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Toyota's Scott Young Receives Texas Access to Justice Award

JULY 8, 2020 | [MARK CURRIDEN](#)





The Texas Access to Justice Commission has presented its 2020 Corporate Counsel Pro Bono Award to Scott Young, who is managing counsel at Toyota North America and past president of the Association of Corporate Counsel's DFW Chapter.

"Scott has an unwavering commitment to pro bono work inside and outside his role as managing counsel at Toyota Motor North American," Texas Supreme Court Justice Eva Guzman said in a formal webcast last week.

Justice Guzman said that Young's history as a volunteer and financial contributor to the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program, Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans, Legal Aid of Northwest Texas and Housing Crisis Center demonstrates his commitment to pro bono and public service.

"Scott has led the Toyota legal department's pro bono committee and expanded access to justice for countless low-income Texans by bolstering pro bono culture within the corporate framework," Justice Guzman said.

"He's prepared a robust pro bono policy at Toyota, and he continues to build out events and programming so that Toyota can be part of meeting the need so that all Texans can have access to justice," she said. "He has gone above and beyond. He is really leading by example. He is among the very best in our legal profession. He recognizes that this is not just a profession, it is a noble calling."

Justice Guzman also pointed out that Young has led ACC-DFW pro bono initiatives for the past few years, which included conducting an in-person pro bono fair that matched law firms and corporate legal departments with public service programs.

Young, in an interview with *The Texas Lawbook*, said he plans to donate the

\$2,000 stipend that comes with the award to the Housing Crisis Center and the

\$2,000 stipend that comes with the award to the Housing Crisis Center and the Mosaic Family Services, which operates a shelter for abused women and children and those seeking asylum. In addition, Toyota is matching the \$2,000 to the two charities.

“I am grateful to be at an amazing company and in an amazing department led by individuals of strength and compassion who enthrone respect for people in literally every single decision they make and enable me to serve through pro bono,” he said.

“Special thanks for the passionate leadership of Sandra Phillips-Rogers. Sandra, thank you for setting the highest of expectations not only of service to our company, but also of service to those around us who are less fortunate.”

Young told Justice Guzman and others that he traces his passion for public service work to when he was five-years-old when his kindergarten teacher “pulled out a picture of a fuzzy blue blob and she said this is a warm fuzzy and in this class this year, we are going to learn what it is like to give warm fuzzys to each other.

“To me, pro bono has been all about the warm fuzzies,” he said.

A 2004 graduate of the University of Texas School of Law, Young practiced real estate law for seven years at Jenkins & Gilchrist and Norton Rose Fulbright. In 2011, he went in-house at T.G.I Fridays as its managing attorney for real estate and franchising.

Young joined the Toyota legal department relocated its North American headquarters to Plano in 2017, where he is the automaker’s leading legal expert on commercial real estate development, lease negotiations and corporate transactions.

During the past several years, Young has performed hundreds and hundreds of hours of community service and pro bono efforts on projects focusing on veterans, Hurricane Harvey recovery, domestic violence shelters and legal assistance for low-income Texans.

In 2018, *The Texas Lawbook* and the Association of Corporate Counsel’s DFW Chapter made Young and Toyota a finalist for the Outstanding Corporate Counsel’s Pro Bono and Public Service Award.

“Scott’s efforts are amazing and tireless – all done while he balanced a busy work schedule and a family life with his wife and six children,” Toyota Managing Counsel Derek Lipscombe said in nominating Young for the award.

In February 2017, Young discussed exploring a new challenge with his friend, Derek Lipscombe, who had left JCPenney a year earlier to join the legal department at Toyota.

“I was raised on the importance of giving back,” Young said in an interview in 2018.

Young’s commitment to making this a better world started during his junior year at Utah State University, where he studied political science.

“Scott got the community service bug in 1999 when he researched prison recidivism rates in the State of Utah,” Lipscombe said in his nomination. “Scott documented the impact of higher education on recidivism and the corresponding fiscal impact to the state of reducing prison recidivism.

“He lobbied for, wrote a bill, obtained a legislative sponsor and secured funding to create the first electronic system of delivering higher education programs to incarcerated persons within the State of Utah,” Lipscombe said.

The initial program, Young said, was approved by the legislature and proved to be massively successful. The program was launched across the state in subsequent years.

“When you look at the cost of educating someone compared to the cost of warehousing people, it is a no-brainer,” Young said.

Editor’s Note: The Texas Lawbook is working to create a full-time pro bono and public service writer’s position. This reporter will focus her/his time to identifying pro bono efforts by business lawyers in Texas. For more information about supporting the pro bono writer’s position, please contact Mark Curriden at mark.curriden@texaslawbook.net.