



## Hon. Steven E. Kirkland

More than thirty years legal experience.

- Sixteen years as a Trial Court Judge.
- Three years as Arbitrator and Mediator of Business, Personal Injury, Employment and Family disputes.
- Two years as City Attorney for a small Texas city.
- Four years as Assistant City Attorney negotiating complex real estate and economic development transactions, drafting and interpreting city ordinances and managing litigation.
- Four years in private practice representing tort plaintiffs and small businesses.
- Eight years as in-house counsel for an international oil company providing representation in many legal areas emphasizing negotiation and drafting of transaction documents, litigation management, representation before regulatory agencies and compliance counseling.
- Eleven years lecturing on Communication law areas of first amendment, copyright and privacy.
- Ten years volunteer and professional non profit real estate development.

Experience includes presiding over more than 900 jury trials, direct and oversight responsibility in areas of environmental claims and regulatory compliance, transportation safety, bankruptcy and litigation. Considerable experience in real estate and community development.

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

#### **CITY ATTORNEY, CITY OF NACOGDOCHES**

**2021-2023**

Advised City Council and City Manager on all aspects of City Government including compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Public Information Act, and the numerous procurement statutes. Managed investigation of embezzlement and termination of long term police chief. Negotiated plan for sale of a portion of water supply system. Drafted and negotiated all City Contracts, created a contract library for departments to utilize for routine matters. Handled claims by and against the City. Prosecuted cases in municipal court.

#### **JUDGE, 334<sup>th</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE STATE OF TEXAS JUDGE, 215<sup>th</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE STATE OF TEXAS**

**2017- 2020  
2009- 2012**

Elected November 2008 to serve as Judge of the 215<sup>th</sup> Civil District Court in Harris County Texas.  
Elected November 2016 to serve as Judge of the 334<sup>th</sup> Civil District Court in Harris County Texas.

District Courts are courts of original jurisdiction handling all matters not specifically assigned to other courts by the Texas constitution. These courts had a docket of 1700+ cases, ranging from complicated commercial contract disputes to tax delinquencies to personal injuries in an auto accidents. In addition to adjudicatory duties, I chaired the rules and special dockets committees of civil board of judges and served as the Civil District Court Representative to the JIMS Executive Board which oversees the Information Technology Assets of the Justice System.

#### **CITY OF HOUSTON LEGAL DEPARTMENT – Houston, Texas**

**2013 – 2017**

Senior Assistant City Attorney -- Assist the City's Chief Development Officer and City Attorney in determining the appropriate development tools to use for economic development projects. Assist in documenting projects and navigating bureaucratic and/or legal challenges to accomplishing the projects.

## STEVEN E. KIRKLAND

- Negotiated, drafted and closed a funding agreement ensuring a \$50 million grant from a private foundation to the City's \$200 million Bayou Greenway project. The Project will restore habitat and connect all the city's bayous with hike and bike trails.
- Negotiated, drafted and closed a series of agreements with the electric transmission utility that convert 165,000 of the City street lights from high energy bulbs to lower energy LED bulbs and fixtures which will result in 50% reduction in electricity consumption, provide a mechanism for auditing the inventory and fees charged for street lights and settling litigation over the fees, provide rate certainty to the utility, and provide access to 140 miles of transmission corridors for bike trails and \$1.5 million funding an initial trail. Negotiated and closed a public-private-philthropic partnership agreement providing for the construction and operation of a \$10 million theater and arts venue, market leading 363 unit micro-apartments, 30,000 square retail space and shared parking.
- Negotiated, drafted and closed agreements providing for \$25 million investment in restoration or reuse of two underperforming municipal golf courses.
- Negotiated, drafted and closed agreements with Harris County to build and operate a Joint Processing Facility for City and County detainees, allowing the City to close its jails and streamline operations saving money and time for police and citizens.
- Created local government corporations to assist economic development programs and projects utilizing tax increment financing.
- Managed a team of lawyers representing the City in a complex environmental negotiation with federal and state agencies.
- Managed a team that updated the City's Heliport regulations.

### UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

2012 - present

Lecturer --Teach communication law and ethics to upper level undergraduates in the Valenti School of Communications at the University.

### CITY OF HOUSTON MUNICIPAL COURTS – Houston, Texas

2000 - 2008

The City of Houston Municipal Courts handle 1.5 to 2.0 million cases a year, generating \$37 to 42 million per annum. It is the third largest Court in the United States. There are over 40 full time and associate judges handling cases arising under city ordinances, Texas traffic laws and other Class C misdemeanors.

Judge of the Municipal Courts

December 2002

Associate Judge of the Municipal Courts

June, 2001

Hearing Officer in the Municipal Court's Parking Administration.

