowned for unraveling complex legal matters involving multiple issues and parties, often in a series of thoughtfully sequenced sessions with focused follow-up. Her mediation work has included business relationship and partnership disputes, catastrophic injuries and mass torts, complex commercial transactions of all types, construction cases, confidential employment matters (including class actions, statutory claims, executive contracts and trade secrets), government contracts and public interest issues, healthcare, insurance contract and coverage disputes, and oil and gas controversies. As an arbitrator, Deborah has served as the sole arbitrator and chaired panels involving an array of disputes that fall broadly within the categories of appellate, commercial, employment, energy, healthcare, and large, complex cases.

The 2019 edition of The Best Lawyers in America named Deborah as Dallas Arbitration Lawyer of the Year. In 2016, Deborah was selected to the *National Law Journal's* inaugural ADR Champions list. She is a Fellow of the College of Commercial Arbitrators and a member of the American Law Institute. The Texas Chapter of the American Board

of Trial Advocates honored Deborah as the Texas Judge of the Year in 1999. She has been a member of the Executive Board at SMU's Dedman School of Law since 1998 and received the Distinguished Alumni Award for Judicial Service from Southern Methodist University in 2002. In 2017, she received the Distinguished Alumni award from the University of Texas at Dallas.

While on the bench, Deborah was a driving force behind the creation of the Texas Access to Justice Commission, which works to ensure that low-income Texans have access to justice in civil legal matters. In recognition of her efforts, Deborah is the recipient of the Harold F. Kleinman Award from the Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation and the Merrill L. Hartman Award from Legal Aid of Northwest Texas.

## AFFILIATIONS

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### ADR

- Fellow, College of Commercial Arbitrators (2016-present)
- Member, American Arbitration Association's National Roster of Neutrals (2006-present)
- Member, American Arbitration Association Board of Directors (2009-present)
- Member, American Arbitration Association Foundation Board of Directors (2019)
- Member, International Centre for Dispute Resolution Roster of Neutrals (2016-present)

### TRIAL + JUDICIAL

- Fellow, American Academy of Appellate Lawyers (2011-present)
- Advisory Board Member, Institute for Energy Law, a division of The Center for American and International Law (2018-present)
- Member, American Law Institute (1999-present)
- Member, National Association of Women Judges (1998-present)
- Board Certified, Civil Appellate Law, Texas Board of Legal Specialization (1992-present)

### ACCESS TO JUSTICE

- Leader, Texas Supreme Court's establishment of Texas Access to Justice Commission (1999-2000)
- Vice-Chair (2007-present), Board (2003-present), Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation
- Committee Member (2003-2006) and Former Chair (2006-2009), American Bar Association Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants

- Former Member, Texas Access to Justice Commission (2001-2002)

## BAR

- Fellow, American Bar Foundation (1998-present)
- Member, American Bar Association (1983-present) and current member of Dispute Resolution Section
- Member, Fifth Circuit Bar Association (2003-present)
- Fellow, Texas Bar Foundation (1992-present)
- Former Chair (2005) and Life Benefactor Fellow, Dallas Bar Foundation
- Member, State Bar of Texas
- Member, Dallas Bar Association

## RECENT SPEAKING

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### ADR

- Speaker, *Arbitration and Mediation*, Oil and Gas Disputes Course, State Bar of Texas (2019)
- Faculty, *Special Masters in Electronic Discovery*, American Arbitration Association Webinar (2018)
- Faculty, *Sexual Harassment – A Presentation for AAA/ICDR Panelists*, American Arbitration Webinar (2018)
- Speaker, *Appellate Mediation*, Dallas Bar Association Appellate Section (2016)
- Speaker, *Arbitration Law: Key Developments of 2015*, AAA/ICDR/Mediation.org Panel Conference (2016)
- Panelist, *Individuals–Impact on Trade and Access to Justice*, Society, Commerce and Dispute Resolution: Goals for Justice and Trade, Fordham University School of Law and the American Arbitration Association (2015)
- Speaker, *Developing the AAA Judicial Panel, Working Together*, American Arbitration Association Webinar (2015)
- Speaker, *Do You Want to Arbitrate? Managing the Process When You Do*, Oil & Gas Disputes Course, State Bar of Texas and Texas Tech School of Law (2015)
- Speaker, *The Arbitrator’s Perspective: Oil and Gas Arbitration*, State Bar of Texas’ 32nd Annual Advanced Oil, Gas and Energy Resources Law Course (2014)
- Faculty, *Conducting Research & Investigations: The Arbitrator’s Authority*, American Arbitration Association (2014)
- Faculty, *Principled Deliberations: Decision-Making Skills for Arbitrators*, American Arbitration Association (2014)
- Facilitator, *Managing the Arbitration Process for Efficiency & Economy Following the Preliminary Hearing*, American Arbitration Association (2012)

- Panelist, *How to Prevent a Runaway Arbitration*, ABA Section of Litigation CLE Conference (Washington, D.C., 2012)
- Faculty, *Regaining Speed and Economy in Dispute Resolution*, American Arbitration Association (2011)
- Faculty, *Chairing an Arbitration Panel: Managing Procedures, Process & Dynamics*, American Arbitration Association (2010)

#### **TRIAL + JUDICIAL**

- Speaker, *Proper Role: Opinions and Oral Argument*, Texas College for New Judges (Texas, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018)
- Panelist, *Making Your Appellate Position More Appealing: The Importance of Framing the Issues*, Appellate Judges Education Institute (New Orleans, 2012)