

LAW MATTERS

April 2022

Volume XXXIII No. 11



ANNUAL MEETING AND AWARDS BANQUET



MARTHA CRAIG DAUGHTREY
AWARD
BARBARA J. MOSS



RISING STAR AWARD
CHRISTEN BLACKBURN

COCKTAILS 5:00 PM DINNER 6:30 PM

04 | 21 | 2022

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2022 Marth Craig Daughtrey Award Recipient

Barbara Moss



Barbara Moss, the founder of Elder Law of Nashville, has been practicing law in Nashville for more than 30 years. She started out as a trial lawyer and now focuses her practice on elder law, conservatorships, probate, estate planning, Medicare, and Medicaid.

Barbara truly cares about seniors and their families. She was a single mom and a trial lawyer for 22 years and believes that her mission, and the mission of her staff, is to relieve the anxiety of seniors and their families as they prepare for and face the challenges of aging while maintaining their standard of living.

Barbara has been named by her peers as the 2022 Lawyer of the Year in Elder Law. She has also been named “Best of the Bar” (one of the 75 best lawyers in Nashville) multiple times by peers in Nashville; has been chosen as a Mid-South Super Lawyer in Elder Law by Law & Politics Magazine, (2006-present); was named by peers to be included in The Best Lawyers in America© (2005-present); was named by peers as one of “Nashville’s Best Lawyers,” The Tennessean (2010-present); and was selected by Memphis Magazine as one of the Top 50 Women Attorneys in the Mid-South. She was an Adjunct Professor of Law at the Vanderbilt School of Law from 1984 to 2000 and is currently on the faculty of the Nashville School of Law. Barbara was the first woman to chair the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, the organization responsible for all attorney ethics and discipline in Tennessee, and holds herself to very high ethical standards.

Barbara has been recognized for her contributions to the law profession and the community with numerous honors including the Athena Award in 2007, induction into the YWCA Academy of the Women of Achievement in 2008, the Molly Todd Cup in 2009 presented by Nashville networking organization CABLE, and Nashville Business Journal, Women of Influence in 2007.

Barbara graduated in the top 10% of her class Vanderbilt University School of Law. She has written more than 90 columns for The Tennessean, most recently under the topic “Advice for Seniors.”

Barbara and her husband, Tom, love adventure travel, cooking, and their grandchildren, all of whom live in Nashville.

2022 Rising Star Award Recipient

Christen Blackburn



Christen Blackburn is an experienced litigator and as a member at Lewis Thomason, represents Fortune 500 companies, small businesses, and professionals in a variety of practice areas. Christen regularly handles tort litigation involving transportation, products liability, premises liability, and professional liability. She also dedicates a significant portion of her practice to employment litigation and workers' compensation, defending employers against allegations of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. She also advises insurance carriers on areas of insurance coverage and bad faith litigation. Christen has handled litigation in all stages from responding to initial complaints through trial before judges, juries, and administrative bodies and the American Arbitration Association.

Christen is an active member of numerous legal groups and has received numerous honors, including serving on the Nashville Bar Association Board of Directors; being named the Best Lawyers® 2021 Litigation/Insurance Law "Lawyer of the Year" in Nashville; being named to Nashville Business Journal's 2021 40 under 40; serving as a Nashville Bar Foundation Fellow; being the Immediate Past President for LAW; being named to The Best Lawyers in America®, Insurance Law and Insurance Litigation; serving as the Chair Emeritus for ALFA International Women's Initiative Practice Group Steering Committee; serving as the Community Relations Chair for the Nashville Bar Association; serving on the membership committee for the Harry Phillips American Inn of Court; and serving on the planning committee for the 2020 National Association of Women Judges Conference.

Christen is very active in community and professional organizations. She recently served as a Judge for the Nashville ATHENA Award Program, which honors outstanding women leaders in the Community. Christen also serves on the Relationship and Fund Development Committee of Adventure Science Center. In December 2021, Christen was appointed to the Tennessee Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection. Her term began on January 1, 2022 and ends on December 31, 2024.

