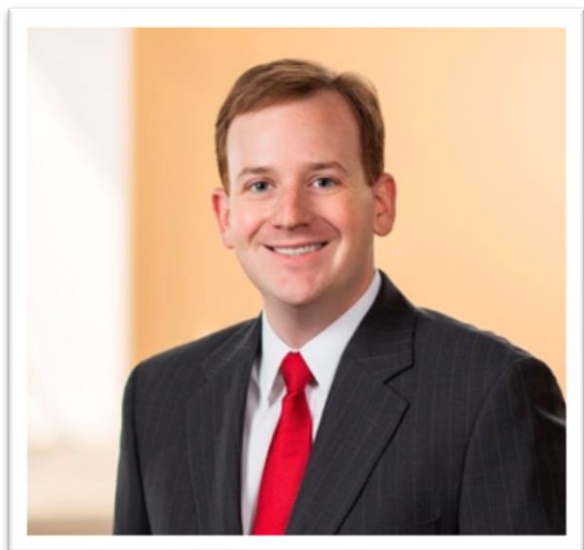




## Alumni Spotlight: Stephen Gilstrap



I graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 2008 with a B.A. in Plan II/Government and a B.B.A. in Business Honors/Finance. I was inducted into Texas Blazers in 2006 and served as Vice-Chair of Membership my senior year. During my time at UT, in addition to Blazers, I was a Friar, involved with Student Government, and a member of the Tejas Club.

My best memories from Blazers are from serving as Vice-Chair of Membership. When I took over, the number of applications had been declining for a few years, and David Yount (then Chairman) and I undertook an aggressive approach to increase those numbers and recruit two great New Guy classes. Thankfully, our hard work paid off semesters, and I do not believe that Blazers has had any shortage of quality applicants over the past many years.

After I graduated from UT, I attended law school at Yale, graduating in 2011. From there, I clerked for two federal judges, first, for the Honorable Lewis A. Kaplan of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, and second, for the Honorable José A. Cabranes of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. After I completed those clerkships, my wife (Meggie – a UT grad and Orange Jacket alum) and I moved back to Texas, settling in Dallas. I now work as a senior litigation associate at Vinson & Elkins, LLP where I specialize in appellate law and complex commercial litigation.

I remember my time at UT and in Blazers fondly and have worked to contribute back to my alma mater. I worked with several other Blazer alumni to help found the Blazer Alumni Network a few years ago and currently serve on its Advisory Council. I also am a member of the BHP Alumni Advisory Board, and I serve on the Plan II Board of Visitors.

### **What advice would you give a current Blazer?**

Enjoy everything that UT and Texas Blazers has to offer. You are surrounded by a fantastic group of guys. Learn from them; make lasting friendships; stay in touch after graduation. Some of my best friends in college were Blazers, and we still update each other on big life events—such as marriages and new kids.

### **What was your New Guy Class Project?**

Like many New Guy projects, ours focused on giving back at Eastside Memorial High School (then known as Johnston High School). We hosted a day of career development where we brought in speakers, etc. for the students.

### **How does your time in Blazers (lessons/experience) intertwine with the work you do now?**

Texas Blazers instilled in me the importance of service. It can sometimes be hard to find the time to give back when you are working and have a family, but I try to focus some of my work on pro bono cases, and I work to give back through various avenues here in Dallas—whether it be through church or other community organizations.