2000

- Handled all types of proceedings in the Courts including over 700 jury trials, numerous bench trials, arraignments, appeals, jail arraignments and trials, and administrative hearings, and performed magistrate duties. Handled citizen challenges to parking citations.
- Issued search and arrest warrants.
- Assisted with training new Associate Judges.
- During my tenure, the Courts underwent a complete conversion to a paperless court and electronic maintenance of judgments, scheduling, collections, warrants, and reporting and I assisted with training other Judges.
- Established Houston's Homeless Recovery Court.

### AVENUE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

2001 – 2002

Director of Rental Housing (2001)

- Oversaw Avenue's interest in a 94 unit new construction tax credit financed apartment project, by reviewing, revising and negotiating legal documents and periodic review of construction activity.
- Negotiated acquisition, developed project budget and financing structures for Avenue's

acquisition of 9 scattered site rental units. Managed predevelopment, due diligence and construction activity.

- Managed and coordinated predevelopment activities on a \$6 million project to convert an old county hospital to live work space for low income artists, including negotiating acquisition and partnership agreements, developing project budgets, financing arrangements and fundraising plans, site and building history and community outreach.

**SOLO PRACTICE -- Houston, Texas**

**1998 – 2002**

- Represented East Harris County residents in suit to clean up air pollution. Analyzed complex air pollution files, public information sources, and litigation documents to find evidence to support residents' lawsuits for damages, improved air quality and improved accountability of industrial sources in East Harris County to the homeowners in the surrounding neighborhoods. Researched legal issues, drafted court pleadings and motions, defended and took depositions.
- Assisted clients in forming, dissolving and selling businesses, including selecting corporate form, drafting and negotiation of sales documents.
- Assisted non-profit to develop a 74 unit apartment complex using low income housing tax credits and brownfield redevelopment funds. Negotiated and drafted documents and contracts for land acquisition, construction and permanent financing, management agreements and corporate structures. Provided environmental regulatory support throughout the project.

**TEXACO INC. - Houston, Texas**

**1986 - 1998**

Senior Attorney (1998)

- Provided environmental and archeological regulatory support to \$300 million natural gas pipeline construction project including day to day counseling and interfacing with FERC staff allowing project to proceed without regulatory driven interruptions.
- Drafted purchase order terms and conditions for Shell-Texaco joint venture resulting in a standard contract blending the best practices of both companies.
- Assisted in formation of buyer's consortium including identifying and resolving business organization, governance and antitrust compliance issues.
- Negotiated and drafted environmental provisions and indemnities in operational joint ventures in Jamaica and Nicaragua facilitating entry into new markets while avoiding environmental liability.
- Developed strategy and negotiated resolution of possible violations with state air agency reducing potential for fines, unfavorable publicity and potential forced closure of the facility.
- Negotiated financial guarantees and counseled natural gas sales persons avoiding potential losses resulting from customer bankruptcies.
- Participated with American Petroleum Institute's and the National Association of Manufacturers' efforts to represent industry's view of the revised National Ambient Air Quality Standards in the rulemaking process and litigation which ensured industry concerns were effectively communicated to the EPA, Congress and the public.

Attorney (1990-1997)

- Negotiated early settlement of bankruptcy actions at 50 - 60% of claim reducing counsel fees. Directed paralegal handling of routine bankruptcy claims providing least cost prosecution of collections actions.
- Negotiated creative settlement of stock sales contract dispute alleging a \$5 million chemical plant cleanup claim capping company exposure and reducing the ultimate net cost.
- Managed and led technical, managerial and legal teams to resolve government, public water company and private business claim arising from underground storage tank leak resulting in significantly less liability and reduced transaction costs.

## **STEVEN E. KIRKLAND**

- Developed and drafted standard settlement and remediation agreement which ensured faster, more consistent and responsive environmental claim resolution and reduced transaction costs. Selected to participate on interdepartmental teams that developed standard environmental operating policies that enhanced communication of best practices.
- Negotiated sales agreements for closed facilities allowing divestiture of non-performing assets.
- Developed and implemented system for negotiating, managing and tracking over 1400 environmental claims by outsourcing to and training two national law firms on successful handling and negotiation strategies which reduced total costs of claims handling and allowed re-deployment of nine in-house attorneys.
- Managed, drafted and edited pleadings and briefs, and prepared budgets and jury themes for the successful defense of Bahrle v. Texaco, a mass environmental tort claim, which was upheld by the New Jersey Supreme Court defeating a \$22 million damage claim.
- Provided counseling to managers and audit teams on air, water and waste permits and regulations, spill response and reporting, environmental remediation projects, hazardous materials transportation regulations, emergency planning and risk management minimizing the potential for fines and penalties, off site property and personal injury damage claims, and unfavorable publicity.
- Managed Bankruptcy Claims where company was a creditor. Managed litigation proof of claim process during company's own bankruptcy.

