

SETH HOPKINS



Email: Seth@SethHopkins.com • **Phone:** (337) 540-9120

Writing samples & oral argument videos at: SethHopkins.com



<http://www.linkedin.com/in/sethbhopkins>

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Member of the Senior Leadership Team in the nation's third-largest county attorney's office who litigated 60 high-profile appeals in the United States Supreme Court, Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, and Texas Supreme Court and directly managed 30 attorneys and paralegals defending 500 employment, tort, real estate, and civil rights cases. Prior to serving Harris County, represented private clients in complex commercial, employment, intellectual property, wrongful death, and civil rights cases, was lead counsel in the largest single-client Title II Americans with Disabilities Act case in history, and secured compensation for a man who spent 31 years in prison for a crime he did not commit.

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

HARRIS COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, Houston, Texas

Special Assistant County Attorney for Litigation

2022 - Present

Appellate litigator in high-profile, complex civil cases for the nation's third-largest county. Manage training and technology programs for more than 250 attorneys and paralegals and supervise the design and implementation of software to track 110,000 cases and 13.5 TB of sensitive data. Developed a \$5.95 million program to make local government more transparent and improve court appearance rates for criminal defendants by working with County stakeholders to create videos to be shown to 100,000 arrestees per year and developing MyHarrisCountyCase.com to make court records easier to access and understand. Serve on Harris County's Joint Technology Committee, Records Management Committee, and Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Committee.

Managing Counsel of Defensive Litigation & Real Estate

2021 - 2022

Supervised more than 30 attorneys and paralegals responsible for defending 500 cases against Harris County and its 18,000 employees. Rebuilt one division after it lost nearly half its staff during the pandemic by hiring experienced civil rights, employment, and tort litigators, conducting weekly training, and improving morale and quality of client representation. Supervised attorneys during jury trials, appeals, hearings, and mediations, and developed litigation practice guides, settlement procedures, and a Microsoft Teams-based library and case monitoring application.

Assistant County Attorney, Litigation Practice Group

2017 - 2020

Served as lead counsel in high-profile 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, juvenile justice center, county and district judges, commissioners, auditor, and elected officials. Maintained a heavy docket, which included:

- **Election strike team.** 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 through four emergency 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.
- ***Brown v. City of Houston.*** Represented Harris County in death-row wrongful conviction case in the district court, federal appellate court, and on certified question to the Texas Supreme Court.
- ***Harris County v. Annab.*** Obtained unanimous Supreme Court reversal of significant sovereign immunity case. The Texas Solicitor General joined in oral argument as an *amicus curiae*.
- ***Green v. Harris County.*** Secured summary judgment in a highly technical case where a jail detainee died from a rare and virulent form of meningitis caused by *Streptococcus sanguinis* bacteria.
- ***Shestawy v. Conservative Club of Houston.*** Awarded sanctions at a rate of \$500 per hour.
- ***Grant v. Harris County.*** Successfully defended Harris County in the trial and appellate courts in a complex employment case involving a juvenile supervision officer.

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

Commercial Litigation Associate

2013 - 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 to recover \$19 million owed by a Kazakhstani company to National Oilwell Varco 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-Q₁₀, 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

2009 - 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. 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. *Covington v. McNeese*, 98 So.3d 414 (La.App. 3 Cir. 9/5/12).

KASOWITZ, BENSON, TORRES & FRIEDMAN, Houston, Texas

Litigation Attorney

2005 - 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

2003 - 2004

Served as a 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. Helped to set up a new federal office, wrote and edited opinions and jury charges, scheduled dockets, researched, assisted with trials, and communicated with attorneys and other federal offices on behalf of the Court. Handled a 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

1999 - 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

1998 - 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, PUBLICATIONS, AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

THURGOOD MARSHALL SCHOOL OF LAW, Houston, Texas

Professor of Alternative Dispute Resolution

2024 - Present

Developed and taught Alternative Dispute Resolution as an adjunct professor.

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LAW CENTER, Houston, Texas

Professor of Appellate Advocacy & Moot Court Coach

2020 - Present

Teach Appellate Advocacy and coach and judge teams in the nation's 13th best trial advocacy program (U.S. News & World Report, 2023).

CONFERENCE PRESENTER

2017 - Present

Presented CLE courses on legal writing, business law, election law, and other subjects at in-house and external conferences, including the 2023 Texas District & County Attorneys Association.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY GLOBAL, West Lafayette, Indiana

Professor and Course Developer

2008 - 2019

Developed and taught 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 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 "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 2008. Served as a public speaker for national conferences such as the Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses.

PROFESSIONAL LICENSES AND TRAINING

STATE LICENSES AND COURT 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, California Northern District, Court of Federal Claims, Tax Court, Court of International Trade, Federal Circuit Court of Appeals, and Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation.

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 the 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.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

Licensed pilot for single-engine aircraft.

REAL ESTATE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

MAGNOLIA PLACE & LIVE OAK PLACE, Lake Charles, Louisiana

Owner

2014 - Present

Designed, funded, and managed \$2 million in residential redevelopment projects.

NON-PROFIT AND VOLUNTEER SERVICE

HOUSTON HOSPICE, Houston, Texas

Vice-Chair, Board of Directors

2021 - Present

Serve as vice chair on the board of directors of the largest non-profit hospice in the greater Houston area. Houston Hospice is a member-hospital of the Texas Medical Center—the world's largest medical center. It serves 10 counties and has an inpatient unit located on a historic campus. Formerly served as Governance Chair.

EAST DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY & TIRZ 15, Houston, Texas

Board of Directors, Projects Committee, & Communications Committee

2020 - Present

Serve on the board and on the Projects Committee and Communications Committee of the East Downtown Redevelopment Authority and Tax Increment Reinvestment District 15, a quasi-governmental board 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

Serve on the board and Governance Committee of an organization that advises the Governor's Program for Gifted Children, 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.

DOWNTOWN SUPER NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL, Houston, Texas

Founding Vice President

2011 - 2013

Founding vice president of the Downtown Houston Super Neighborhood Council.

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 website 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.

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.