

MERCER LAWYER

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MERCER UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW



100 Years of Women

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND
ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AT MERCER LAW SCHOOL, P. 8

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SCENE FROM MACON

View of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard in downtown Macon. The newly installed Mercer banner (right) celebrates Macon as not only the home of the Mercer Bears, but also home to Macon's music legacy with the recently renovated Mercer Music at Capricorn at historic Capricorn Studios located at 540 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. Mercer Music at Capricorn is a multi-purpose music venue in downtown Macon whose mission is to leverage Macon's music heritage to create Macon's music future.



WELCOME TO
MACON
WHERE THE
**SOUTH
ROCKS!**

HOME OF THE
MERCER
BEARS

AND

CAPRICORN
sound studios



FROM THE DEAN

Dear Alumni and Friends,

The 2019-2020 academic year has been one for the history books at Mercer Law School. On March 23, our 47 instructors began teaching all 73 of our courses online — after one week’s notice — and we wrapped up the semester with all final exams offered in an online, take-home format. As you can imagine, converting our entire curriculum to online instruction was no easy feat. Our faculty, staff and students all rose to the challenge, and I am incredibly proud of their hard work.

As we conclude a year with several “firsts” for us, you will discover other landmark moments at Mercer Law in the following pages. We are highlighting our first women graduates, the first female SBA president, and the first woman to serve as editor-in-chief of *Mercer Law Review*. These milestones for diversifying the Law School changed our institution for the better, and I hope you enjoy learning about each of these trailblazing women and their journeys through law school and the legal profession.

Just as the alumni featured in this issue championed inclusion and diversity, current events and the fight for racial justice signal another landmark moment in our nation and profession. Too many times over too many years, we’ve recounted the countless names of Black men and women who were subjected to a death sentence without a charge or trial. As lawyers and lawyers-in-training, we recognize these wrongs, as well as the biases that allowed them to occur. Our community of legal scholars is uniquely positioned to make these wrongs right.

At Mercer Law, we are committed to supporting our students’ learning and understanding of where we have been, including where we have faltered, failed, and fallen short in the area of inclusivity, but even more importantly in understanding where we have opportunities to improve those shortcomings as we work toward “a more perfect union” envisioned in our Constitution. We may not know all the answers, but we know we are called by our shared commitment to human and civil rights to seek a better future and pursue equal justice under the law.

Thank you for your continued support of Mercer Law School by offering encouragement to current students and faculty. Your involvement and financial support are crucial to our continued success as we continue to offer an inclusive environment and a Mercer Law education that prepares our students for practice in a way that reflects these shared values. May 2020 be the year that changed our lives, our health perspectives, our priorities, our commitment to our fellow humans, and our tolerance for injustice — forever.

I am thankful to be part of the Mercer Law community and proud to be a Mercer Lawyer.

Sincerely yours,



Cathy Cox, '86
Dean and Professor of Law



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SCHOOL OF LAW

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100 Years of Women

In November 2019, alumni Leah Chanin, '54, Mary Alice Buckner, '73, Ann Baird Bishop, '76, Wendy Shoob, '77, M. Yvette Miller, '80, and Evett Simmons, '82, joined Dean Cathy Cox, '86, to commemorate the centennial of women at Mercer Law School.



FROM TOP: LEAH YETTER, PB PHOTOGRAPHY, LLC
OPPOSITE: CHRISTOPHER IAN SMITH

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Bridging the Gap

While Mercer Law has accepted women students for 100 years, it wasn't until the mid-1970s and early 1980s that women's enrollment dramatically increased. Hear from several alumni who were trailblazers during this time and in their careers.

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New Faculty and Staff

Mercer Law School is pleased to welcome new faculty and staff this year.



LAUREN E. MAULDIN

Sharon Bradley is the new digital & scholarly resources librarian. She served as the faculty services librarian and the special collections librarian at the University of Georgia School of Law and as the librarian for technology education at the Thomas M. Cooley School of Law. Bradley teaches legal research and speaks on topics ranging from technology competency to archives administration. She received her J.D. from the University of Montana and an M.L.S. from Florida State University.



LEAN VETTER

Brian Kammer stepped into the role of director of the Habeas Project as a staff attorney and adjunct professor of law, as Professor Sarah Gerwig-Moore, who founded the Habeas Project, moved into the role of associate dean for academic affairs. Kammer served as executive director of the Georgia Resource Center since 2009, providing representation to death-sentenced prisoners in Georgia in state and federal habeas corpus proceedings. Kammer earned his B.A. from Earlham College and his J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law.



COURTESY OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Billie Jo Kaufman became the interim director of the Furman Smith Law Library and visiting professor of law. She served as associate dean for library and information resources at American University Washington College of Law since 2004. She also teaches and specializes in advanced legal research, cyberlaw, criminal procedure, legal research and writing, and law librarianship. Before she received her J.D. from Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad College of Law, she earned her M.S. and M.Ed. degrees from Indiana University Bloomington.



LEAN VETTER

Dean Alyssa Leffall started as assistant dean of student affairs on Dec. 2, 2019. Leffall previously served as special assistant to the vice president for student affairs at Texas A&M University, also working as assistant director of campus life and student development and program coordinator in the Student Conduct Office. Leffall earned her B.S. in kinesiology and M.S. in higher education at Texas A&M University. She earned her J.D. from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University, and practiced law for five years in Nashville, Tennessee, and Houston, Texas.



LEAN VETTER

Lauren Mauldin started as director of communications and marketing on Jan. 2. Previously, Mauldin served as director of neighborhood revitalization at Historic Macon Foundation, where she implemented marketing and development efforts in the historic Beall's Hill neighborhood adjacent to Mercer University's main campus. Mauldin earned her A.B.J. in Advertising and A.B. in History from the University of Georgia. She earned her M.A. in Conservation Studies of Historic Buildings from the University of York in the United Kingdom.

Immigration Appeals Clinic

Mercer University School of Law started an immigration appeals clinic, accepting its first cases in January. Along with a recently announced clinic at Georgia State Law School, this is one of the first immigration law clinics in the state of Georgia, and one of the first in the Southeast.

Professor Scott Titshaw supervises Mercer Law's new clinic, which accepts four to eight students at a time.

"I look forward to supervising students as they work on real-life asylum appeals," says Titshaw. "Our students will help clients, who would otherwise have no legal representation in the complex immigration appeals process. It's a hard time to win immigration cases, but dealing with, and hopefully surmounting, some of those challenges will provide valuable learning opportunities for our students."

Students will draft legal documents involved in immigration appeals, gaining experience in how to develop a compelling factual narrative and how to make effective arguments regarding points of law.

Professor Titshaw practiced immigration law with Arnall Golden Gregory in Atlanta prior to joining the Mercer faculty. He has served as chair of the Georgia/Alabama Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) and has led several national AILA committees.

Although based in Macon, the Mercer clinic will be filing appeals before the Board of Immigration Appeals in Washington, D.C. and, potentially, in Article III federal courts as well.

"Given the extremely low approval rate for asylum claims in the Immigration Courts in the Middle Georgia region, there is a tremendous need to appeal deserving cases in our area," says Titshaw.

Mercer Law Launches Inaugural Legal Legends Series

Mercer Law launched the inaugural Mercer Legal Legends lecture series featuring L. Lin Wood, '77, on Jan. 16 in the L. Lin Wood Courtroom. Mercer Legal Legends invites distinguished lawyers to share their legal expertise and perspectives with Mercer Law students.

Wood has more than 40 years of experience as a trial lawyer. He is one of the nation's most prominent First Amendment/defamation litigators, representing high-profile clients including Richard Jewell, John and the late Patsy Ramsey, and Nicholas Sandmann.

"With a prolific career protecting the First Amendment rights of his clients, Wood is a fitting lawyer to launch Mercer Legal Legends," says Dean Cathy Cox. "His career exemplifies the intent of Mercer Legal Legends — inspiring current students to discover broader interests in the law and demonstrating how the law can shape perspectives into robust legal careers."