Introducing LAW's Slate of Officers for 2022-2023

Pursuant to the LAW Bylaws, notice is hereby given that the annual meeting of the membership for the election of board of directors and officers for 2022-2023 will be held on April 21, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at Music City Center, 201 Rep. John Lewis Way S., Nashville, Tennessee. Nominees for the officers and directors are introduced below. Other nominations may be made from the floor at the annual meeting.



President—Shellie Handlesman. Shellie is the founder of Handelsman Law, where she practices estate planning and probate law, entertainment and sports law, intellectual property law (copyright and trademark), and business law. Shellie is a 2014 graduate of Belmont University College of Law, where she also earned a certificate in Entertainment and Music Business Law. She holds a Bachelor in Music from Berklee College of Music. Shellie participates in Spartan obstacle course racing and dotes on her two golden retrievers, Dakota and Decker.



President-Elect—Emily Warth. Emily is an Assistant General Counsel with the Leads Global Ethics & Compliance Team at Asurion. She oversees litigation matters and advises on other risk-related issues. She was in private practice for over eight years before joining Asurion in 2015. Emily is a 2006 graduate of Vanderbilt University School of Law and holds a BA in Political Science and Music from Southern Methodist University. She and her husband enjoy traveling in the US and internationally with their ten-year-old twins.



Secretary—Tabitha Robinson. Tabitha is a Staff Attorney at Nashville Electric Service. She is a 2017 graduate of the University of Tennessee College of Law and received her BA in political science and government from Clemson University. Tabitha volunteers for numerous non-profit organizations and boards. She was the recipient of the CABLE Young Professional Award in 2021. Tabitha enjoys traveling and cooking, and playing the saxophone. She and her husband have two Ragdoll cats, Buffy and Poppy who are widely popular on Instagram.



Treasurer—Rachel Berg. Rachel is an Associate in Polsinelli's Commercial Litigation group. Her practice focuses on class action defense and multidistrict litigation. She is a 2015 graduate of Fordham University School of Law. She holds an MSc from the London School of Economics and a BA from Vassar College. Before joining Polsinelli, she clerked for Judge Eli J. Richardson in Nashville, Judge Alan K. Kay of the US District Court for the District of Hawaii. Her legal career started in the New York office of a major international law firm. Rachel and her husband had their first child in October.



Archivist—Kaley Bell. Kaley is Corporate Counsel at Legility. She is a 2014 graduate of Belmont University College of Law, where she also earned a certificate in Entertainment Law. She holds a BS in English Literature (British and Commonwealth). Kayle also worked as an Associate at Leitner, Williams, Dooley & Napolitan, and has other in-house counsel experience. She enjoys volunteering for organizations that work with children and families and the arts.



Newsletter Editor—Amanda Bradley. Amanda is of counsel at Hartzog & Silva, PLLC in Franklin, specializing in family law. She served as a Judicial Law Clerk and Judicial Assistant to the Honorable Frank G. Clement, Jr. of the Tennessee Court of Appeals. She is a 2016 graduate of Nashville School of Law and holds a Bachelor of Music, Vocal Performance from the University of Kentucky. Amanda loves traveling and going to plays with friends and family while keeping up with her middle school son's activities.



Newsletter Editor—Kierstin Jodway. Kierstin recently moved to K & L Gates from Waller and practices in labor and employment. She is a 2017 graduate of Belmont University College of Law and holds a BBA in Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies from Belmont University. She spent a year at King's College London studying International Law and the European Union, and International Business. Besides work, she and her wife stay busy with their daughter's activities and volunteer for community organizations.



Newsletter Editor—Devon Landman. Devon is an Attorney with Whitfield Coleman Bullock, focusing her practice on plaintiff's work in personal injury and medical malpractice. Also licensed in FLA, she worked as an Assistant State Attorney after law school. She received her law degree from Belmont University College of Law in 2017 and holds a bachelor's degree in Communication and Media Studies from the University of Alabama. Recently engaged, Devon is busy with wedding planning outside of work.



Newsletter Editor—Leighann Ness. Leighann has worked at HCA Healthcare since 2015 as Litigation Counsel and Operations Counsel—Physicians Services Group, her current position. She received her law degree from The University of Memphis—Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law in 2012 and holds a BA in Sociology from San Diego State University. Leighann enjoys practicing yoga away from the office and recently attained her RYT200 yoga certification. She and her elementary-aged son and high school-aged daughter enjoy snow and water skiing.



