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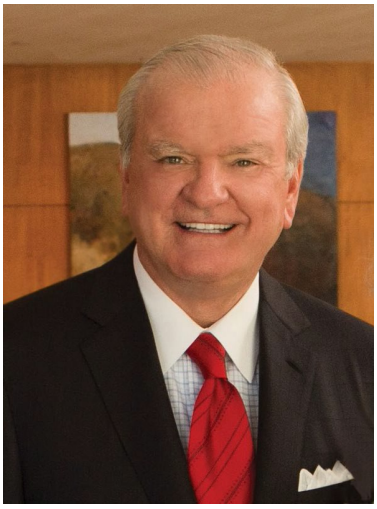

Donald E. Godwin
Chairman/CEO; Treasurer

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Donald E. Godwin is considered one of the most respected and tenacious trial lawyers in Texas. For more than 40 years Don has tried significant jury cases in courts throughout Texas and across the United States. Board Certified in Civil Trial Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization, he has the ability to translate complex matters of law and fact into easily understandable language for courts and juries.

Don's practice covers a broad range of areas with an emphasis on complex litigation, including:

- Oil and gas
- Bet the Company Litigation
- Environmental
- Fiduciary duties
- Will contests
- Major family law disputes
- Business torts

Of note, Don was the Lead Trial Lawyer in the successful defense of Halliburton in connection with all civil litigation and investigations concerning BP's Macondo well blowout in the Gulf of Mexico, the largest environmental lawsuit in the history of the United States. As well as being recognized as a leading trial lawyer in the United States, Don has also earned the reputation among corporate executives, their legal departments, and other highly visible individuals as a master negotiator where the risks are substantial, and the future and successes of such clients are on the line.

Board Certified in Civil Trial Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization, and a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA), Mr. Godwin is one of the most widely respected attorneys in the nation. Reflecting the standard of long-term excellence established in his legal practice, he has been named to the 50 Lions of the Texas Bar by Texas Lawbook, ranked in Chambers USA in the area of General Commercial Litigation, selected to the Lawdragon 500 honoring the 500 leading lawyers in America (Lifetime Member), named among the Top 100 Lawyers in Texas by Thomson Reuters 10 times,

University of North Carolina Wilmington, BS 1969

University of Memphis, MS, 1970

SMU School of Law, JD, 1973

Board Certified, Civil Trial Law

AV Peer Review Rated "Preeminent"

Practice Areas

- Bet the Company Litigation
- Civil Litigation
- Commercial Litigation
- Divorce Litigation
- Eminent Domain and Zoning Litigation
- Energy/Oil and Gas Litigation
- Environmental Litigation
- Wil, Probate, Estate Planning and Estate Litigation

and chosen among Thomson Reuters Texas Super Lawyers since the award was initiated in 2003. He has also been honored by selection on the list of The Best Lawyers in America since 2012 in the area of Commercial Litigation along with a variety of other honors.

Honors and Awards

- *Chambers USA: America's Leading Business Lawyers* – General Commercial Litigation, Texas
- Best Lawyers in America®, 2012-2027
- Thomson Reuters' "Texas Super Lawyers," 2003-2026
- *D Magazine* Best Lawyers in Dallas, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2011-2026
    - Named to the Best Lawyers in Dallas Hall of Fame, 2024
- Benchmark Local Litigation Star, 2020, 2023-2026
- The Dallas 500 – The Most Powerful Business Leaders in Dallas-Fort Worth by D CEO Magazine, 2016-2026
- Lawdragon Hall of Fame Lifetime Member
- Lawdragon 100 Managing Partners You Need to Know, 2025-2026
- Lawdragon 500 Leading Litigators in America, 2023-2026
- Lawdragon 500 Leading Family Lawyers in America, 2024-2026
- Lawdragon 500 Special Situations Lawyers, 2026
- Lawdragon 500 Leading Lawyers in America, 2015-2022
- Named to the National Board of Trial Advocacy
- Thomson Reuters' "Top 100 Lawyers in Dallas/Fort Worth" as published in Texas Monthly & Super Lawyers magazines, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010-2020
- Named "Distinguished Alumnus of the Year" by the University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2019
- Named as a Member of the Advisory Board to the Dean of the University of Memphis' Fogelman College of Business & Economics, 2016-2018
- Named as "Outstanding Alumnus" of the Fogelman School of Business & Economics at the University of Memphis
- Inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Fogelman School of Business & Economics at the University of Memphis
- Chosen to the list of the "50 Lions of the Texas Bar" by Texas Lawbook

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- 5-time selection to “Who’s Who in Energy” in Dallas, Houston, Austin, Denver, St. Louis, Columbus, San Antonio and Pittsburgh by the American City Business Journals, 2011-2015
- AV rated “Preeminent” Martindale Hubbell
  Designated as one of the “Top Five DFW Defenders,“ Dallas Business Journal, 2006, 2010
- 10-time selection to Thomson Reuters’ “Top 100 Lawyers in Texas” as published in Texas Monthly & Super Lawyers magazines, 2003-2006, 2012, 2014-2018
- Texas Super Lawyers Advisory Board, 2010-2013
- Received the Distinguished Alumni Award for Private Practice from SMU Dedman School of Law for 2003
- Selected in the *Dallas Business Journal’s* list of the Top 10 Litigators/Trial Lawyers in the D/FW Metroplex, 2003
- Recognized in Best Lawyers® for Commercial Litigation and Banking and Finance Litigation, 2022

Admissions

- U.S. Supreme Court
- State Courts of Texas
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma
- U.S. District Courts for the Northern, Eastern, Southern and Western Districts of Texas

Legal Memberships

- American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA)
- Dallas Bar Association, Chairman, Antitrust & Trade Regulation Section, 1980
- Dallas Bar Association, Member
- State Bar of Texas
- The William ‘Mac’ Taylor American Inn of Court (Master of the Bench Member)
- Executive Board Member, SMU Dedman School of Law, 2002 to present

Community

- Board of Directors, Haggar Clothing Co.
- Chair, Dallas Symphony
- Corporate Underwriting Chair, Prevent Blindness and UT Southwestern Department of Ophthalmology, Eye Ball event
- Executive Board Member, SMU Dedman School of Law

- Outside Counsel and Trustee, Episcopal School of Dallas, 2002 to 2011

Representative Clients

- Hilltop Holdings, Inc.
- Hilltop Securities, Inc.
- Halliburton Company
- Ray Hunt
- Haggar Clothing Co.
- Ross Perot, Sr.
- PlainsCapital Bank
- Prime Lending, Inc.
- Texas Capital Bank
- Alinda Hill Wikert
- Tenneco Gas Pipeline Company
- Tenneco Inc.
- Dallas Cowboys
- Jerry Jones
- John O'Quinn
- Hill Feinberg
- Katherine Perot Reeves
- Sharon McCutchin
- Harold Simmons
- Lon Smith Construction Company

Presentations & Publications

- Frequent lecturer on a variety of topics related to litigation, jury selection, cross-examination techniques and closing arguments at CLE seminars, institutes and trade-association groups throughout the United States
- Frequent lecturer at Mealey's Institutes on a variety of topics involving defending companies against asbestos claims and how to successfully negotiate global settlements of asbestos and silica claims