### **LICENSES**

State Bar of Texas

### **EDUCATION**

Bachelor of Arts, History - 1982  
Rice University, Houston, Texas

Doctorate of Jurisprudence, Cum Laude - 1990  
University of Houston Law Center, Houston, Texas

Senior Executives in State & Local Government – 2012  
Harvard, Kennedy School, Cambridge, MA

40 Hour Mediation Training  
AA White Dispute Resolution Center -2012

### **LANGUAGES**

English, Spanish

**CIVIC/COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS AND/OR ACTIVITIES**

Boardmember, International Association of LGBTQ+ Judges Foundation - 2023 to Present  
Co-Chair, Houston Bar Association LGBTQ+ Committee, 2019-2020  
Chair, Advisory Board, Center for the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality, Rice University - 2010 to 2022  
Boardmember, International Association of LGBTQ+ Judges - 2010 to 2023  
Technical Advisory Group, Houston Recovery Center – 2015 to present  
Community Advisory Board, Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Houston - 2013 to 2022  
Community Advisory Board, The Women's Home -2014 to 2016  
Founders Circle, Houston Walk for Mental Health Awareness - 2010 to present  
Boardmember and Secretary, Expert Nutrition (fka Houston Buyers Club) - 2005 to 2012  
Vice Chair, State Bar of Texas, LGBT Law Section (fka Sexual Orientation Gender Identity Issues Section - 2003 to 2004  
Vice Chair, Old Sixth Ward Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone Board - 2000 to 2013  
Treasurer, Annise Parker Campaign -1991 to 2001  
Fellow, Texas Bar Foundation - 1999  
Chair, Abandoned & Contaminated Sites Subcommittee, Houston Foresight II Committee –1998 -2000  
Member – Houston's Committee for Sustainable Community Redevelopment - 1998  
Member - Pro Bono College of Texas - 1996 to 2001  
Board Member & Past President - Avenue Community Development Corporation - 1992 to 2001  
Board Member – Stonewall Lawyers of Greater Houston (fka Bar Association for Human Rights) - 1992 to 1993  
Board Member - Old Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association - 1991 to 1998  
Member - Order of the Barons - 1990  
Joint Ventures for Business and Humanities - 1982  
Baker College Shakespearean Theater Producer - 1982  
Chairman - Texas Public Interest Research Group - 1979 to 1980

**AWARDS**

John Paul Barnish Justice Award, Houston GLBT Political Caucus, 2020  
Houston Bar Association President's Award, 2020  
Mayor Annise Parker Leadership Award, Victory Fund, 2018  
Phyllis Randolph Frye Award, Stonewall Lawyers of Greater Houston - 2015  
Trailblazer Award, Harris County Democratic Party - 2011  
Houston GLBT Political Caucus Leadership Award-2009  
Judge Norman Black Award, State Bar of Texas, LGBT Law Section - 2009  
Harvey Milk Award, Houston Stonewall Young Democrats - 2008  
Government Friend of the Homeless Award, Coalition for the Homeless of Houston & Harris Co.-2006  
Greater Houston Preservation Alliance's Good Brick Award for Neighborhood Revitalization - 1996  
AmJur Award, Antitrust -1988  
Baker College Fellow - 1982  
Philpott Award for Exceptional Service to Baker College - 1982

**PRESENTATIONS**

Adjunct professor, University of Houston,  
Communications Law and Ethics, (UH Comm 4303)  
Fall Semester 2012 to present

"Protecting Every Citizen's Right to Participate in Jury Service"  
The Houston Lawyer, Vol. 58, No. 2  
September/October 2020

"Do Americans Have a Right to Lie?"  
University of Texas, Communication Law and Ethics  
September 22, 2020

"2020 Supreme Court Update: Bostock v Clayton County"  
University of Houston Law Center  
August 6, 2020

"Advocating for LGBTQ+ Dignity and Humanity: What You Need to Know Now"  
State Bar of Texas Annual Meeting  
June 2020

"Communicating with Judges"  
NBI, Civil Judicial Forum, April 17, 2020

"Wedding Cakes, Historical Perspective on current issues in the LGBT Community"  
Rice University, Sexual Debates Class, April 20, 2020

"Policy implementation, impacts and consequences"  
UH Graduate School of Social Work, Advanced Social Welfare Policy Analysis class, October 16, 2019

"Evening with the Judiciary"  
Houston Bar Association, Construction Law Section, October 16, 2019

"Gender Fairness"  
Judges Panel Discussion, Houston Bar Association, April 12, 2017

"Let's Talk about It: Attorney Wellbeing"  
Mexican American Bar Association of Houston, October 9, 2017  
Houston Bar Association, Litigation Section, February 20, 2018

"Healthy Lawyers" Panel Discussion  
Lavender Law, National LGBT Bar Association, August 3, 2017

"Sexual Orientation and Juror Bias"  
American Association for Justice, July 24, 2017