First Year Director—Corey Harkey. Corey currently serves as Associate GC for Austin Peay State University. Prior to joining APSU, she served as Assistant GC at TSU. as a Metropolitan Attorney for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County where she acted as primary legal counsel for the Metropolitan Board of Education and the MSPS. She is a 2009 graduate of Cleveland State University - Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. She and her husband have two children.



First Year Director—Jessica Lim. Jessica is an Elections Attorney with the Tennessee Secretary of State. Prior to her current position, Jessica worked in private practice in Nashville and the Washington, DC area. She is a 2014 graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law and holds a BA in Political Science from Samford University. Jessica and her husband have two busy pre-schoolers, and they are expecting baby #3 very soon.



Second Year Director—Shundra Manning. Shundra is an Associate in the Litigation Practice Group in Bradley’s Nashville office. She is a “Double Dore” as she received her law degree from Vanderbilt University Law School in 2018 and holds a BA in English Vanderbilt University. While at Vanderbilt, Shundra was a three-time recipient of the Avon N. Williams, Jr. and Robert Lillard Law School Scholarship and was inducted into Phi Delta Phi Legal Honor Society.



Second Year Director—Courtney Orr. Courtney is the East Tennessee Leader & Senior Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Appeals Division. She received her law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 2014 and holds a bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Furman University. Courtney is an accomplished harpist, and was the recipient of LAW’s Marion Griffin Scholarship at UT College of Law.



Immediate Past President—Kimberly Faye. Kimberly is an Associate at Waller Lansden Dortch and Davis, LLP where she is a policy advisor on legislative and administrative issues. Prior to joining Waller, she worked at Bone McAllister & Norton and was a Judicial Clerk to the Honorable Frank G. Clement, Jr. She received her law degree from the Nashville School of Law in 2015 and holds a BS in Music Business, Marketing from Middle Tennessee State University. Kimberly enjoys spoiling her two nephews, and her golden retriever Leo and her cat Spartapuss.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Kimberly Faye



It is bittersweet to write my last President's message. It has been one of the most challenging and rewarding jobs to serve as President of this great organization. I am excited and looking forward to what President-Elect Shellie Handelsman has in store for her term!

I am so thankful for everyone who volunteered their time to serve on the board this year, participate in our CLEs and events, and support the organization in general. The pandemic threw so many curve balls

at us along the way, but I truly believe that we handled things the best we could and that LAW came out stronger on the other side. In April, we hosted our board meeting in person which was the first time since February 2020. It truly was special for me to have the majority of our board back in one room together for that meeting. It felt like old times. It brought back memories of my very first LAW board meeting in 2016 when I joined the board as a committee co-chair. I was nervous and excited to be in a room with so many women I admired. Flash-forward to my last board meeting as President of LAW, and I felt the same way. I honestly do not have words to express my gratitude for having the privilege to collaborate and build friendships with so many intelligent, strong, and genuine women. YOU are why I love this organization!

In closing, I share a quote from Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, confirmed 116th Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court: "Be open to new ideas and experiences because you'll never know when someone else will have an interesting thought or when a new door will open to take you on the journey of your dreams." Thank you for trusting me with the responsibility of serving as President of LAW, one of the most rewarding journeys I have known to date.

Membership Renewals were recently emailed.

Renew soon!

