

# Meet CBA YLD Chair Mallory Hasbrook

BY HALEY HEMEN

On the path to becoming a lawyer, CBA Young Lawyers Division Chair Mallory Hasbrook took a small but significant detour early on in her academic career. “When I started undergrad at the University of Oklahoma, I initially planned to major in political science with an eye toward law school,” she recalls. “However, I took an introduction to geology course as an elective my freshman year and fell in love with the subject so much that I changed my major.”

Hasbrook explains, “Oil and gas is a major part of Oklahoma’s economy, so when you grow up there, it’s almost impossible not to have some familiarity with or connection to the industry.” Delving further into the subject, she found she enjoyed learning more about the history and processes that have and will continue to shape our planet, including those that formed the natural resources that we depend on, such as oil and gas. And she wasn’t simply confined to the classroom. The undergraduate program at the University of Oklahoma incorporates field work, and Hasbrook completed her capstone course for the degree at the Bartell Field Camp in Cañon City, Colorado.

## Switching Gears

However, as she reached the end of her undergraduate career, she knew she didn’t want to pursue a master’s degree in geology. “I spoke to one of my geology professors about the other options available to me, and he encouraged me to think outside the box, and to consider my other passions.” In high school, Hasbrook had an AP US history teacher who “encouraged us to respectfully debate each other when we had differing opinions, write persuasive papers, and



think about issues from all angles. I loved the class and his approach, and he took the time to talk with me about what careers I should consider that included those skills.” Since then, law school had always been in the back of her mind, and as graduation neared, “I decided to go for it.”

Hasbrook went from undergrad to law school, choosing to stay at the University of Oklahoma because of her love for the school and the strength of its reputation in her chosen areas of focus. “It was important to me because I knew the law school had an amazing energy and natural resources program,” she says. While studying, Hasbrook was involved in several student groups, including the Energy Resources Law Student Association and the Organization

for the Advancement of Women in Law. She also took on the role of editor-in-chief of the *American Indian Law Review*.

## Colorado Beckons

During her third year of law school, Hasbrook’s husband, who was working as a petroleum geologist at the time, found out his job, based in oil and gas, would be transferred to Denver. “We are both committed to having successful careers and made the joint decision to move,” she says. “We were open to an adventure and already loved Colorado, so making the move was an easy decision!”

Following her graduation from law school, Hasbrook moved to Colorado and immediately began studying for the bar. “Because of my husband’s support, I was able to extend my job search until I found the right position. Welborn, Sullivan, Meck, and Tooley was hiring for an associate position focused on natural resources and had been highly recommended to me by a fellow University of Oklahoma alumni.”

Hasbrook’s practice now focuses on oil and gas title work, but also involves other areas she didn’t expect, such as estate planning, probate, and elder law, which she was surprised to find she really enjoys. “My firm focuses on natural resources, but we seek to assist our clients with all areas in which they might need assistance. I learned early on that the crossover between title work and estate planning is more natural than most might think—often, clients come to us requesting curative work with respect to their own mineral interests, which might involve opening probate, or a determination of heirship. Further, in estate planning, it’s important to understand what steps to take if a client’s assets include mineral interests. This isn’t an issue that most general estate planners encounter on a day-to-day basis, but it’s an area in which I can provide my expertise.”

## Outside Engagement

Hasbrook first became involved with the CBA at the encouragement of a mentor. “I was fortunate to have an amazing mentor within my firm, Nancy Peterson, who guided me, helped me grow, and encouraged my involvement with the CBA.

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“Nancy joined Welborn, Sullivan, Meck, and Tooley not long after I did, and her practice areas involved estate planning, probate, and elder law. She taught me these areas of law and encouraged me to get involved with the CBA Elder Law and Trust and Estate Sections to meet other practitioners, as she was involved in those sections and had found it helpful over the course of her own career.

“Nancy has since retired but was instrumental in encouraging me to get involved outside of the firm with organizations where I can make a difference beyond the practice of law, which is very important to me,” Hasbrook says. “I am grateful that I work for a firm that shares these values and takes the time to teach its associates not only how to practice law, but how to do it well.”


And though she first became involved in the CBA with a push from her mentor, Hasbrook has stayed involved because of what she found within the CBA YLD. “Being from out of state meant that I had very few connections when I moved to Colorado, and within the YLD, I

have found lifelong friendships with my fellow council members, as well as a way to give back to other young attorneys. I believe service is so important, and if you can give back to your community, you have a responsibility to do so.” In addition to the CBA, Hasbrook is also a member of the Denver Association of Oil and Gas Title Lawyers and the Colorado Women’s Bar Association.

#### **YLD Meets Pandemic Life**

Like every professional organization, the CBA YLD faced serious setbacks as the COVID-19 crisis emerged. But Hasbrook is impressed with how the YLD found creative ways to remain relevant and useful to its members during this time. “One of the YLD’s biggest strengths is our ability to adapt. Over the past year, we have

modified our programming to include virtual events that could reach out to young attorneys where they were, at home, statewide.” As chair, Hasbrook understands that “it is crucial for us to continue to reach out to our members around the state, even as we may return to in-person events. Our goal is to remain as flexible as possible, and in tune with our members’ needs.”

For any young lawyers on the fence about joining the CBA or the YLD, Hasbrook would emphasize the community aspect. “It is important to make connections with your peers, both for personal purposes such as networking, but also to build relationships that you can fall back on when you need advice or guidance. Joining the CBA is a perfect way to get involved, to give back to your community, and to begin to build those relationships.” 



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