



ELEVEN BELL NUNNALLY ATTORNEYS HIGHLIGHTED AS 2017 “TEXAS RISING STARS”

March 17, 2017

Bell Nunnally & Martin LLP attorneys Alana K. Ackels, R. Heath Cheek, Kristopher D. Hill, Heather H. Jobe, Gregory D. Kelminson, Danica L. Mathes, Daniel A. Murray, Benjamin L. Riemer, Jennifer P. Sibley, Jason P. Steed and Ross A. Williams have been named to the 2017 “Texas Rising Stars” list published by Super Lawyers – a Thomson Reuters publication and rating service – and featured in the April issue of *Texas Monthly*.

“Texas Rising Stars” recognizes lawyers across more than 70 practice areas who are 40 years or younger, or in the first 10 years of practice. Inclusion is based on a highly selective process comprised of detailed and comprehensive peer nominations, evaluation and research – yielding only those who have both a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement. Ultimately, no more than 2.5 percent of eligible lawyers in the state are named to the list.

[Ackels](#) is a partner and a member of the firm's Labor, Employment and Benefits and Litigation practice areas. Licensed in Texas and California, she has extensive experience litigating disputes in state and federal courts and arbitration. Ackels routinely represents clients in complex commercial disputes; employment claims involving discrimination, harassment and retaliation; wage and hour claims; trade secret litigation; and non-compete matters. She also advises employers on navigating the multitude of state and federal laws governing the employer-employee relationship. Ackels earned both her legal and undergraduate degrees at Southern Methodist University (J.D., *cum laude*, 2009; B.A., *cum laude*, 2006). This is her third consecutive year on the “Texas Rising Stars” list.

[Cheek](#) is a partner, practicing in the firm's Litigation group. He focuses on trials and disputes, representing clients from *Fortune 500* companies to start-up businesses and high-net-worth individuals in industries including private equity, financial services, energy and real estate. Cheek is an active member of the community having served in various board or leadership positions for the State Fair of Texas, Dallas

Museum of Art, Cotton Bowl Council, North Texas Super Bowl XLV Host Committee, Texas Tech Alumni Association, Republican Lawyers of Dallas and Christian Legal Society, among others. He is a graduate of Baylor Law School (J.D., 2006) and Texas Tech University (B.A., *magna cum laude*, 2003). This is Cheek's fourth consecutive selection to the "Texas Rising Stars" list.

[Hill](#) is a partner, practicing in the firm's Litigation and Labor, Employment and Benefits groups. He focuses on complex business disputes and trials involving business torts, contract issues and similar high-stakes commercial litigation matters. Hill has extensive experience handling disputes involving non-compete agreements from the injunction stage through trial. He is a graduate of Baylor Law School (J.D., 2008) and Texas Tech University (B.B.A., *cum laude*, 2005). This is Hill's fourth consecutive appearance on the "Texas Rising Stars" list.

[Jobe](#) is a partner in the firm's Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring, Creditors' Rights and Litigation practices. She handles bankruptcy- and business-related litigation, with a concentration on valuation issues. Jobe is a graduate of Texas Tech School of Law (J.D., *cum laude*, 2004) and Texas State University (B.B.A., *cum laude*, 2000). This is her sixth consecutive selection to the "Texas Rising Stars" list.

Kelminson works in the firm's White Collar Criminal and Regulatory Defense, Litigation and Healthcare practices. He represents clients in complex criminal and regulatory investigations and charged proceedings and has experience handling federal and state administrative actions instituted by securities and healthcare regulators. He is a graduate of the University of Houston Law Center (J.D., *cum laude*, 2009) and the University of Texas at Austin (B.B.A., 2005). This is his third consecutive year on the "Texas Rising Stars" list.