2021-2022 LAW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Board

Kimberly Faye, *President*

Shellie Handelsman, *President-Elect*

Emily Warth, *Secretary*

Leighann Ness, *Treasurer*

Brooke Coplon, *2nd Year Director*

Tabitha Robinson, *2nd Year Director*

Shundra Manning, *1st Year Director*

Courtney Orr, *1st Year Director*

Rachel Berg, *Archivist*

Samantha Simpson, *Archivist*

Amanda Bradley, *Newsletter Editor*

Hannah Kay Freeman, *Newsletter Editor*

Devon Landman, *Newsletter Editor*

Caroline Sapp, *Newsletter Editor*

Sara Anne Quinn, *Immediate Past President*

Committee Co-chairs

New Admittees' Breakfast

Kaley Bell, *Chancellor* Claudia Bonnyman,
April Knox

Community Relations

Savannah Darnall, Jackie Dixon, Danielle Johns

Diversity Equity and Inclusion

Kierstin Jodway, Quynh-Anh Kibler,
Angela Williams

Health and Wellness

Morgan Bernard, Rachel Taylor

Judicial Appointments, Elections and Awards

Ellen Bowden-McIntyre

Legislation and Litigation

Annie Beckstrom, Jenny Charles

Marion Griffin Women's Symposium 2021

Liz Sitgreaves, Kyontzè Toombs

Membership

Katharine Fischman, Callie Hinson

Mentoring/Member Development

Alaina Beach, Mel Gworek, Corey Harkey

Networking

Katie Bennett, Blake Howell,
Jessica Cunningham Lim

Programs

Jan Margaret Craig, Mandy Floyd,
Candi Henry

Executive Director

Melanie Gober Grand

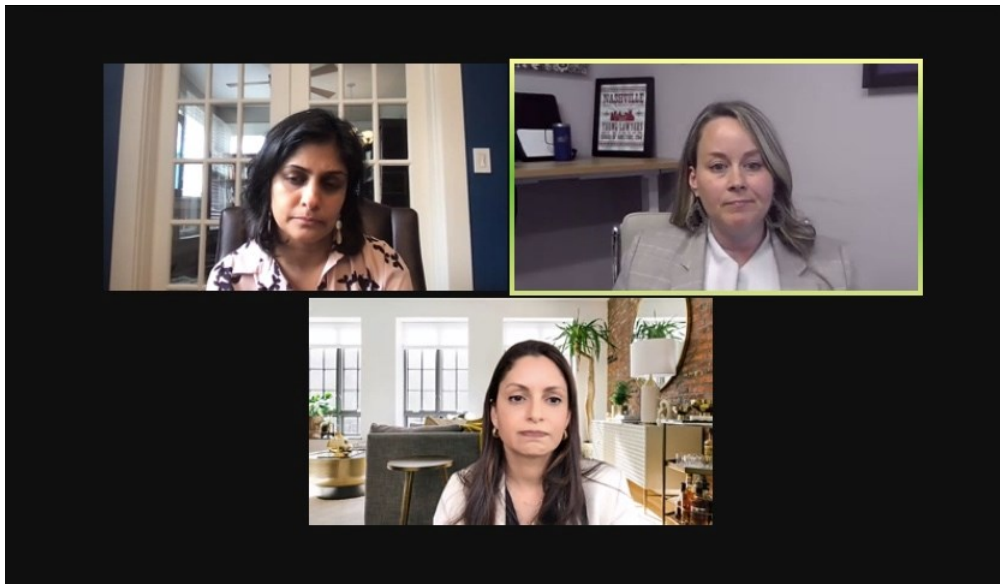
LAW Matters is a monthly publication of the Lawyers' Association for women—Marion Griffin Chapter, P. O. Box 210436, Nashville, Tennessee, 37221-0436. Voicemail: 615.708.1827 Fax: 888.834.7370; www.law-nashville.org.

Beyond a Reasonable Doubt: How the Tennessee Innocence Project & the Davidson County District Attorney Review Wrongful Conviction Cases

By: Hannah Kay Hunt Freeman

On March 15, 2022, LAW held its virtual March Membership Meeting and One-Hour Dual Credit CLE: “Beyond a Reasonable Doubt: How the Tennessee Innocence Project & the Davidson County District Attorney Review Wrongful Conviction Cases.” The panelists were Jessica Van Dyke, the Executive Director and Lead Counsel at the Tennessee Innocence Project, and Sunny Eaton, the Director of the Conviction Review Unit for the Office of the District Attorney in Nashville, Tennessee. Amy Mo-han, a member at the law firm Sherrard Roe Voigt and Harbison, moderated the discussion.

The panelists offered insight on how their organizations work to overturn wrongful criminal convictions and the processes for overturning these convictions. Sunny Eaton shed light on how conviction review units function, including their role within district attorney offices and how these conviction integrity units identify and investigate past convictions for credible claims of actual innocence. Jessica Van Dyke explored the role of the Tennessee Innocence Project in seeking to effectuate changes to facilitate the discovery of wrongful convictions. Both panelists discussed the challenges convicted individuals face in overturning their convictions, how they handle the delicate issues of potential prosecutorial misconduct and maintaining relationships with prosecutors, testing policies and philosophies, and proposed legislation to help overturn wrongful convictions.



