

# Certification Matters

## Honoring Brian L. Webb



TBLS lost a brother last year. Brian L. Webb, a TBLS Board Member who was Board Certified in Family Law since 1980, passed away November 8, 2019 at the age of 70. Though we can never fully repay Brian for his immense impact on not only TBLS but the practice of Family Law as a whole, we'd like to honor him by naming him this year's John F. Sheehy, Jr. Distinguished Attorney Award for his achievements, support to our organization and profession.

TBLS gives this annual award to an attorney that has been Board Certified for more than 25 years, shown commitment to serving the public and justice system, advanced standards of the legal profession and has been the epitome of outstanding professional ethics and civility. We couldn't think of a more distinguished attorney to recognize with this accolade this year, which is apparent from his list of accomplishments below.

- Served as TBLS Board Member for more than three years;
- Served as member of the TBLS Family Law Exam Commission for 10 years;
- Presided over Texas' four largest statewide family law organizations — Family Law Section of the State Bar of Texas (where he was given the Dan R. Price Award in 2009), Texas Academy of Family Law Specialists (where he received the Judge Sam Emison Award in 1997), Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (as well as was president of the AAML Foundation), and Texas Family Law Foundation;
- Served as past member of the State Bar of Texas Board of Directors (where he was inducted into the State Bar of Texas Family Law Section Hall of Legends) and headed the Dallas Bar Association Family Law Section;
- Was a Fellow of the International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers and a charter Diplomate in the American College of Family Trial Lawyers, which is limited to 100 lawyers nationwide;
- Served as an adjunct professor at the SMU Dedman School of Law, his alma mater, where he conveyed his passion for Family Law to successive generations of new attorneys in the making; and more.



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Brian's legacy and The Webb Family Law Firm will live on through his two children and law partners, Natalie and her brother Brant, who follow in his footsteps. Brant and Natalie will also accept the John F. Sheehy Distinguished Attorney Award plaque on their dad's behalf during TBLS' 2020 Induction Ceremony, March 6, at the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center.



Brant, Natalie and dad

## Words from Brian's Colleagues

*"It is with a tremendous sense of loss that I contemplate the service of my friend Brian Webb. He brought an immense intellect accompanied by an all-consuming desire to improve the standards, the quality and the image of Family Law in Texas — and he succeeded. That he was able to do this with a quick wit, a ready quip and an infectious smile makes me look on our service together with a great deal of pleasure. He will be especially missed by his colleagues in the Family Law Bar and Texas Board of Legal Specialization."*



William Frank Carroll

— William Frank Carroll, TBLS, Board Chair, Board Certified, Civil Appellate Law, Civil Trial Law

*"Brian was a lawyer's lawyer. I relied on him so many times for counsel and advice, and he always answered the call. There was no problem big or small that he wouldn't handle for a friend. Some of my best memories with Brian were at CLE presentations we did together. He loved learning from other lawyers as much as he loved teaching them. I treasure every second I had to learn at the feet of the master."*

— Kristal C. Thomson, TBLS, Board Member, Board Certified, Family Law



**Back Row:** Steve Naylor, Barbara Nunneley, Kristal Thomson, Gary Nickelson, Wendy Burgower and Brian Webb — **Front Row:** Judge Judy Warne and Judge Scott Beauchamp



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*“Brian was the most loyal and kind friend you could have. He was a Family Law scholar, mentor to hundreds of lawyers and was never too busy to help with questions about law, procedure or strategy. He worked to improve the practice of law and the lives of all Texans by making Family Law more just. He was the quintessential Board Certified Family Law attorney. He also had a style, ‘Brian Webb casual,’ which was known to everyone as shorts and Hawaiian shirt.”*



Brian Webb, Mary Jo McCurley and Tom Vick

— G. Thomas Vick, Jr., Vick Carney LLP, Partner, Board Certified, Family Law

*“Brian was the definition of ‘old school’ in the best way. In 27 years, I never saw him renege on his word. He was characterized by honor and integrity, always took the high road, never spoke ill of another attorney — even if they earned it — and always stood by his employees.*

*He absolutely loved the practice of Family Law and the people in this profession. He relished being involved when decisions were made regarding Family Law, on a state and national level. Through his work with the Texas Family Law Foundation, which started at the Foundation’s very inception, he helped pass good legislation and kept potential damaging laws out.*



Brian Webb and Kay Redburn

*I only remember a few times where Brian took a vacation that wasn’t also a “business” trip. Every year, his family vacation was taking his children to the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers spring meeting. His son and daughter, Brant and Natalie, grew up surrounded by Family Law, spending spring breaks in exotic locations with the country’s best Family Law attorneys and their families. Now Natalie and Brant are carrying on his legacy by continuing the Webb Family Law Firm, practicing Family Law to the highest standards set by their father.”*

— Kay Redburn, The Webb Family Law Firm, Board Certified Paralegal, Family Law