Wood focused his lecture on professionalism and covered a wide range of topics in his remarks and in a question-and-answer session afterwards. He questioned the propriety of the landmark 1964 *New York Times v. Sullivan* standard for defamation lawsuits, discussed some of his personal approaches to trials and depositions, and urged students to always keep their clients' interest at the center of their work.

This lecture is the first of an annual series featuring prominent lawyers who have made considerable contributions to the practice of law while sharing their careers and legal expertise with Mercer Law students.



CHRISTOPHER IAN SMITH

L. Lin Wood, '77, shares his professional insights with Mercer Law students.



MEREDITH



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Department of Justice Federal Honors Program

Two Mercer Law graduates, Christopher Meredith, '19, and Addison Gantt, '19, were accepted to work in the U.S. Department of Justice Attorney General's Honors program, the largest and most competitive of the government honors programs. Mercer was the only law school in the state of Georgia to have students hired into the program in 2019.

Meredith works in the Executive Office of Immigration Review in Fort Worth, Texas.

"Attending Mercer School of Law put me in a position to achieve my dream — becoming an attorney for the Department of Justice. The faculty's hands-on approach helped me to develop the essential skills needed to be practice-ready," says Meredith.

Gantt works as an Honors Attorney/Advisor for the Office of Legal Education at the National Advocacy Center in Columbia, South Carolina. Additionally, Gantt will be working as a Special Assistant United States Attorney for the District of South Carolina.

"I came to Mercer Law because of its reputation for producing practice-ready attorneys, and the opportunities available to me at Mercer — participating in Moot Court, working on law review, advocating on behalf of real-life clients with the Habeas Clinic and editing for *The Journal of Southern Legal History* — were invaluable. I would not have been able to gain the same amount of practical experience from any other school," says Gantt.

Since 1953, the Attorney General's Honors Program has been recognized as the nation's premier entry-level federal attorney recruitment program. The program attracts candidates from hundreds of law schools across the country representing a broad cross-section of experiences and interests.

Law Review Symposium

Mercer Law School and the Southeastern Association of Law Schools co-sponsored the 2019 Mercer Law Review Symposium on Sept. 27, 2019, which focused on the theme “Contemporary Issues in Election Law.”

The symposium connected several experts, including election law scholars, to talk about important issues that have created controversy in recent years. The symposium included a series of four panels based on the current state of the American electoral system and covered topics such as the criminalization of voter mistakes, partisan gerrymandering, and campaign finance reform.

The principal speakers, noted scholars in the field, addressed a wide array of election law topics. Speakers included:

- Anthony J. Gaughan, professor of law at Duke University
- Lori Ringhand, professor of law at the University of Georgia School of Law
- Jacob Eisler, professor of law at Southampton Law School in the United Kingdom
- Atiba Ellis, professor of law at Marquette University Law School
- Gary Simson, professor of law at Mercer University School of Law
- Michael Dimino professor of law at Widener University School of Law
- Benjamin Cover, professor of law at the University of Idaho College of Law.

Commentators included Mercer University College of Liberal Arts Professor Dr. Lori A. Johnson and Mercer Law Professors James Fleissner and David Oedel. Former Macon mayor, former Mercer Law Professor and former U.S. Representative Jim Marshall also participated.

Simson, the Law School’s Macon Chair in Law and the faculty liaison for the event, observed, “For the third year in a row, the *Mercer Law Review* co-hosted its annual symposium, and it was a great success. With elections for the U.S. presidency and both of Georgia’s seats in the U.S. Senate only a year away, and with controversy continuing over the fairness of voting procedures in Georgia’s 2018 gubernatorial election, it is difficult to imagine a timelier topic for a symposium held at Mercer.”



Georgia Court of Appeals Holds Oral Arguments at Mercer Law

The Court of Appeals of the State of Georgia heard oral arguments in the Bell-Jones Courtroom at Mercer Law School on Sept. 10, 2019. The visit provided an opportunity for students and the local community to observe the court in action. The panel that heard cases at the Law School included Presiding Judge Stephen Louis A. Dillard, Judge Elizabeth Gobeil and Judge Ken Hodges.

Following the cases, the court hosted Q&A with students and members of the audience.

Former Gov. Roy Barnes Discusses Leo Frank Case

On Nov. 12, 2019, former Georgia Gov. Roy Barnes shared with Mercer Law students his efforts to reopen the notorious Leo Frank case.

Barnes, founding partner of the Barnes Law Group in Marietta and former Georgia governor, is working as a consultant to the Fulton County District Attorney’s Conviction Integrity Unit to review old cases. One of these is the case of Leo Frank, a factory superintendent who was killed by a lynch mob in Marietta in 1915 following the commutation of his death sentence for killing a 13-year-old female employee in the factory he managed.

Barnes discussed the details of the case, its evidence and the process of reviewing the case now for possible exoneration of Frank. He also spoke to a Mercer Law class on settlements and negotiations after his presentation on the Frank case.

Advocacy Round Up

Mercer Law Team Places First in Regional Competition

Mercer Law School students Breanna Vega, '21, and Bomkapr Kanu, '21, placed first in the National Black Law Student Association's (NBLSA) Thurgood Marshall Moot Court Regional Competition in Charleston, South Carolina, on Feb. 1. Kanu won Best Oral Argument at the competition. Second-year students Dontez Mars, '21, and Naadia Ali-Yallah, '21, advanced to the semifinal round, reinforcing Mercer Law's strong showing at this historic competition.

Vega and Kanu advanced to the national competition in Cincinnati, Ohio in early March, where the top three teams from six regional competitions competed. Mercer Law's team won Best Respondent Brief in the national competition.

The NBLSA team was coached by third-year student L'Zandra Jones, '20, Mercer Law Professor Sue Painter-Thorne, and Mercer Law alumna Judge Brenda Youmas, '88.

"All four of our students, their student coach L'Zandra Jones, coaches Professor Painter-Thorne and Judge Youmas worked exceedingly hard for months throughout the fall semester exam period and during their winter break to prepare for the competition," says Mercer Law School Dean Cathy Cox '86. "Mercer Law is proud of our students and congratulates them on their success."



Mercer Law Advances to ABA National Moot Court Competition

Ariel Newman, '20, and Chelsea Henderson, '20, participated in the American Bar Association's regional National Moot Court Competition in Oklahoma City in early March. The pair were one of four teams to advance to the national round, which was canceled due to COVID-19. Newman won 4th Best Oralist.

The team was coached by student coach Stephen Poydasheff, '21, alumna-coach Hannah Couch, '18, and faculty member Professor Linda Jellum.

Mercer Law ranked 16th overall in the country in the American Bar Association's Student Competitions. Mercer Law students competed in three of the four practical skills competitions: National Appellate Advocacy Competition (NAAC Moot Court), Client Counseling Competition, and Negotiation Competition throughout 2019-2020.



OUTLaw Raises Over \$6,000 for Local Charity

OUTLaw, Mercer Law School's LGBTQ student alliance, raised more than \$6,000 for Crisis Line and Safe House of Central Georgia during its fourth annual OUTLaw Drag Show.

This year's event was held at downtown Macon's Hummingbird Stage and Taproom on Oct. 3, 2019. The Bibb County District Attorney's Office matched the \$3,098.55 raised that night, bringing the total donation to Crisis Line and Safe House to \$6,197.10.

"This is the fourth year that OUTLaw has raised substantial funds for Crisis Line to help them provide assistance and support for community members in need," said Teresa Pardiñas, '20, president of Mercer OUTLaw. "This year we raised a record-breaking amount because of the generous Mercer Law community, not just at our school, but in the Macon community as well."

OUTLaw uses education and outreach efforts to improve inclusion and diversity at Mercer Law School and in the legal field. In addition, members participate in networking events, informational panels, service initiatives and mentoring programs.

The mission of Crisis Line and Safe House of Central Georgia is to provide community crisis intervention as well as safe shelter, comprehensive support, and recovery services for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, and to educate the community about the cycle of violence and its prevention.



LEANN WETTER

100 YEARS *of* WOMEN

By Steve Murray

When she earned her degree from Mercer Law School in 1919, Kathryne Pierce was what today we would describe as a non-traditional student. Macon-born, she was believed to be 36 at the time, married to William E. Jackson, and with three preteen and teenage daughters. Her classmates called her “Mrs. Jackson” and voted her their president. That may not seem so unusual — except when you understand that she was also the school’s first female student and graduate.