Hannah Kay is a 2021-2022 Newsletter Editor. She is Senior Corporate Counsel at Louisiana-Pacific Corporation.

Davidson County District Attorney Race Heats Up

By Jane Salem

At a recent candidates' forum sponsored by the Women's Political Collaborative, what began as a calm discussion among the incumbent and two former assistant district attorneys ended as a terse debate about the merits of whether cases involving alleged medical malpractice should also bring criminal charges.

The hour-and-a-half-long program, where the candidates often didn't express views that diverged much, changed abruptly on mention of the *Vaught* trial, a case that has garnered national attention.

On March 25, 2022, a jury found former Vanderbilt nurse RaDonda Vaught guilty of the lesser charge, criminally negligent homicide. It didn't convict for reckless homicide, the more serious charge she faced. Charges were brought after Vaught gave a 74-year-old patient a fatal dose of a paralytic medication. Vaught was accused of negligent homicide for administering the wrong drug to Charlene Murphey on December 26, 2017.

The medical community and nurses in particular watched the trial closely, with some nurses characterizing the case as an attack on their profession.

Incumbent District Attorney Glenn Funk strongly defended his office in the case. He said it wasn't about "a single mistake," but "17 instances of gross neglect, that led to a painful and gruesome death for the victim [.]" The victim was conscious while the paralyzing agent took effect, he said, and one expert said the only worse death would be "burning at the stake." Funk said they reached out to medical professionals, who urged for the case to go forward. A grand jury indicted, and a unanimous jury convicted, which jury contained two medical professionals.

"I will not prosecute medical professionals who make mistakes that amount to civil malpractice. Period," pledged opponent Sara Beth Myers. "It is so important in our society that we have a separation of criminal and civil procedures. We have an epidemic of violent crime here in Nashville." Vaught's actions were unintentional, Myers added, "and if we're going to prosecute Ms. Vaught, where does the slippery slope end?" Myers questioned how Vaught remains a danger to the community because she was stripped of her nursing license, and a civil settlement was paid.

The other challenger, P. Danielle Nellis, was also critical. The death occurred in 2017, but the case came to the DA's attention much later due to an anonymous tip "and the involvement of two state and federal authorities." Nellis said, "We know that his [Funk's] decisions are often politically motivated. As to this case, I say the elements of medical malpractice should have handled this completely."

Nellis continued, "It has created an outcry among medical professionals, in the midst of a global pandemic."

Unique Qualifications, Critiques

Funk pointed out that he has worked as a public defender, prosecutor, and in private practice, primarily criminal defense. He said it's "broad experience," where he came to understand the perspectives of different stakeholders. He quoted the district attorney who told him on his first day, "The most important part of being a district attorney, is to know the difference between a bad person and a good kid in trouble.' And I've brought that ethos to the district attorney's office."

Funk is running largely on his record, citing a high conviction rate for cases his office has tried.

Nellis emphasized that she's "not running because I am angry with the incumbent. Let us begin there. I am running because in 2013, my father-in-law, a Venezuelan immigrant, was murdered. And in 2014, my

black, gay, male cousin was murdered on Eleventh Avenue North, in a series of what appeared to be hate crimes that were not investigated as such.”

Nellis said she believes criminal justice should be done differently and has crafted a 20-page policy initiative with four principles. They are: (1) transparency: the district attorney is accountable to the public; (2) prevention: look to the root causes of criminal behavior and work to alleviate them; (3) restorative justice: focus on holding individuals accountable for their actions while healing and reducing harm to the victim and larger community; and (4) community-focused decision making: create policies to accurately reflect the role of the prosecutor within the community.

For her part, Myers said that crime has risen sharply in the last eight years, and that as DA, she’ll implement criminal justice reform. She brings experience as a local, state, and federal prosecutor for ten years, the last five as an assistant U.S. attorney as the civil rights and human trafficking coordinator in her office. “I became a prosecutor because I was inspired by survivors,” she said.

