

TEXAS LAWYER

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LEGAL LEADERS ON THE RISE

Christopher B. Trowbridge

Partner, Bell Nunnally & Martin

Dallas

Age: 39

While taking a business law course as an undergraduate, Christopher Trowbridge decided to become a lawyer instead of a businessman.

"I had always thought of myself as a businessman, and that was what I wanted to be," he says.

But, during the business law course, Trowbridge realized the impact that lawyers and lawsuits can have on business operations. "And that's what made me initially think maybe I should go to law school," he says.

His interest in business has served him well on the revenue side of the legal profession.

"Chris is annually one of our top-producing lawyers in the firm, not only the work he originates but the work he bills and collects for his own time," says Mikel Bowers, a partner in Bell Nunnally & Martin and member of the firm's management committee.

Bowers has been with the firm since 2007 and says "in my experience he's always generated in excess of \$1 million annually."

He's not only concerned with building his own book of business. Trowbridge puts a lot of time and energy into heading the firm's marketing and business development committee, Bowers says.

"He's dedicated to sitting down with younger lawyers and helping them prepare business plans and helping them create opportunities for developing their individual practices," Bowers says.

But it's not all about the billable hours. Trowbridge co-chaired the 2012 Billiard Ball, which raised more than \$300,000 for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas. He also serves as vice-chairman of the

board of directors of the Greater Dallas Boys & Girls Club and co-chairman of its major gifts committee.

"The clubs in the Dallas area serve over 1,000 kids a day," Trowbridge says. "It's really a life-changing experience for these kids," he explains.

After graduating from Baylor University School of Law in 1998, Trowbridge joined the Dallas office of Philadelphia-based Cozen O'Connor as a litigation associate; he had been a summer associate in 1997.

After two years at Cozen O'Connor, he moved to Bell Nunnally & Martin. Trowbridge says he was attracted to the idea of working in a one-office firm built by lawyers coming from larger firms.

"It had a high caliber of client, a high caliber of case, but it was a smaller-firm environment," he says.

Trowbridge's colleagues elected him to partnership in 2006 and to equity partner in 2008, making him the second youngest equity partner in the firm's history.

Trowbridge has clients ranging from *Fortune* 500 companies to privately held organizations. His client list includes First National Bank of Omaha, Paychex Inc., Prospera Financial Services and Capital One Bank (USA) NA.

He also represented a nonprofit in 2011 in *Ward Family Foundation v. Arnette*, where he obtained a \$1,397,291.07 judgment including \$397,913.88 in attorney fees in federal bankruptcy court. After a four-day adversary hearing, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Barbara J. Hauser of Dallas issued a memorandum and accompanying judgment in favor of the foundation. ■