

Shawn Raymond Honored by University of Texas School of Law as the 2019 Distinguished Alumnus for Community Service

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On October 7th, Houston partner Shawn Raymond was honored by the University of Texas School of Law as the 2019 Distinguished Alumnus for Community Service. Raymond, who graduated in 1999, was recognized as, “a law firm partner who mixes high-stakes litigation with high-stakes pro bono service.”

Susman Godfrey Managing Partner Neal Manne introduced Raymond at the event. In his speech, Raymond spoke about and addressed his four young sons and his quest to instill in them the notion that their purpose in life is to help others and to do good. You can read that speech here.

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Raymond has always maintained an active pro bono practice and makes a point to take on matters involving important community issues. He represented, pro bono, a wrongfully convicted man, Alfred Dewayne Brown, in his now successful quest to obtain an “actual innocence” finding from the Harris County D.A.’s office after nearly a decade on death row for a murder he didn’t commit. Raymond also represents pro bono a family from Angola seeking asylum in the U.S. He previously represented a national resettlement agency that successfully opposed an effort by the state of Texas to block Syrian refugees from being placed in Texas. He is also part of the Susman Godfrey leadership team prosecuting the Flint, Michigan water crisis class action.

Raymond has received wide recognition for his community work. The Houston Astros named him a “Hometown Hero” for going “over and beyond and performing extraordinary acts within his community.” The mayor of Houston also proclaimed a “Shawn Raymond Day” to honor his decades of community service. Raymond was the first man elected as Board Chair of the Houston Area Women’s Center, an organization supporting survivors of domestic and sexual violence. He now serves on the school board for KIPP Texas Public Schools, which serves more than 25,000 students.

Raymond’s commitment to community service pre-dates his work as a lawyer. After graduating magna cum laude from George Washington University, he joined Teach for America and spent two years teaching special education and social studies to high school students in Sunflower County, Mississippi. While at UT Law, Raymond co-founded the Sunflower County Freedom Project, which provides educational and leadership opportunities to at-risk teenagers living in the Mississippi Delta. Now in its 21st year, the Freedom Project has expanded and serves more than 150 students with year-round programming. Raymond also co-founded the U.S. Public Service Academy, an initiative to establish an undergraduate institution modeled on the U.S. military academies and devoted to developing civilian leaders.

To view a short video that was played during the event about Raymond and the impactful work he has done, click [here](#).