Dean Cathy Cox, '86, moderated the distinguished Mercer Law alumni centennial panel during the 100 Years of Women event on Nov. 21, 2019 at the historic Douglass Theatre in downtown Macon.

Though the now-defunct Atlanta Law School had previously welcomed women into its classrooms, Mercer preceded both Emory University and the University of Georgia's law schools in the practice. The august Harvard Law School did not even admit women until 1950.

Though Kathryn Pierce's matriculation kicked off 100 years of equal opportunity for both genders in the Law School's enrollment, it did not open the female-student floodgates right away.

When Leah Chanin, '54, came to Mercer as a student in 1950, there was only one other woman in her class. After withdrawing from school for a year when her husband, a World War II veteran, was redeployed, when she returned, "I was the only woman in the student body and remained so for my entire time in law school." There weren't any female faculty members, either. Though she herself returned to Mercer as the director of the law library and a law instructor in 1964. She was the first female faculty member.

What a difference 40 years can make. Now women regularly represent half or more of entering classes at Mercer Law School. The 1L class of 2019 comprised 44 percent female students. The previous two years, the figure was 54 and 57 percent.

In November, Professor Chanin joined five other distinguished alumni onstage at the Douglass Theatre to commemorate the centennial of women at Mercer Law School, moderated by Dean Cathy Cox, '86. The panelists included the Honorable Mary Alice Buckner, '73; Ann Baird Bishop, '76; the Honorable Wendy Shoob, '77; the Honorable M. Yvette Miller, '80; and Evett Simmons, '82.

Their motivations for choosing to study law varied.

Shoob's father was a lawyer. So was her boyfriend at the University of Virginia. Working one summer as an intern for Sen.

"I was the only woman in the student body and remained so for my entire time in law school."

LEAH CHANIN, '54

Sam Nunn, "I realized that I wanted to work on Capitol Hill," she says. "There was no more thrilling place to be, and if I was going to work there I had to be a lawyer, because the women who were not lawyers were secretaries."

While Shoob had familial motivation, Buckner had no role models or kinfolk who were lawyers. Neither did Chanin ("very unusual for a Jewish family, but there weren't any," she quips). Both were drawn to the legal profession from personal desire. Likewise, Simmons says, "The first time I met a lawyer I was in college, but I knew that they were out there, and I knew that I wanted to help people. I had a strong, deep-seated faith there was something that I had to do."

Miller, as a child in 1960s Middle Georgia, knew only one Macon attorney. But as a young woman she was inspired toward justice by a discrimination lawsuit filed by her father, a white-collar worker at Warner Robins Air Force Base, which was then littered with "Colored" and "White" signs.

Her father told her, "Well, Yvette, some things are just so important that you have to stand up for them," she recalls. "So those are the kind of experiences that I had that led me to want to go to law school... I believe in equality, I believe in fairness, and I'm just proud to have been a double-Bear — which certainly helped me to do what I do."



Centennial alumni panelists during the 100 Years of Women event: (from left to right) The Hon. Mary Alice Buckner, '73, The Hon. Wendy Shoob, '77, and Evett Simmons, '82.



Centennial panelists continued: (from left to right) Ann Baird Bishop, '76, The Hon. M. Yvette Miller, '80, and Leah Chanin, '54.

Bishop jokes that her decision to come to law school was based on an avoidance of any graduate studies requiring subjects like organic chemistry. "Nursing school was out, engineering was out," she says. "I was an English major, and lawyers have to speak English in this country." So, hello Mercer.



CHILDREN 1969

Professor Chanin in 1969 with her male colleagues. Chanin was the first female Professor at Mercer Law joining the faculty in 1964.

She adds that she didn't mind the unbalanced ratio of genders among students: "I had always wanted to go to a boys' school, so that was fine."

Still, that gender imbalance, and its attendant sexism, created a sense of isolation for others. Buckner, the only woman in her class at a time when there were, at most, only three female students in the entire enrollment, recalls a blunt snub from a male classmate in her very first Mercer Law class — but that was apparently sparked by her race more than her gender (*see page 12*).

In her years as a student herself, Chanin recalls some vivid run-ins with good ol' Southern boys in the hallways.

"They had a difficult time with somebody not only being a woman, but a flaming liberal," she says. In the '50s, guys thought it was hilarious to pop a woman's bra strap from behind. One of her classmates did just that. On instinct, Chanin swung around, punched — and knocked the guy's tooth out. "I never had any problem with those boys after that."

Back then, the Law School was so unequipped for both genders, there were no women's restrooms in Ryals Hall, the school's original home on main campus. "Finally the dean took pity on me," Chanin said. Instead of having to scurry to the library next door, he let her use the bathroom in his suite.

When the other centennial panelists were themselves students, Chanin was *still* the only woman on the faculty. Even by herself, she made a big difference.

"Thank God for Leah Chanin," says Miller. "And thank you, Mercer, for having her here [as a professor] for those of us that needed to see what it was like to be a girl and look good every day and wear your high heels — and be *smart*, too."

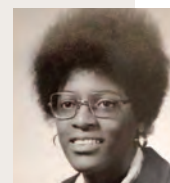
If the women of Mercer Law faced obstacles and adjustments in the classroom, they encountered new ones once they entered the working world.

CENTENNIAL *of* WOMEN PANELISTS

Leah Chanin, '54, former professor and director of Mercer's Law Library, serving the Law School for 28 years, including a year as Dean Pro Tem, retired as a professor emerita. She now resides in the Washington, D.C. area.



The Honorable Mary Alice Buckner, '73, appointed the first woman judge on the Muscogee County Recorder's Court in 1984 and full-time judge of the court in 1991 until her retirement last year.



Ann Baird Bishop, '76, helped found the firm of Drew Eckl and Farnham and became its first female partner. She recently completed a term as chair of the Law School's Board of Visitors.



The Honorable Wendy Shoob, '77, a former prosecutor with the Fulton County DA's office who then served for 24 years on the Fulton County State and Superior Court benches, where she helped create the Business Court and Family Court division.



The Honorable M. Yvette Miller, '80, the first African American woman to practice law in the Brunswick Judicial Circuit and the first African American woman appointed to the Georgia Court of Appeals in 1999, where she now serves as Presiding Judge.



Evelt Simmons, '82, an estate, guardianship and elder law attorney, and currently a partner in her firm of Simmons, Finney and Winfield. She is the first Mercer lawyer to serve as president of the National Bar Association (NBA).



THE HONORABLE MARY ALICE BUCKNER, '73

The Honorable Mary Alice Buckner isn't kidding when she says she didn't think of herself as a history maker. She didn't know she was one. In fact, it wasn't until a few years ago that she discovered this fact in an article that came across her desk: She was the first African American woman to graduate from Mercer Law School.

"When I read that, it almost shocked me," she says, speaking from her home in Columbus. "It was a strange feeling. I put the paper down and started working in my office again."

A little later that day, she picked the article back up and read it again, in case she had somehow gotten it wrong. She believes an African American female was enrolled in the law school before she was, but that woman didn't graduate. Buckner did.

"I never thought of it from a historic standpoint before," she says. That's because, in her two years at Mercer Law, the double-Bear says, "I was just trying to get through law school and start my life."

Buckner spent her 1L year in Atlanta, at Emory University, her tuition funded by a New York foundation. When that money came to an end, she realized it would be more economical to return to Mercer. But she experienced culture shock. (As fellow Law School alum M. Yvette Miller put it, in Macon back then, "the '60s came during the '70s — or later.")

At Emory, "You had a lot of African American students and women students and diversity in the student body and a lot of diversity in the faculty," she says. "And you had a lot of support. We formed study groups, and we ate together."

At Mercer Law, there were only two other women in the whole school, one in the class ahead of her, one behind. "There was no socializing. We were just in school at the same time."

The prejudice of the era raised its head quickly. Injustice and racial bias were a daily occurrence. On her very first day of class, "I sat down near one of the law students — and he moved," Buckner says. "I just smiled. It didn't make me angry. I had made my choice that I wanted to be a lawyer, so I was just amused by it."

