



DONALD DAVIS SEMINAR

MANAGING THE PRACTICE



Texas Criminal Defense
Lawyers Association

Date November 14, 2025
Location Criminal Justice Center, 1201 Franklin, 20th Floor, Houston, TX 77002
Course No. 174294872
Course Director Staci Biggar
Total CLE Hours 6.00 Ethics: 3.00

Seminar Agenda

Time	CLE	Topic	Speaker
9:00 am	0.75	Financial Planning in Uncertain Times	Elijah Lopez <i>Manske Wealth Mgmt</i>
9:45 am	0.75 (0.75 ethics)	Navigating the Caseload: Secondary Trauma & Compassion Fatigue	Wilvin Carter
10:30 am		BREAK	
10:45 am	0.75	Resilience: Preventing & Recovering From Burnout	Katie McQueen, MD <i>La Hacienda Treatment Center</i>
11:30 am	0.5 (0.50 ethics)	Attorney Stories of Recovery & Remission	Chris Flood
12:00 pm		BREAK - PICK UP LUNCH	
12:15 pm	0.75	The Life and Lessons of Donald Davis	Lott J. Brooks III Cheryl Irvin
1:00 pm	1.0 (0.25 ethics)	Balancing the Scales: Navigating Volatile Personal Relationships	Mekisha Walker
2:00 pm		BREAK	
2:15 pm	0.75 (0.75 ethics)	Effective Tools for Your Mind & Practice	Jed Silverman
3:00 pm	0.75 (0.75 ethics)	How to Avoid Losing Your License: Ethical Considerations of Lawyer Well-Being	Bobby Caine <i>Texas Lawyers Assistance Program (TLAP)</i>
3:45 pm		ADJOURN	

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In Loving Memory of **Donald Ray Davis**

(Dec 1956 – Jun 2000)



Donald Ray Davis graduated from Grambling High School, Louisiana. He received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Kansas in 1977 and his Juris Doctorate from the University of Ohio College of Law in 1980.

Donald joined the Harris County District Attorney's Office where he remained until 1985. He became the Chief Prosecutor in the 178th District Court. He then joined Connie B. Williams and Richard W. Wilkinson, Jr. in private practice where he excelled in criminal defense work. Attorneys Lott J. Brooks III and Diana Olvera later joined him in practice.

He carried a heavy caseload including at least 30 capital murder cases where he secured life sentences for 11 defendants. In 1994 Donald was rated one of the Top 12 Criminal Defense Lawyers in Houston, Texas. In the 20 years that Donald practiced law, he built many firm and lasting relationships among his peers. His trial skills and quiet and courteous competency was unrivaled at the criminal courthouse. Eventually the life he spent defending the accused had taken its toll. In 2000, overwhelmed by back-to-back murder trials, Donald took his own life.

This seminar is aptly named for Donald Davis in the hopes of reaching out to lawyers who give their all to their clients while experiencing difficulties balancing their own lives with the practice of law, and/or who may be struggling with personal issues such as depression, addictions, or health problems.

We never know everything that lies behind a man's decision to end his own life. In the case of Donald Davis, I think that it's natural for us, in our adversarial relationship with the judiciary, to blame them. I'm good with that. They worked him like a rented mule, and maybe if they had given him a chance to come up for air between trials, he would still be with us today.

The defense of people charged with crimes can be isolating and brutalizing. We are charged with protecting society's most hated from the consequences, usually, of their own mistakes. Whether we care about our clients or not (and I think most of us usually do), we take it personally when we are not able to help them as much as we feel we should be able.

At the same time, most of us are sole practitioners, physically isolated from our brothers and sisters fighting the same fight. Nobody but us cares about us, but we don't always heed the flight attendants' admonition to put our own oxygen masks on first. Our health suffers—we suffer from depression, from alcoholism, from sedentary lifestyles, from poor diets and from divorce.

But if we don't take care of ourselves, we can't take care of the people whom we are charged with defending. It is with that in mind that HCCLA several years ago put on the first "dealing with the practice" seminar. We named it in honor of Donald Davis, so that his life would not go unremembered and his death would not be in vain.

The seminar is about helping yourself and your fellow criminal-defense lawyers so that we can all be better lawyers and have better lives.

Thank you for attending,

*Mark Bennett
HCCLA Past President*