Myers proposes helping victims through three “pillars”: (1) dividing the office into precincts and locating assistant district attorneys to neighborhood offices, so they have a deeper understanding of the population they serve; (2) formation of a restorative justice unit to reintegrate past offenders into the community, and (3) performing the first-ever civil rights criminal justice audit, to see where the disparities exist and better training for law enforcement.

When asked to offer one criticism of Funk, Myers said, “So without hesitation, I would say the rising crime rate in Nashville. If the office were truly being as successful in every single department as the incumbent claims it is, our crime rates would not be consistently increasing.” She said she and Funk have distinct philosophical differences, and that the system is racially inequitable.

Nellis gave a somewhat similar answer: “What we require are systems-level solutions to systems-level problems. We know that 37208 still incarcerates the highest number of people in the country, and that statistic was relevant as of 2021, after seven years of the current administration. We know that 60 percent of the bodies held in custody right now are black and brown bodies.” Nellis also questioned some of the charging decisions, including the *Vaught* case, and the effect they have had on building trust in the community.

Funk acknowledged that crime is up, largely due to the greater availability of guns. But he said there were fewer murders in 2021 than in 2020, and that Nashville was the only major city in the country to see a decrease in homicides last year.

As to his opponents’ abilities, he said they are “excellent lawyers and fine people,” and if either defeats him, “I’ll do all I can to help them be successful in this office.”

Both opponents thanked him. For her part, Nellis said, “We really must reimagine together. And I invite each of you to reimagine with me how we do criminal justice better.” Myers added, “I think you’ve had your eight years, and it’s time for some new ideas.”

All candidates praised the abilities of the current assistant district attorneys. Funk said he’s proud to have increased diversity in the office. Both challengers also said that they wouldn’t fire anyone on their first day in office—a nod to the many ADAs in the room at the forum. Nellis noted that the current work environment in the DA’s office is “toxic,” while Myers said she’s not a “micromanager.”

Domestic Violence and Guns

Domestic violence is a serious problem, they agreed, and there aren’t easy answers on reducing it.

Myers said the office needs better training for the assistant district attorneys handling these cases. She said that 87% of cases are dismissed by the current DA’s office, adding that we “need to break the cycle of violence” with violence prevention in schools.

Nellis was likewise critical of the incumbent on this issue, noting that Davidson County has one of the highest domestic violence homicide rates in the nation. She recommended better mechanisms for scheduling, so there are no more “cattle calls” to increase the chances of victims coming to court. She also called for greater accountability by partnering with community stakeholders.

Funk agreed that domestic violence is pervasive; it accounts for over half of the violent crime in Davidson County. He sees the domestic violence unit as the most important in the office, and on his watch, he has dramatically expanded the number of personnel on the team. These days 22 professionals from varying disciplines are assigned to the unit.

Funk pointed out that a “dismissal” isn’t necessarily an undesirable outcome if the defendant has completed the required intervention program. Moreover, his office has an early intervention program that is the first in the nation, being copied by others.

The candidates agreed that violent crime has risen in recent years, and they chalked it up to laws permitting carrying firearms. These firearms that are stolen when they are visible in parked vehicles. Funk said he wanted to carve exceptions to the law in Davidson and Shelby Counties, but the Governor wasn’t receptive. His office has, however, distributed trigger-lock devices at community events and ended gun shows at the fairgrounds. Further, they prosecute all felony gun charges, and the conviction rate is high.

Nellis said that the answer will have to come from the community, since the legislature doesn’t seem interested in taking action, with initiatives like the existing violence interruption program or Gideon’s Army.

A district attorney should be a “policy maker,” Myers said, and the answer is to bring forth legislation through the DAs’ conference. For example, what about raising auto insurance premiums on persons who store guns in vehicles?

Also, her neighborhood prosecution program would be better in tune with gun violence with an eye toward prevention. As for prosecution, Myers said the incumbent’s office occasionally reduces charges to misdemeanors, releases defendants on low bonds, and allows them to be charged federally—all of which are questionable practices.