Buckner grew up in a large family, but none of them were

lawyers. "I would tell a lot of people that's what I wanted to do," she says, "and a lot of people really thought I was crazy because they knew I didn't know any lawyers, and *they* didn't know any lawyers... I wanted to be a lawyer so my voice could be heard and listened to, so I could make a difference to what was going on in our society.

That's what motivated me."

At the Law School, there were other African American male students. "But a lot of the guys were married and went home after class," she says. "They had their own lives, and it was not that kind of environment where you do a lot of fraternizing."

At the time, Mercer didn't provide housing for single students, only for married couples. So Buckner lived with family, far from campus, which deepened the isolation she sometimes felt. "What helps you in law school

is getting together and talking about the law you studied in class that day."

At home, she didn't talk about her difficulties. "I didn't really express it with my family, because I didn't want them to worry about me," she says. "You don't want to show that you can't make it."

But she did make it, even if she didn't know she was making history at the time. "You don't feel like a trailblazer when you're going through all that," she says. And she's glad to see the big changes that have happened in the years since her graduation — the tremendous increase in female enrollment and Mercer Law School's embrace of diversity in all its forms.

"I am so happy to see how much this school has grown, and I am so happy and ... I see so many females and I see so many African American students," Buckner says. "That does my heart well, just to see that. It's almost unbelievable, and it makes me feel really good to know that Mercer *did* change."

Despite the problems she experienced decades ago at Mercer, as it used to be, "I want to say this: I wouldn't change the experience... I think it was preparing me for how things would be in society." And for the practice of law, as well — a profession where people may dislike and underestimate you, but you get the job done, regardless.



LEAH YETTER

"I could not get a job, I could not get a job," Chanin says — even though she'd graduated at the top of her class. (Despite her grades, she was not named *Mercer Law Review* editor-in-chief, an oversight she now believes was due to gender bias). A bank offered her a \$75-a-week position in their trust department, but she didn't take it. Only four years after graduation did she become a practicing attorney.

Following graduation, Shoob interviewed with a DA's office in Colorado. The job candidates were narrowed to two: herself, and a man. The man got it. After getting by as a waitress, she was eventually hired by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Where she was hit on, *twice*, by her superior.

On the very first day, he walked into her office, closed the door, and said, "You have the most beautiful eyes," Shoob recalls with amused horror. "At the EEOC!"



COURTESY OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS JOE CLAXTON

Mercer Law Review, early 1950s. Despite graduating first in her class, Chanin (sitting) was not selected for the editor-in-chief role for *Mercer Law Review*.

At her first job as a trial attorney at a law firm, Simmons quickly became aware of a similar kind of objectification from male colleagues: "They look at the way you *walk*."

Post #MeToo, things presumably are better now in the legal profession. However, women attorneys are still expected to balance professional and personal lives in ways their male colleagues aren't.

"The most important decision you could make is who you marry, if you *decide* to marry," says Chanin, who herself had a long marriage and raised four children while working. "If you don't have a supportive spouse, you're in trouble, because you need someone to understand that you're not going to walk in the door at 5 o'clock every day — and that you can't be responsible for the whole family."

In their various ways, in Mercer Law School and since graduation, the centennial panelists have been role models and trailblazers. But they don't see it that way. They see advancement for women in the legal world as a kind of group effort, built over generations.



CAULDRON 1978

For decades, Mercer Law women students were few and far between not only within the student body, but also within student organizations; Mercer BLSA members 1977-1978.

Bishop says she took things for granted in her early years, but "I did later realize I was standing on the shoulders of the women that had gone before... I came along at a really perfect time."

Likewise, Simmons says she appreciates the role models who have shown her that a female attorney can have smarts and strength without being ruthless: "I have been blessed because there have been women that have come before me, such as here, who have allowed me not to be as tough, not to be as mean, not to be as hard and still succeed."



CAULDRON 1979

Law students hang out between classes on campus, 1979. The few women law students in the 1970s would triple in the 1980s.

As for current female students at Mercer Law, Judge Miller has some career advice for when their school days are behind them.

"You've got to stay focused on what it is that you offer so that you can offer it to the best of your ability," she says. "Today, women have to seek not only to go into the firms, but you need to be the partner, you need to consider being the rainmaker or be the managing partner."

"Why wouldn't a woman want to go to the top?"

Bridging the Gap

For over a half century, a female student at Mercer Law was typically the *only* woman in the entire law school. This trend dramatically shifted in the mid-1970s and early 1980s when women's enrollment tripled, continuing the way for women law students to become the norm — not the exception. >>

Kathy Lewis (highlighted), a first-year law student from 1975-1976.



CAULDRON 1976

TEE BARNES, '81

Unexpected Journey Leads to Supreme Court of Georgia

By Nadia Pressley

Therese (Tee) Barnes did not always know she wanted to go to law school. After receiving her undergraduate degree from the University of Virginia in secondary education and political science, Barnes wanted to be a teacher.

Her plans changed, and Barnes embarked on a legal journey that has led to her current position as clerk of the Supreme Court of Georgia, the second female graduate in Mercer Law's history to serve in this role.

Joline Bateman Williams, '60, was the first woman in Mercer Law's history to serve as clerk of the Supreme Court of Georgia from October 1970 to July 1992. Williams was the only woman in her class and the first female editor-in-chief of the *Mercer Law Review*.

Barnes grew up in New Jersey. After completing her undergraduate degree in 1978, she moved to Macon to attend Mercer Law School. Barnes says her law school experience was "pure serendipity."

"I honestly believe I had one of the most wonderful graduating classes at Mercer," she says.

Barnes was very engaged during her time at Mercer Law. She was part of the Women's Law Association, involved herself in the career counseling and outreach programs, and served as the managing editor of the *Mercer Law Review*.

"I remember the day they called me and said I made law review," she says. "That was huge. I knew it was going to be a game changer. Hearing that news ... knowing I had worked really hard to achieve that, it was really great to hear."

After graduation, Barnes moved to Atlanta where she began her six years in civil business litigation. Barnes left practice to focus on her young family with her husband, Gary Barnes, '81, whom she met at Mercer Law.

In 1987, Barnes started her position as clerk for the Georgia Court of Appeals. During her tenure, she helped create a job-sharing program, allowing two people to clerk part-time in order to fulfill the requirements of a full-time position. Barnes says this allowed her to be more involved with her children, family and volunteer work.



BOB MCATEER, GEORGIA SUPREME COURT DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY

In 2006, Barnes started her current role at the Supreme Court of Georgia. She is now in her third term.

Barnes says this role is more than she ever expected to achieve in her career. Having gone to school for education, dreaming of holding such a position was "never on her radar." Despite this, Barnes says she is grateful for all she has achieved.

Barnes says her time at Mercer Law prepared her well for the success she has had throughout her career.

"It was really intimate and an intellectually stimulating environment," she says. "We worked very hard, everybody put 100 percent into their commitment to being lawyers and being good law students. I also think being on law review and working really late into the night and watching so many brilliant students editing some really well-known authors' works was an education for me."

Now, nearing the end of her career, Barnes has helped leave a lasting impact that she attributes to her experience at Mercer Law and in the field.

"Right now, I am in a position that allows me to still employ my legal skills," she says. "That's really the goal here, to serve the public, and to make sure that the nine justices are taken care of in every regard. I just hope I've left some positive impact wherever I've been and hope I've made it better when I leave."

LYDIA SARTAIN, '84

Mercer Law's first female SBA President

By Steve Murray

Like many other alumni featured in this issue, Lydia Sartain has notched a few “firsts” in her career.

She was the first member from her extended family in the Blairsville area to become a lawyer. “At the time, I only wanted a law degree so I could work in government as a congressional aide, or something like that,” she says from the newly founded Law Office of Lydia J. Sartain in Gainesville. “I never intended to be a litigator — and of course I ended up being a litigator.”