"It's Worse than We Thought; The Prevalence of Substance Abuse and Other Mental Health Concerns"  
Stonewall Lawyers Association of Houston, October, 2016  
City of Houston Legal Department, December 1, 2016

"Civil Court Judicial Forum: What Civil Court Judges Want You to Know"  
National Business Institute, October 25, 2012

“Emerging issues in Energy Law,”  
Panel discussion for National LGBT Bar Association, 2012 Lavender Law Career Fair and Conference

“Impaired lawyers, Judges and Texas Lawyers Assistance Program”  
Harris County Criminal Judges CJE, August 7, 2012

“Sixty Days out from Trial”  
Mexican American Bar Association of Houston, October 10, 2011,  
Houston Young Lawyers, January 27, 2012

“Outing: the Unique Privacy Issues Affecting the LGBT Community,”  
Moderated the panel discussion for National LGBT Bar Association, 2011 Lavender Law Career Fair and Conference

“Foreclosures” Panel Discussion  
Houston Bar Association, March 3, 2011

“Civil Court Judicial Forum: Advanced Discovery and Trial Practice”  
National Business Institute, November 19, 2010

“Judges, Jury Service, and Judicial Elections”  
Eastwood Civic Club, Montie Beach Civic Club, November, 1 & 4, 2010  
International Longshoremen's Union, Retirees Club, October 19, 2011  
Tomball Rotary, October 26, 2011

“Practice Tips for the District Courts”  
Panel Discussion, Harris County Democratic Lawyers Association, October 7, 2010

“Running as an open LGBT Candidate”  
007 Democrats, September 27, 2010

“Citizens United: Corporate Money, Federal Elections and LGBT Equality”  
Moderated the panel discussion for National LGBT Bar Association, 2010 Lavender Law Career Fair and Conference

“Marketing yourself as an LGBT job applicant”  
OutLaw, University of Houston Law Center, April 21, 2010

“Gay Elected Officials Panel Discussion”  
Lone Star College CY Fair GLBTA present Gay Pride Week, March 25, 2010

“Practice Tips for the 215<sup>th</sup> District Court”  
Houston Bar Association – Litigation Section, December 15, 2009  
Houston Lawyers Association, February 9, 2010

“New Judicial Perspectives: Mediation and ADR”  
Houston Bar Association – ADR Section, September, 15, 2009

“Yes, Lawyers in Mainstream Practices Can Still Serve the LGBT Community”  
National LGBT Bar Association's Annual Career Fair and Conference, Brooklyn, NY –  
September 11, 2009

“The Importance of Diversity in the Legal Profession”  
Black Law Students Association, South Texas College of Law -- August 27, 2009

"Litigating Consumer Cases: The View From the Bench."

State Bar of Texas, Consumer and Commercial Law Course – August 13, 2009

"Seizure and Forfeiture Practice and other changes at the Civil Courthouse"

North Harris County Bar Association

"Things That Surprise Us in the Law"

Meyerland Democrats – July 20, 2009

"Communities in Schools Legal Internship Judges' Roundtable"

HBA, Community in Schools Program, June 22, 2009

"Out in the Workplace"

OUTLaw, University of Houston Law Center – March 11, 2009

"Gay Marriage Panel Discussion"

Lone Star College CY Fair GLBTA present Gay Pride Week, March 23, 2009

March 11, 2010

"The Judicial Role and Responsibilities"

Houston Municipal Court

New Associate Judge Training – 2006

"Anatomy of a Speeding Case"

Stonewall Lawyers CLE Luncheon --2006

"Anti-Gay Bias in the Courtroom"

Stonewall Lawyers CLE Luncheon --2004

"Municipal Court Practice"

Stonewall Lawyers CLE Luncheon --2003

Community Law Day – 2003

"Jefferson Davis Artist Lofts – New Life for an Old Hospital"

City of Houston, Brownfields Conference -- 2003

"The Washington Courtyards Story"

City of Houston, Brownfields Conference -- 1999

"The Petrochemical Industry Lawyer's Role in a Sustainable America"

National Association of Environmental Law Students - 1998

"Missed Opportunities; Avoiding Litigation and Claims by Appropriate Timely Response"

Texaco International Marketing and Manufacturing

Operations and Environmental Conference – 1998

"Won Lost and Why?"

Texaco Environmental Remediation Management Workshop - 1997

"Legal Issues for the OPA Qualified Individual/On Scene Commander"

Oil Pollution Act Training Workshops for Texaco Trading and Transportation

and Texaco Caribbean - 1997

"A Legal Perspective of Fugitive Hydrocarbon Data"

Texaco R&D Hydrocarbon Characterization and Source Identification Workshop – 1995

"Environmental Law, An Overview"

Texaco Legal Department, Paralegal Development -- 1994