Attorney Stephanie Williams, the forum moderator, explained the importance of the office and why everyone should vote. The office carries an 8-year term, one of the longer terms served by elected officials allowed under Tennessee state law. Moreover, the responsibilities are far-reaching, both determining which cases to prosecute and which to dismiss or divert, and to some extent sanctions to be levied—all while running an office of approximately 150 employees. The decisions made in the office have a significant impact on the community.

The primary election will take place on May 3. Early voting began on April 13th at the Howard Office Building. All early voting locations open April 20, 2022.



Jane Salem is a staff attorney at the Tennessee Court of Workers' Compensation Claims in Nashville and a frequent contributor to LAW Matters.

The Candidates at a Glance

Glenn Funk

Education: Bachelor's degree, Wake Forest University; juris doctor, University of Mississippi

Experience: Assistant public defender, Shelby County, 1985-1986; assistant district attorney, Davidson County, 1986-1989; Glenn Funk, Attorney at Law, 1989-2014; Davidson County District Attorney, 2014-present.

Service: YMCA board; Interfaith Dental Clinic; ARC of Davidson County, Fifty Forward.

Sara Beth Myers

Education: Bachelor's degree, Duke University, 2003; master's degree, Yale University, 2005; juris doctor, Vanderbilt University Law School, 2009.

Experience: Jones Day, 2009-2010; Riley, Warnock & Jacobsen, 2011-2012; assistant district attorney, Davidson County, 2012-2014; assistant attorney general, State of Tennessee, 2014-2016; assistant U.S. attorney, Department of Justice, 2017-2021.

Service: Advocates for Women's and Kids' Equality; Thistle Farms board; Communities in Schools of Tennessee board; Nashville Bar Association; LAW.

P. Danielle Nellis

Education: Bachelor's degree, Spelman College, 2005; juris doctor, Boston University, 2009.

Experience: Nellis Law, 2010-2014; assistant district attorney, Davidson County, 2014-2018; Legality, 2018-2019; judicial law clerk, Davidson County Criminal Court, 2010-2021; Klein Solomon Mills, 2021-present.

Service: LAW; Harry Phillips American Inn of Court; Nashville and Napier-Looby Bar Associations; Sunday school teacher; PTA at her son's school.

“The goal of meditation isn’t to control your thoughts, it’s to stop letting them control you.”

By Morgan Bernard, Health & Wellness Co-Chair

On the evening of March 28, the Health & Wellness Committee hosted a mindfulness and meditation CLE with guest speaker Joanna McCracken. Joanna is an attorney, yoga instructor, and meditation teacher who helps educate lawyers on how to use meditation, mindfulness, and yoga techniques to overcome occupational stress and establish healthier working environments. The event took place at Mindful Nashville, a wellness center located in Germantown, that provides counseling services and group meditation. During the wellbeing presentation, Joanna explained to LAW members how stress impacts us mentally and physically, and the benefits of practicing meditation to combat the effects of stress and cultivate positive thinking patterns. Specifically, she focused on “mindfulness meditation” and the importance of being present in the moment. Joanna took into consideration that focusing during meditation can be difficult, and she explained that mind-wandering is normal and how to practice observing one’s thoughts instead of wrestling with them. With mindfulness meditation, the work is in learning to observe one’s mind and understand its tendencies, not necessarily to clear it. Joanna guided participants through several mindfulness meditation exercises and provided tools on how to establish a daily practice. The event was a great success, and the Health and Wellness Committee is looking into scheduling additional mindfulness meditation events, so be on the lookout for more in the future!



PLEASE **UPDATE YOUR DATA IN THE** **MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY**

The LAW Membership Directory is a members only directory. LAW members love to refer business to one another! Keep your contact information and areas in which you practice updated so our members can connect with one another—professionally AND personally! business to one another!

Please review your information TODAY! If you do not know your password, please email the LAW office at info@law-nashville.org to receive a new one.

LAW MENTORING AND **MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT** **UPCOMING MEETING**

LAW's Mentoring and Membership Development Committee will host a program on April 26th at the Law Offices of Lewis Thomason, 424 Church Street, Suite 2500, Nashville, TN 37219. The topic is **Freedom of Speech in Higher**. Dannelle Whiteside, Vice President for Legal Affairs and Organizational Strategy for Austin Peay State University will lead the discussion. She will explore freedom of speech in higher education. The group will look at, from the cultural, legal, and practical perspective, why free speech should be preserved, promoted, and protected. Optional CLE is offered. For more information [Click Here](#).