In her sophomore year at Young Harris College, she worked in the Georgia Legislature for Speaker of the House Tom Murphy. She wanted to be a doorkeeper, but learned women weren't allowed for that post. Instead, she was offered a job in the stenographers pool. Only, she didn't know how to type. Finally, she got to work on the page desk. “They said they generally didn't allow young women, but they would make an exception.”

Sartain continued to be an exception. At Mercer Law School, she served on the honor court, and when election for president of the Student Bar Association approached in 1983, she threw her name in.

Her main opponent had worked for Rosalynn Carter in the White House; she didn't think she stood a chance against him. Yet she won. “Then I found out there hadn't been any women in the position before,” she says. That was a surprise.

More of those “firsts” were to come. Two years out of law school,

she was encouraged, as an associate with Mercer alum Nathan Deal, '66, and his partner Tom Gerard, to campaign for solicitor for the State Court of Hall County.

“I said, ‘I think I'll call the other women prosecuting counsels and see how their campaigns went,’” she recalls. That's when she learned there had never been a full-time elected female solicitor in Gainesville.

Like her belated discovery that she was the first female SBA president at Mercer, “Again, that was most surprising to me,” she says. “It never occurred to me that there had never been another woman in the job. This was 1986! And Nathan said, ‘Maybe we better not say anything about that.’”

She was 26. The man opposing her was 30 years older. Explaining her victory, she says, “I ran on experience. I had twice as much as he had.”

Elected twice to be solicitor, Sartain was then tapped by Gov. Zell Miller to be director of Georgia's Children and Youth Coordinating Council, monitoring statewide facilities that held juveniles. The welfare of children has always been important to Sartain, and in her new, namesake practice, her main focus is family law and mediation.

In 1993, Miller appointed her district attorney of the Georgia Northeastern Judicial Circuit, where she served for nine years. After that she was a longtime partner at Stewart, Melvin & Frost. In 2018,



1919

Kathryn Pierce Weekley
President of the Senior
Law Class of 1919



1921

Ruby Donnan Martin
“And when a lady's in the
case — you know all other
things give place.”



1938

Pearle “Pearlie”
Virginia Eichelberger
Published thesis “The
Appalachian Mountaineer,”
still in Tarver Library



1938

Allie Bessie Bates Jolley
Secretary of the newly
started Mercer Graduate
Club in 1937



1939

Mary Emma Benton
Spoke at the 1939 Georgia Bar
Association convention, imploring
the bar to adopt educational
standards for lawyers



1950

Kathryn Lanelle
Rimes Eaves
First woman to open a
law practice in Brunswick



RE PHOTOGRAPHY, LLC

Sartain and her husband Phillip, also an attorney who retired in 2016, established an endowment at Brenau University to create programs addressing social justice issues and practice.

Among Sartain's memorable cases were Gwinnett County's "runaway bride," then another memorable non-newlywed, the so-called "jilted bride." The latter, Gainesville resident RoseMary Shell, sued her fiancé for breach of contract when he canceled the wedding. Sartain scored a \$150,000 award for her client from a Hall County jury, and was invited with Shell and her own three

daughters to appear on the *Today* show to discuss the case.

Though the girls thought it was cool that their mom was on TV, they seemed more interested in the live Miley Cyrus concert attached to that day's broadcast.

Sartain's youngest, Susanna, graduated this year with an arts management degree from the College of Charleston. The eldest, Callie, attended Mercer undergrad, earned a master's at Wake Forest and plans to enroll in a Ph.D. program in Chicago,

focusing on communications and healthcare. And middle-daughter Carey, a double-Bear, is a member of Mercer Law School's class of 2021.

Looking back at her own days as a law student, Sartain says, "It was of course very rigorous, but the students could talk to the professors.

"I made lots of really good friends at the Law School and even now, 35 years later, the Mercerians will reach out to each other. It's such a delight."



1951

Patricia Beauchamp O'Neal
Book review editor
for the first volume of the
Mercer Law Review,
1949-1950



1954

Professor Leah Farb Chanin
Professor 1964-1977, Law
Library director 1977-1992,
Dean Pro Tempore 1986-1987



1960

Joline Bateman Williams
First female editor-in-chief
of the Mercer Law
Review, 1959-1960



1962

Myrtha Irizarry Nevares
First Hispanic American
woman to graduate from
Mercer Law School



1973

The Hon. Mary
Alice Buckner
First African American
woman to graduate from
Mercer Law School



1981

Araceli Carrigan
First Asian American
woman to graduate from
Mercer Law School

Quintesha Williams, '20

How Drive and Ambition Led Her to Success

By Nadia Pressley

After graduating from the University of Georgia with her undergraduate degree, Quintesha Williams was unsure what path to take next. Having majored in criminal justice, she knew law school was an option. Williams would go on to take the LSAT with no preparation, except the drive and ambition to attend law school.

Williams's journey was full of firsts, and as a recent graduate, her success is evidence that hard work pays off.

"I went to take the LSAT with no prep, no guidance, no anything," she says. "I will be the first attorney in my family, so no one in my family knew about the LSAT; no one in my family had attended law school or even thought about attending. My hometown is very small, so I didn't have access to lawyers, so I didn't know what to do."

After taking the LSAT once, Williams was determined to do better.

"I didn't do extremely well the first time, but it gave me insight for what I needed to study and learn for the next time around," she says. "By the time I took it the second time, I had two law school mentors. Using LSAT prep books and constantly talking to my mentors, I brought my score up tremendously."

Williams, born and raised in Irwinton, Georgia, started her journey at Mercer Law in 2017. When she entered law school, she was initially interested in criminal law.

"It was the law I knew, the law I had seen on TV," she says. "I was so intrigued by it."

Williams was drawn to Mercer's many programs, including the Habeas Project, an initiative that allows students to work closely with a faculty supervisor on *pro se* cases pending before the Georgia Supreme Court,

and the Legal Writing Program, which prepares students with legal research and writing skills needed for practice after graduation.

After entering law school, her interests changed.

"Now that I have been through law school and have had several internships in different areas of the law, I am really interested in civil defense," she says.

Williams was an active member of the Black Law Students Association (BLSA), the Phi Delta Phi Honor Society and the Real Estate Society. She also served on the board of the nonprofit Family and Youth Innovation and currently works at the civil defense firm Chambless Higdon Richardson Katz and Griggs. Williams says she owes her current success to being part of the Mercer Law community: "The internships and the job that I currently have, I don't think I would have gotten if I wasn't part of Mercer Law."

One of Williams' most recent successes was being named an inaugural recipient for the Judge M. Yvette Miller Endowed Scholarship, created to promote diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.

"I am very grateful and happy to receive the scholarship," she says. "I found out I was the first to receive it, which is also very exciting. It has provided me an opportunity to afford the many 3L expenses we have as far as purchasing bar prep and purchasing graduation regalia, so me and my family appreciate it greatly."

Judge Miller, the scholarship's namesake, says Williams was the perfect candidate for the award.

"As I talked to Dean Cox about Quintesha, I was convinced that she had the attributes that I wanted the inaugural Judge Miller scholarship recipient to have: a demonstrated knowledge of the law, commitment to public service, a proven hard worker and overall a thoughtful person," she says.

After graduation, Williams will remain in her position at Chambless Higdon Richardson Katz and Griggs while working towards her long-term goals.

"I just want to continue what I'm doing, continue to stay focused and just give everything my all and make partner one day. I really want to continue to learn more about law and continue to work hard at what I do and continue to give back to the community and Mercer Law."



HEATHER REINE PHOTOGRAPHY



Teresa Pardiñas, '20

The president of the LGBTQ student organization OUTLaw talks about her experiences as a law student.

Q. Tell us about the change of Project Equality into OUTLaw. Is there more to the transition than a different name?

A. Project Equality was founded in the early 2000s and its formation was important and courageous. The name remained in place until 2019, when we began implementing the long-term goals of the organization. We grew from a passive meeting space into an advocacy-driven organization. "OUTLaw" aligned the organization with Georgia law schools and others across the country. The name is a signal to prospective LGBTQ students that Mercer Law is an inclusive campus. Now, there is a targeted effort to recruit LGBTQ students, inclusive language on admissions forms and class rosters, and faculty are offered LGBTQ cultural awareness training. The last initiative under my presidency is gender-neutral restrooms on campus. Mercer Law is far too great of an ally for LGBTQ students to be behind all other Georgia law schools in this respect.

