Summer 2011 Newsletter

Welcome to the latest edition of the Smith Law Group's quarterly e-newsletter. For more frequent updates, follow us on Twitter, connect with us on Facebook or LinkedIn, or subscribe to the Texas Appellate Law Blog.

SLG Celebrates Fifth Anniversary

In July 2006, Todd Smith left Fulbright & Jaworski to form a litigation boutique focusing on civil appeals and trial support from both sides of the docket. What began as a solo practice has grown to include attorney Brandy Wingate and legal assistant Sharon Kamus. From Austin and the Rio Grande Valley, we cover all of Texas, the Third, Fifth, Seventh, and Tenth Circuits, and the U.S. Supreme Court. We welcome referrals and hope you will consider SLG for all your appellate needs.

Texas Supreme Court Issues E-Filing Mandate

Appellate e-filing continues to evolve at a rapid pace. Effective September 12, 2011, attorneys filing documents in the Texas Supreme Court must do so electronically. View the Court's latest e-filing order here.
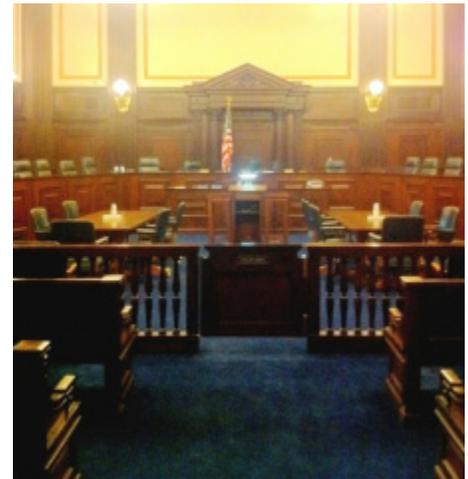
SLG Lawyers Ascend to New Bar Positions

The new bar year has brought new responsibilities for SLG lawyers. Todd Smith was elected chair of the Austin Bar Association Civil Appellate Law Section and accepted an appointment to lead the ABA Membership Committee. In the Valley, Brandy Wingate has begun serving as president of the Hidalgo County Bar Association and was recently elected District 13 Director for the Texas Young Lawyers Association.

A Rare Summary-Judgment Win for Plaintiff

SLG recently prevailed on cross-motions for summary judgment in an oil and gas case, resulting in a complete victory for the plaintiff. After trying a DTPA, fraud, and accounting dispute to a jury and

The firm's anniversary cake

The Fifth Circuit En Banc Courtroom during a recent visit to New Orleans

completing an appeal, the defendant operator contested the plaintiff's interest in production from the well and unilaterally reduced the amount of monthly payouts. SLG persuaded the trial court that it was too late for the operator to challenge the plaintiff's ownership interest and that the operator should pay damages and attorney fees.
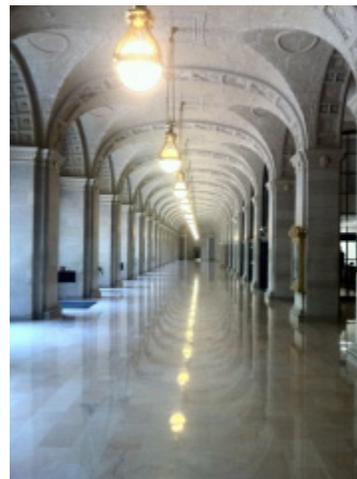
Smith Joins Appellatology

Todd Smith has accepted an invitation to join Appellatology, a new web-based service allowing counsel to obtain feedback and constructive criticism of appellate briefs before filing. The service uses live online video technology to provide mock conferencing sessions with retired judges and experienced appellate lawyers. For more information visit www.appellatology.com.

In the Media

- *Texas Lawyer* interviewed Todd Smith on his use of social media as part of a "tweetup" held in conjunction with the the State Bar Annual Meeting in San Antonio. He appears at 00:45 of the video embedded here.
- Brandy Wingate was quoted in an article appearing in *The Monitor* about one of the firm's ongoing cases.
- Todd Smith discussed recent developments in appellate practice during an audio interview for Solo Practice University's "What's New?" series.

Selected *Texas Appellate Law Blog* Posts

- Wingate Takes New Bar Positions
- The Adaptable (Appellate) Lawyer
- Reaching a Benchmark
- Smith Elected Chair of Austin Bar Appellate Section
- 25th Annual Advanced Civil Appellate Practice Course
- SCOTX: Attorneys Must E-File Effective 9/12/11

An inside view of the John Minor Wisdom Building in New Orleans

Recent and Upcoming

Speaking Engagements

- *Transitioning from Trial to Appeal: Post-Trial Motions*, Brandy Wingate, Federal Court Practice, Dallas, May 20
- *E-Filing in State and Federal Appellate Courts*, Todd Smith, State Bar Annual Meeting, San Antonio, June 23
- *Standards of Review*, Todd Smith, Advanced Civil Appellate Practice Course, Austin, Sept. 8
- *Gateway to Appellate Practice*, Todd Smith, online seminar at AppealsCourse.com

Read the Spring 2011 Issue