Early voting for Davidson County began on April 13th! **Remember the following LAW members when you go to the polls to vote!**

Chancery Court Chancellor

Part I—Chancellor Pat Moskal
Part II—Chancellor Anne Martin
Part III—l'Ashea Myles

Circuit Court Judge

Division I—Wendy Longmire
Division II—Judge Amanda McClendon
Division VII—Andra Hedrick
Division VIII—Lynne Ingram
Division VIII—Judge Kelvin Jones

Criminal Court Judge

Division II—Judge Angie Dalton
Division III—Judge Cheryl Blackburn
Division IV—Judge Jennifer Smith
Division VI—Cynthia Chappell

Juvenile Court Judge

Judge Sheila Calloway

Genera; Sessions Judge

Division II—Judge Melissa Blackburn
Division III—Judge Ana Escobar
Division IV—Judge Allegra Walker
Division V—Robin Kimbrough Hayes
Division V—Judge Dianne Turner
Division VII—Marcus Floyd
Division VIII—Judge Rachel Bell
Division IX—Judge Lynda Jones

Register of Deeds

Register of Deeds Karen Johnson

District Attorney General

Sara Beth Myers
Danielle Nellis

Board Spotlight

Second Year Director

Brooke Coplon



- **Where are you from? Tell us about your path to practicing law.**

I am from Birmingham, AL. My grandfather, father, mother, and brother are attorneys. I'm not sure I had a choice! Kidding aside, I tried several other career paths in high school and college and just kept coming back to wanting to go to law school and practice law.

- **What do you do professionally, and what is your favorite part of your job?**

I am an attorney at Wiseman Ashworth Trauger, practicing in healthcare liability and operations law. My favorite part of my job is problem solving to help a client solve a difficult situation or resolve a challenging lawsuit.

- **What leadership roles have you had with LAW?**

I am currently a Second Year Director. I have held the positions of Newsletter Editor, Membership Committee Co-Chair, Community Relations Co-Chair, and Networking Committee Co-Chair.

- **What is your favorite part of LAW?**

My favorite part of LAW is the friendships and the camaraderie. I am looking forward to seeing everyone again at in-person events!

- **It's a Saturday night in Nashville (pre-COVID-19) - what are you up to?**

Trying a new restaurant with my husband or seeing a show. Now, I have a one year old, so I typically spend Saturday nights watching Netflix after he goes to bed.

- **Facebook or Instagram?**

Instagram.

- **Phone call or text?**

Text

- **Netflix or Hulu?**

Netflix

Members in the News!



Dianna Shew appointed as new Chief Deputy. Attorney General Herbert H. Slatery, III has appointed Dianna Shew chief deputy. Dianna will coordinate and oversee the substantive legal work of all section of the office. Prior to joining the AG's office in 2018, she was associate general counsel at CoreCivic, Inc. an a partner at Stites & Harbison. She earned her law degree from Vanderbilt University Law School.



Melanie D. Wilson was recently named dean of Washington and Lee University School of Law. She will also hold the Roy L. Steinheimer Jr. Professorship in Law. LAW appreciates Dean Wilson's support of LAW's New Admittees' Breakfast and her sustaining membership during her time at the University of Tennessee College of Law.



During the organization's annual award ceremony, LAW member and former LAW board member Nina Kumar recently received Nashville Cable's 2022 ATHENA Young Professional Award. Nina is Vice President, Operations Counsel at Ardent Health Services.



Ed Lanquist has been elected to the office of vice president of the Tennessee Bar Association. He will ascend to office of president-elect in 2023 and lead the organization as president for the 2024-2025 bar year. He is a co-founder and shareholder of Patterson Intellectual Property Law, and serves as the TBA's current general counsel.



Mary Dohner Smith was elected as Middle Grand Division governor on the TBA Board of Governors. Dohner Smith is a partner at Constangy, Brooks, Smith & Prophete where she handles employment compliance and litigation. Mary served as LAW president from 2012-2013.

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