Q. Have you found the Law School to be an accepting place for LGBTQ students and allies?

A. It is an understatement to say Mercer Law is *accepting* of LGBTQ students because Mercer Law *actively supports* LGBTQ students. Professors normalize same-sex couples in classroom discussions; there are two brilliant, out faculty members, and the administration has supported every initiative OUTLaw proposed. I couldn't be happier here. I hope to ensure that my experience is typical for LGBTQ students at Mercer Law.

Q. You worked in law enforcement as a deputy sheriff master in Gwinnett County for nearly a decade. Did your experiences there inform your time as a Law School student?

A. I set my goal to attend law school during the academy after studying criminal procedure. While I worked and finished my Bachelor's degree, I sought to be a trailblazer for women in my department. I earned a position in the elite, male-dominated warrants unit then went on to earn my certification as the department's only female firearms instructor. My experiences defined my sense of public service: to be an advocate for the individual. Law school was my way to do that.

Q. How do you characterize your experience at the Law School.

A. I'd characterize my time at Mercer Law as a gateway. On the surface, I had the typical experience: First year was a blur, second year was almost unbearably busy, and third year gave me a taste of freedom. What surprised me, though, was the amount of personal growth I experienced. There were points of triumph and difficulty that shaped me into a better person and professional. Who I am today is very different from who I was in 2017. The dynamics that played out through my leadership roles, as well as my personal and professional relationships, showed where my strengths and weaknesses lie. I've become a better advocate, leader, and friend.

Q. Have your initial ideas about what you want to do with a law degree changed while at Mercer?

A. Substantially. I swore I didn't want to litigate, so I leaned toward transactional work and had the opportunity to experience that with the Federal Highway Administration. I enjoyed the work, but as I progressed through law school, I realized my personality and skills are best suited for litigation. Since my 2L summer, I have worked in the civil division of the U.S. Attorneys Office. I've focused on medical malpractice and love continuously learning medical terminology and techniques. So I have completely changed my mind about being in the courtroom. I hope to continue my work in medical malpractice.

The Quiet REVOLUTION

By Joseph E. Claxton, *Professor Emeritus*

It is obvious to anyone with any knowledge of the evolution of the Mercer Law School that many changes have occurred over the last 50 years — and, indeed, in legal education generally. An area that undoubtedly has been one of great change is the dramatic increase in racial and ethnic diversity within the student body. The change in this area — particularly the noticeable increase in the number and percentages of African American students — could be designated as the focus of the greatest change at Mercer.

At least for this old legal educator, no change at Mercer Law School quite equals in importance as the dramatic rise in the number of women in the student body since 1970. That change quietly and thoroughly entrenched itself as a fundamental element of the Law School's life much more quickly than most Mercerians ever anticipated.

A few women had enrolled and graduated prior to the '70s, but the number was very small. Indeed, for years Ryals Hall, the building that housed the Law School on the University's main campus, did not even have a single restroom for women. Rain or shine, women were expected to troop to the building next door. (Female staff members were subjected to the same indignity.) That situation finally was rectified in 1965 when the Langdale Building was built, but there was a clear expectation that the number of female law students would remain very low.

As early as 1960, however, there was a significant hint of changes to come. Joline Bateman Williams, '60, became the first woman to serve as editor-in-chief of the *Mercer Law Review*. Her assumption of that role was an important step forward for women that even the unforgettable Leah Chanin, '54, eventually the director of the Law Library and full professor, had not achieved. Chanin was a great student, but in the early '50s she

was overlooked for leadership of the Law Review. Even after Williams broke that particular glass ceiling in 1960, it was not until 1973 that a second woman again took the reins.

By the early '70s, an informal rule-of-thumb seemed to be that there might be one woman per class, but no more. In the class of 1972, Sylvia Haywood was an excellent student and person who enjoyed broad respect and affection. For her, a legal education was an important step toward independence and personal fulfillment. Following Haywood, Mary Alice Buckner, '73, made history as the first female African American Mercer Law graduate in 1973.

In 1974, both symbolically and in practical terms, came a huge change in the role of women at Mercer. This change originated with Ruth West Garrett, '74, (now Ruth Tinsley West), the only female student in her class. Ruth was bright, hard-working, and a leader who became the second woman to serve as editor-in-chief of the *Mercer Law Review*. After graduating at the top of her class, West became the first woman to become a partner at the firm of King & Spalding. A student like Ruth provided the best possible evidence of all the positives that women could bring to the Law School and to the legal profession. After West, the number of women in each class steadily increased.

This fundamental change in the character of the Law School essentially was the product of major sociological changes that swept through the nation during the late '60s and into the '70s. Women no longer viewed the MRS degrees as their most important objective, and they no longer accepted the proposition that important professions — with the law at the forefront — should be closed to them simply because of their gender.



CALDWELL, 1974

The *Mercer Law Review* Editorial Board, 1973-1974, with Ruth Tinsley West, '74, (center) as editor-in-chief. West was the second woman in Mercer Law history to serve as *Mercer Law Review* editor-in-chief.

Hundreds of Law School documents from the time reveal only one entry pertaining to the enrollment of women. The 1984 Self-Study Report, a very extensive document prepared in conjunction with an accreditation review conducted by the Association of American Law Schools and the American Bar Association, contained a brief table referencing the enrollment of women. That table indicated that the enrollment of women in each Law School class, as a whole, had reached the mid-30% range. In effect ... a completely different culture from the days of Haywood, Buckner, and West, when each was the lone female student in their classes.

A 1992 Self-Study and a very thorough five-year strategic plan adopted by the faculty in 1999 contained no reference to the enrollment of women. Perhaps no document is more indicative of the normality of the enrollment of women than an article by the late Judge William Augustus Bootle published in the February 1990 issue of *The Georgia Bar Journal*. Judge Bootle was a legendary and beloved alumnus of the Law School who probably had more personal

knowledge of the institution's history than any other person ever connected to it. His very thorough article did not contain a single reference to the enrollment of women. By 1990, the presence of women in the Law School's student body apparently was so routine that he saw no need to mention it.

By 1990, women were pursuing every academic path and opportunity open to Mercer Law students. They were preparing for every branch of the legal profession, from trial work to estate planning to bankruptcy. Many women made their way into business, higher education, and other pursuits. By the time the 2018 entering class enrolled, 57% of students were women. Today, the women who enrolled decades ago are now senior partners in law firms, state and federal judges, and community and political leaders. Their service to the Bar is irreplaceable. One of the earlier women to enroll at the Mercer Law School, Cathy Cox, '86, the third woman to serve as editor-in-chief of *Mercer Law Review*, now serves as its dean.

Sabbatical Sojourn in Hungary



KAREN J. SNEDDON
PROFESSOR OF LAW



Since entering academia in 2004, I have striven to be an effective teacher and thoughtful scholar. My 2019 sabbatical leave afforded me the opportunity to reflect, study, research, and write in my areas of interest, specifically legal writing, succession, and legal education. To gain new perspectives on succession (commonly referred to as trusts and estates) and legal education, I sought opportunities to visit another law school.

To that end, this past October I visited Hungary, a country known worldwide for its thermal springs, goulash, and Franz Liszt. Hungary follows civil law traditions and has experienced changes in government over the last 200 years, making it an ideal place to gain new perspectives.

During my month-long visit with two Hungarian law faculties, I learned about different legal traditions and different legal education structures. I left not only with an appreciation for paprika, but with new perspectives on my own research in succession and teaching methodologies.

My first visit was to the faculty of law at Eötvös Loránd University, which was established in 1667 and was the first Hungarian faculty of law. The current buildings housing the law faculty are in Budapest, a city of approximately 1.8 million. During my visit, I taught a course and two workshops.

The course I developed and taught was titled “Comparative Succession Law.” Succession has been viewed as a cultural artifact produced by each country’s unique history, economy, political, and social forces. Nonetheless, social, cultural, economic, political, and technological changes have altered understandings of family relationships and property interests. Many European countries, including Hungary, recently revised or are currently considering revisions to their Civil Codes. Accordingly, practitioners, legal scholars, and law students have become increasingly interested in comparative research as it relates to the laws of succession.