[Mathes](#) is a partner in the firm's Intellectual Property, Entertainment, Advertising and New Media practice areas. Some of the most well-known national and international brands and biggest names in entertainment have trusted her with their creative assets and brand reputation. Mathes has represented Grammy-winning recording artists, songwriters and producers, Oscar-nominated filmmakers, independent record labels and music publishers, amateur and professional athletes, reality television show participants, mobile app and game developers, e-commerce, interactive media and startup ventures, as well as international food, beverage, toy, cosmetics, fashion, literary publishing, retail and traditional media companies. A frequent presenter and author, including on her "[I'M WITH THE B\(R\)AND®](#)" blog, Mathes also served as an Adjunct Professor of Entertainment Law at Washington University School of Law for five years. She is a graduate of Washington University School of Law (J.D., 2001) and DePauw University (B.A., 1998), and is licensed in both Texas and Missouri. This is her second consecutive selection year on the "Texas Rising Stars" list.

Murray is a member of the firm's Intellectual Property practice. He focuses on all areas of intellectual property law, assisting clients across a diverse range of industries including telecom/smartphone, medical devices, construction hardware, sporting goods and software technologies. Murray is a graduate of Northwestern University School of Law (J.D., 2007) and Southern Methodist University (M.S., 2009; B.S., B.A., 2003). This is his third consecutive selection to the "Texas Rising Stars" list.

[Riemer](#) is a partner whose practice focuses on complex commercial litigation. He is a member of the firm's Litigation; Bankruptcy and Financial Restructuring; Intellectual Property; White Collar Criminal and Regulatory Defense; and Entertainment, Advertising and New Media groups. Riemer has extensive experience in handling high-stakes business disputes in state and federal courts throughout the country. His business litigation docket routinely includes cases involving construction disputes, securities litigation, broker-dealer disputes, non-compete cases, and business separations. Riemer also frequently counsels clients on legal issues facing businesses, investors and entrepreneurs. He is a graduate of Albany Law School (J.D. *cum laude*, 2008) and Syracuse University (B.A., 2002). This is Riemer's third selection to the "Texas Rising Stars" list.

Sibley is a member of the firm's Estate Planning and Private Clients practice. Pairing her legal credentials with a master's degree in personal financial planning and a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ designation, she counsels individuals, families and business owners regarding wealth preservation, tax planning, business succession planning and estate and trust administration – ranging from preparing basic wills and ancillary estate planning documents to structuring complex estate plans. Sibley also represents executors and administrators in the probate and administration of estates and the preparation of estate and gift tax returns, as well as trustees in the administration of trust estates, frequently consulting with her litigation colleagues regarding contested matters in the areas of estate and trust administration. She is a graduate of Texas Tech University School of Law (J.D., *magna cum laude*, 2011), Texas Tech University (M.S., 2011) and the University of Mississippi (B.A., *cum laude*, 2008). This is Sibley's first selection to the "Texas Rising Stars" list.

Steed is a partner and member of the firm's Supreme Court and Appellate practice and has substantial experience representing clients in both state and federal appellate courts across the nation, including the Supreme Court of Texas and the Supreme Court of the United States. In addition to acting as lead counsel in appeals, as a former English professor, he also frequently assists clients and co-counsel with brief writing – both on appeal and in pre- and post-trial motion practice. He maintains an active presence on Twitter, under the handle @5thCircAppeals, and he posts regularly to his professional blog *forma legalis*. A 2016 "Texas Rising Star," Steed is a graduate of the University of Texas School of Law (J.D., with honors, 2009), the University of Nevada Las Vegas (Ph.D., 2004), the University of Idaho (M.F.A., 1999) and Brigham Young University (B.A., 1995). This is his second consecutive "Texas Rising Stars" selection.

[Williams](#) is a partner and a member of the firm's Litigation and Appellate practices. He has experience in complex matters involving trade secrets, contract disputes, business torts, and IP litigation. Williams has represented creditors on promissory notes, guarantees, unpaid accounts and the foreclosure of secured properties. He is also experienced in handling internet defamation issues. Notably, Williams has briefed appellate matters before Texas courts of appeal and the Supreme Court of Texas, as well as the Supreme Court of the United States (at *certiorari*). He is a graduate of the University of Texas School of Law (J.D., with honors, 2008) and Tulane University (B.A., *summa cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa, 2005). This is Williams' fourth consecutive year on the "Texas Rising Stars" list.

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Related Practices

Appeals
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