

## A Foundation for a Strong Future in East Texas

IMMEDIATELY AFTER GRADUATING FROM BAYLOR LAW School, Melissa Smith moved to East Texas and began racking up wins in the highly competitive personal injury law business. In her first year of practice, at the age of 26, she filed a case that she would ultimately try and earn her a place in the Million Dollar Advocates Forum. Her track record of courtroom success continued thereafter.

### A SUCCESSFUL UNION

By age 32, Smith left the prominent Marshall firm where she began her practice to co-found her own firm with Gil Gillam, a well respected litigator in East Texas. Named to the *Texas Super Lawyers*® list year after year, Gillam is Smith's personal mentor.

The union has proved successful as Gillam and Smith continue to ensure justice for individuals and businesses in need of courtroom advocates throughout the Eastern District of Texas and the counties in and around Marshall, Tyler, Texarkana and Lufkin.

### ACCOMPLISHMENT, LEADERSHIP AND RECOGNITION

Smith has joined Gillam in becoming board-certified in personal injury trial law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and as a civil trial advocate by the National Board of Trial Advocacy. She was also inducted into the prestigious American Board of Trial Advocates and the Multi-Million Dollar Advocates Forum.

She has assumed leadership positions in every association in which she has been involved. She served as one of the youngest officers ever on the executive committee of AAJ (formerly ATLA), she sat on the Advocates Board of TTLA and she is a past president of the Northeast Texas Trial Lawyers Association.

This year Smith obtained the largest personal injury verdict in the history of the Marshall, Texas Federal Courthouse, which complements Gillam's achievement of obtaining the largest commercial verdict in the same venue.

Her selection to *Texas Rising Stars* is even more impressive when one notes the fact that Smith accomplished all of this by age 35.

### VALUED RELATIONSHIPS

Gillam and Smith value the relationships they have developed over the years with colleagues on both sides of the docket. The duo believes that solid referral and joint venture relationships with other committed lawyers litigating in East Texas build the foundation for a strong future for their boutique practice.

## GILLAM ❖ SMITH, L.L.P.

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