The course met daily for 10 days. All instruction and reading materials were in English. The nine enrolled students, many of whom were part of a student exchange program, shared perspectives from the assigned reading materials, which included civil code sections, statutes, cases, and scholarly commentaries from around the world. The students also shared perspectives gained from their previous legal studies in countries including Switzerland, Italy, France, the Czech Republic, and Sweden. Of particular interest to the students was the common law trust. With the Hague Trust Convention and the revised civil codes, many countries from the civil law and mixed legal tradition are recognizing and enforcing common law trusts. Various teaching and learning methodologies were used to promote student engagement, including selected response questions, one-minute papers, closing prompts, and roleplays.

I left not only with an appreciation for paprika, but with new perspectives on my own research in succession and teaching methodologies.

In addition to participating in class discussions and responding to in-class exercises, students completed work outside of the classroom. Students wrote an essay identifying areas of convergence in succession. For example, jurisdictions are adopting laws that dispense with the formalities of will execution or extend familial protections to unmarried cohabitants. Additionally, students wrote a model intestate succession statute to reflect the connection between changes in family law and succession. Students also considered the impact of technology with the creation of a model electronic wills act. The students, similar to students at Mercer, wanted to apply their learning by producing practical documents.



PROFESSOR KAREN SNEDDON

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Professor Sneddon takes a selfie along the Danube with Buda Castle in the background • Statue of namesake of Eötvös Loránd University, established in 1667 and the first Hungarian faculty of Law • University of Debrecen campus • The classroom where Professor Sneddon taught.

I had the opportunity to meet the faculty and wider student body when I developed and presented two workshops. One, titled “Teaching Methodologies for the Law School Classroom,” was for the law faculty. Faculties around the world are seeking ways to foster active learning and promote deep learning. This may require, for example, structuring class meetings in formats other than the lecture or seminar format traditionally used in many European law schools. For instance, many European law schools have traditionally structured the law school classrooms as either lectures or seminars. Interest in student-centered learning rather than teacher-centered transmission encourages faculties to incorporate varied assessment devices and adapt methods of instruction to optimize learning. This focus dovetails with my research and strategic planning conversations at Mercer.

Similar to Mercer students, the Hungarian students were focused on preparing for practice. My second workshop, titled “Effective Legal Writing,” was for law students, most of whom were currently undergraduates. I shared seven characteristics of effective legal writing

and highlighted practical strategies on how to leverage the five stages of the writing process. After some initial hesitation, students became engaged workshop participants eager to reflect upon the universal characteristics of effective writing and recognize the unique qualities of legal writing.

Following my time in Budapest, I traveled to the city of Debrecen, where I visited faculty of law at the University of Debrecen. The university was established in the 16th century. The faculty of law was established in 1920, suspended in 1950, and re-opened in 1996. While there, I visited with members of the law faculty and presented my two workshops to faculty, undergraduate and graduate-level law students.

From the banks of the Danube to the Hungarian Plain, I gained perspectives that will inform my future research and teaching. Law faculties and law students share an interest in addressing common legal problems, borrowing legal approaches, and providing optimal learning environments. I also realized that, no matter where in the world they study, no students like to sit in the front row of a classroom.

SUZIANNE PAINTER-THORNE

On legal writing, tribal rights and the love of dogs

By Steve Murray

Professor Suzianne Painter-Thorne — known to friends and colleagues as Sue — took a late path to her college degrees. Midway through pursuing her undergraduate at the University of Maryland, the state where she grew up, money problems caused her to withdraw after two years.

She was working at the United States Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C., when she started thinking about going back to college. She hesitated, though. She was already in her thirties and worried about not graduating until she was nearing 40.

When she expressed her concerns, a good friend at the Institute said a very simple thing that put her back on the path:

“She said, ‘You’ll almost be 40 *anyway*, so why not *do it*.’” Forty with a degree is better than without, so Painter-Thorne followed her friend’s advice. From there, she moved west to earn her Juris Doctor at the University of California-Davis School of Law.

The youngest of four children, she was raised by a single mom. Her dad had drug and alcohol problems, and ultimately disappeared. In high school, Painter-

Thorne took a job to help make ends meet. “I started working when I was 14, and I guess I’ve never stopped,” she says.

Her undergraduate degree was in anthropology. “I think by nature I’m a generalist, and there’s not much more general than studying culture,” she says. “I like history and stories, and understanding the world through different perspectives.”

Another reason for anthropology? “The whole curriculum was

reading and writing and talking about what you read.” In other words, a perfect training ground for the intensive, three-year experience of law school. But that’s not the only way an anthropology degree influenced her legal studies.

“It also prepared me really well for law school, because anthropology takes the view that you have to look at issues through a cultural lens. And one of the things you’re learning in law school is an understanding of ambiguity and flexibility.”

Facts matter, of course. “But sometimes our perception of them is wrong, or we’re missing a piece of the puzzle,” she says. “Or our understanding might be right, but the law doesn’t allow the remedy we want.”

Issues like these are at the core of the scholarly writing that has

been her focus, examining the intersection of culture and law, with a particular emphasis on American Indian law and the ways it conforms, and often clashes, with the U.S. legal system.

A recent example is her ongoing research on tribal same-sex marriage bans and their effect on the adoption of Native children in *Praying the Knot: Practical Problems*

with Tribal Marriage Bans and the Adoption of Indian Children.

The situation of the Native LGBTQ Indian community “is a challenging issue for me when it comes to the conflict of U.S. and tribal laws,” says Painter-Thorne, who generally supports the independence of tribes to self-legislate. “We should respect tribes’ sovereignty, even in the face of their making what I might think are horrible decisions.”

“It also prepared me really well for law school, because anthropology takes the view that you have to look at issues through a cultural lens. And one of the things you’re learning in law school is an understanding of ambiguity and flexibility.”

Case in point: Though the Supreme Court has ruled that same-sex marriage is legal in all 50 states, that's not so on many reservations. Because of their sovereign status, Indian tribes can regulate marriage within their tribes. For instance, "the Navajo Nation is the largest tribe within the United States, they are incredibly influential, and they prohibit same-sex marriage," Painter-Thorne says. "I wanted to see how that was going to work. First of all, I think they're wrong. But I don't agree with everything Canada does, either — that doesn't mean I can apply U.S. law to them. Thus, my research focuses on the practical problems these bans might present for tribal members."

Voted for promotion to full professor by her faculty colleagues last fall, Painter-Thorne has been at Mercer Law School since 2006, teaching Client Counseling, Evidence, Legal Writing and Property. She

served as the Legal Writing Institute host school director from 2014 to 2018, and is a coach of student moot court teams as co-advisor with Professor Tim Floyd for the Mercer Advisory Council.

In her spare time, Painter-Thorne has traveled often around the Southeast with her husband of 30 years, Nate, a CT scan technologist with Navicent Health, whom she met in Maryland when he was serving in the Navy. They enjoy entering their dogs — the majority are Border Collies — in agility and flyball competitions. "We don't breed them," she explains. "We train them, compete with them and love them." In addition to their six dogs, they're often fostering a new one. Oh, and they have seven cats — who compete in nothing. That's it, for now, unless zoning laws change in her neighborhood. "I'd love to have a pony," she says, "but I'm not allowed."

Professor Painter-Thorne and her Border Collies warming up for an agility competition at Stepping Stone Farm in Canton, Georgia.



JEFF SNYDER/ANIMATEDLINE.COM

The Attorney General and the Rule of Law: Lessons from the Past

PATRICK E. LONGAN, W.A. BOOTLE CHAIR IN ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM AND JAMES P. FLEISSNER, PROFESSOR OF LAW

Almost every day, we awake to headlines about the rule of law and the appropriate role of the Attorney General of the United States. For example, in February President Trump tweeted his outrage over actions of Department of Justice prosecutors in the Roger Stone case. Attorney General Barr thereafter overruled those prosecutors. A firestorm erupted. Although Mr. Barr asserted that he had already made the decision before the president's tweet, the president was accused of improperly influencing a criminal case involving a political associate, and William Barr came off looking — justly or not — more like the president's errand boy than an attorney general. The perception, and perhaps the reality, was that the attorney general was more interested in pleasing the president than in protecting the rule of law.

