



Meet the Women Lawyers of Cowles & Thompson

Women lawyers have been a part of Cowles & Thompson since its founding decade. Today, we are proud of this talented group of legal professionals who lead both inside the firm and across our community. March is International Women’s Month, and thus we feature our ladies in the March issue of the Cowles & Thompson newsletter.



[Michelle V. Alonzo](#)

Associate
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Michelle V. Alonzo focuses on employment-based immigration matters, where her experience includes:

- handling H-1B professional worker visas,
- O-1 extraordinary ability visas,
- E-1/E-2 treaty investor,
- L-1 transfer visas,
- TN temporary work visas for citizens of Canada & Mexico,
- E-3 professional worker visas for Australian nationals,
- permanent residence applications based upon labor certification, and
- extraordinary ability aliens, and multinational managers and executives.

Additionally, she has represented hundreds of individuals in obtaining legal permanent residence through family-based sponsorship. Michele is a graduate of Houston College of Law.



[Lishel Bautista](#)

Associate
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Lishel Bautista has a broad litigation practice comprised of prosecuting and defending businesses and individuals in a variety of complex matters. She has successfully represented clients in both federal and state courts throughout Texas. She also has experience providing general business counsel to executives and in-house counsel on corporate governance matters, best practices, and risk assessment.

Lishel is a proud graduate of Ursuline Academy of Dallas, Texas A&M University, and St. Mary’s School of Law.



[Glenda O. Brewer](#)

Shareholder
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Glenda Brewer is a Shareholder and Section Head of the Firm's Estate Planning, Wills and Probate Practice Group as well as a member of the Corporate and Business Law Practice Group. Her practice consists primarily of representation of a wide variety of clients in the areas of probate, trusts, wills, estate planning, and general corporate representation.

Glenda has lectured and taught on topics from wills and trusts to oil and gas law, and she has appeared on *Good Morning Texas*, and on radio to discuss medical directives and related issues. Glenda is rated AV Preeminent® by Martindale-Hubbell®.



[Auston Cherry](#)

Senior Counsel
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Auston Cherry is Senior Counsel in the Tort Litigation Section. Her practice consists primarily of representation of a wide variety of clients in the areas of aviation, products liability, and personal injury.

Auston is a graduate of the SMU Dedman School of Law, and she is rated AV Preeminent® by Martindale-Hubbell®.



[Helen Hutton](#)

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Helen Hutton practices in the areas of civil litigation and civil appeals. She served as a briefing attorney for the Honorable Douglas S. Lang, Fifth District Court of Appeals of Texas, 2014-15 and as a judicial intern for the Honorable John R. Roach, Jr., 296th Judicial District Court, 2012.

A *cum laude* graduate of SMU Dedman School of Law, Helen currently serves as a Director with the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers.



[Claire E. James](#)

Associate
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Claire James practices primarily in commercial litigation and family law. On the commercial side, Claire regularly helps companies and their owners solve a wide variety of problems, including business partnership disputes, collection and contract issues, employee non-compete negotiation and disputes, and mechanic's lien perfection and litigation.

In her family law practice, Claire represents men and women in divorce, child support, child custody, and related matters. Claire strives to help her clients resolve these important matters in a way that works best for them, whether that be through litigation, mediation, or collaboration.

Claire is originally from the Chicagoland area and now lives in Richardson with her husband and two children.



[Dorlin Lafer-Sousa](#)

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Dorlin Lafer-Sousa practices in the areas of civil litigation and civil appeals. She served as a briefing attorney for the Honorable Justice Mike Willson, Eleventh District Court of Appeals of Texas. She earned her J.D., *cum laude*, from SMU Dedman School of Law, where she was a recipient of the Sarah T. Hughes Diversity Scholarship, and was Executive Editor of the Science & Technology Law Review.



[Angela M. Lopez](#)

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Angela Lopez is Section Head of the Cowles and Thompson Immigration Practice Group and the current Chair of the Dallas Bar Association Immigration Section. She has developed a large national practice representing numerous foreign nationals and their employers in obtaining temporary employment nonimmigrant visas and permanent residence. She has represented numerous individuals and organizations in the medical field.

A native of Colombia, Angela holds a J.D. from Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Colombia; and an L.L.M. from SMU Dedman School of Law. She was recently honored in 2017 by the Texas Diversity Council as one of the Top 50 Women Lawyers in Dallas.



[Monica L. Narvaez](#)

Of Counsel

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Employment attorney, Monica Narvaez, advises a variety of businesses and industries and leverages her experience as a certified human resources professional to help businesses navigate complex employment situations in the hopes of avoiding litigation. However, she also litigates disputes before the TWC, EEOC, DOL, state and federal courts, and other state and federal regulatory bodies.

Before private practice, Monica served as an Assistant Ohio Attorney General and defended state and county agencies as well as universities against simple and complex employment disputes before state and federal courts. She also served as a Human Resources Policy Attorney for the State of Ohio where she wrote laws, rules, and policies pertaining to the personnel processes and functions for close to 100,000 employees.

She earned both a J.D. and Certificate in Dispute Resolution from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, and an L.L.M. with distinction, from University of Edinburgh School of Law, United Kingdom.



[Melissa J. Pegram](#)

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Melissa J. Pegram is the senior member of Cowles & Thompson's Business section. She focuses on the representation of individuals and businesses in the area of commercial law and transactional matters. As a part of her representation, Melissa structures complex business agreements on behalf of her clients, and negotiates, drafts, and reviews all business-related documentation concerning her clients' ongoing business operations. Melissa also supervises and directs the handling of complex employment and commercial litigation matters. In her representation of individual clients, Melissa handles simple and complicated estate probate and trust matters, including supervision of difficult, hard-fought litigation issues that may arise related to settlement of estates.

Melissa earned a J.D. from the Baylor University School of Law in 1981, and has practiced with Cowles & Thompson for more than 37 years, serving in most every capacity over the years, including Section Head of its Business Section and as a member of its Board of Directors.

Melissa is rated AV Preeminent[®] by Martindale-Hubbell[®].



[Julia F. Pendery](#)

Of Counsel

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Julia Pendery has represented clients in Texas appellate courts for 35 years. She predominantly represents the party appealing an adverse judgment and has successfully appealed business and commercial, personal injury, professional malpractice, real estate, family, and many other types of disputes. She is also well-known for setting aside/obtaining relief from default judgments and frequently speaks to other lawyers on that topic.

Julia writes amicus curiae (friend of the court) briefs for industry groups, businesses, and individuals who are interested in important Texas Supreme Court cases, but are not direct parties to the case. She also represents landowners in eminent domain proceedings.

Julia graduated from SMU Dedman School of Law. She is rated AV Preeminent[®] by Martindale-Hubbell[®], and is Board Certified[®] in Civil Appellate Law, by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.