The attorney general's job is unique. The attorney general is a political appointee and a member of the Cabinet. But the attorney general is also the head of a department with long traditions and robust norms of independence from politics. Charting a course under these conflicting responsibilities is difficult for any attorney general. Mr. Barr is not the first attorney general, nor will he be the last, to face these conflicts.

History provides some lessons. In the last 50 years, the dangers of a politicized Department of Justice came into highest relief during the presidency of Richard Nixon. His first attorney general, John Mitchell, went to prison for his role in the Watergate coverup. Mitchell's successor, Richard Kleindienst, pled guilty to lying to the Senate about attempted political interference by the president in a pending case. When Nixon fired Archibald Cox, the Watergate

special prosecutor, both the attorney general and the deputy attorney general resigned in protest. Cox commented at the time, "Whether ours shall continue to be a government of laws and not of men is now for the Congress and ultimately the American people."¹

Restoring the morale and credibility of the Department of Justice was a high priority for the next two presidents, Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter. In 1975, Ford appointed Edward H. Levi to serve as attorney general. President Carter chose Judge Griffin Bell, '02, for the post when Carter defeated Ford in 1976. Levi and Bell have been widely and justifiably credited with restoring the independence and credibility of the Department of Justice. They both did their parts.

Levi and Bell were very different people. Levi was a bow-tied academic who had spent almost his entire career at the University of Chicago. When Ford's White House counsel, Philip Buchen, made calls to test reaction to Levi's possible appointment as attorney general, he heard high praise but also heard that Levi could be "prickly." Both of us were students of Levi at the University of Chicago Law School in the 1980s, and that description conforms to our youthful impressions of him.

In contrast, Griffin Bell was a highly successful lawyer, political adviser, and all-around raconteur. He advised one law graduate to learn to play golf and shoot birds, because that is how she could bring in business. As a result of Judge Bell's deep ties to Mercer, we came to know him late in his life, and our experiences were consistent with that of a friend who once wrote that Judge Bell "could light up any room with his personal warmth, and entertain all with his stories drawn from a life of incredible depth and breadth."²



JEFF TWILOR/APSHUTTERSTOCK

Edward Levi (right) gives Griffin Bell (left) a tour of the Justice Department after Bell's designation as Attorney General, June 3, 1977.

Levi and Bell were not at all alike. Yet somehow these two very different men played similar roles in restoring faith in the Department of Justice and the rule of law.

How did they do it? Levi did not right the ship by sitting in his office, smoking his pipe, and exuding integrity. He had to deal with a variety of controversial issues, including Watergate prosecutions, busing, and gun control. Levi once described the job as “one damn thing after another.”³ It was the way in which he dealt with those issues that define his legacy. Bell faced difficult issues as well. He had to make decisions whether to investigate and prosecute powerful congressmen, and he helped formulate the government’s position in politically explosive cases involving affirmative action and civil rights. The decisions Bell made, and the way he made them, tell us much about how an attorney general can safeguard the Department of Justice and the rule of law. With both Levi and Bell, the lessons are in the details.

We have undertaken a research project to learn exactly how Levi and Bell succeeded, in the hope and expectation that we can glean lessons for future attorneys general. The archival research has led so far to the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library in Ann

Arbor, Michigan and the Special Collections Research Center at the University of Chicago. We will be spending time at the National Archives and interviewing lawyers who served with Levi and Bell at the Department of Justice. We are in search of those details that will bear lessons for the future.

As part of this project, we are hosting the 21st Annual Georgia Symposium on Professionalism and Ethics at Mercer in October. The title of the symposium is “Ethics, Professionalism, and the Role of the Attorney General of the United States.”

There is no more pressing issue for the legal profession than to ensure that the rule of law survives the political tumult of the age we live in. The attorney general has a crucial role to play in this endeavor, and our hope is to bring to light some lessons from history that will help future attorneys general to protect the norms and traditions of the Department of Justice, for the benefit of all of us, regardless of political preferences.

¹Gormley, Ken, ARCHIBALD COX: CONSCIENCE OF A NATION 358 (1997).

²John C. Bell, Jr., *President's Foreword*, 18 *Journal of Southern Legal Hist.* (2010).

³Katherine Graham, *In Memoriam: Edward H. Levi (1912-2000)*, 67 *U. CHI. L. REV.* 979, 980 (2000).

Ted Blumoff

Professor of Law

Recent Publications

PRETRIAL DISCOVERY (2nd ed. 2020) (co-authored with Prof. Edward J. Imwinkelried).

Cathy Cox

Dean and Professor of Law

Recent Publications

Georgia Keeps Voting Accuracy, Safety a Top Priority, THE MARIETTA DAILY JOURNAL, AUGUSTA CHRONICLE, MACON TELEGRAPH and DONALSONVILLE NEWS, Opinion, Aug. 31, 2019.

Select Speeches and Presentations

"Georgia's 'Proud' Tradition of Election Fraud," *Mercer Law Review* Symposium Dinner, Macon, Sept. 27, 2019.

Moderator, "Leading Successful Strategic Partnerships," Health South Connect Conference, Georgia Aquarium, Atlanta, Sept. 27, 2019.

Keynote Speaker, "Connect with Conversations," 2020 Leadership Georgia Opening Session, Brasstown Valley Resort, Young Harris, Feb. 1.

Keynote Speaker, "Women Can Lead, Women Can Win – So Quit Asking About It," Usery Forum of Leadership, Georgia College in Milledgeville, Feb. 10.

"Update on Decennial Redistricting in Georgia," Macon/Bibb League of Women Voters, Macon, Feb. 19.

Panelist, Georgia Public Radio's *Political Rewind* to discuss the current state of voting in Georgia, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Coastal Georgia, May 5.

Honors, Awards, and Activities

Featured in the article *Legal Luminary*, MACON MAG. (October/November 2019).

Awarded the 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award, State YMCA of Georgia's Center of Civic Engagement, 75th Annual Youth Assembly Governor's Luncheon, Atlanta, Nov. 8, 2019.

Outstanding Woman Lawyer of the Year, Middle Georgia Chapter of the Georgia Association of Women Lawyers, April.

Jessica Feinberg

Professor of Law

Recent Publications

After Marriage Equality: Dual Fatherhood for Married Male Same-Sex Couples, 54 U.C. DAVIS L. REV. ___ (forthcoming 2020).

Restructuring Rebuttal of the Marital Presumption for the Modern Era, 104 MINN. L. REV. 243 (2019).

Select Speeches and Presentations

"Restructuring Rebuttal of the Marital Presumption for the Modern Era," International Society for Family Law, North American Regional Conference, Chicago, IL, June 2019.

"Restructuring Rebuttal of the Marital Presumption for the Modern Era," Feminist Legal Theory Program, Law and Society Annual Conference, Washington, D.C., June 2019.

Daisy Hurst Floyd

University Professor of Law and Ethical Formation

Recent Publications

THE FORMATION OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY: THE PATH FROM STUDENT TO LAWYER, (2019) (co-authored with Prof. Patrick Longan & Prof. Timothy Floyd).

Timothy Floyd

Tommy Malone Distinguished Chair in Trial Advocacy and Director of Experiential Education

Recent Publications

THE FORMATION OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY: THE PATH FROM STUDENT TO LAWYER, (2019) (co-authored with Prof. Daisy Hurst Floyd & Prof. Patrick Longan).

Sarah Gerwig-Moore

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Professor of Law

Recent Publications

To Outgrow a Mockingbird: Confronting Our History—as Well as Our Fictions—about Indigent Defense in the Deep South, ___ GA. L. REV. ___ (forthcoming 2020).

WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE TODAY? AN INTRODUCTION TO CLIENT COUNSELING (forthcoming 2020).

Knowing Better, Doing Better, MACON MAG. (August-September 2019).

Select Speeches and Presentations

"Justice for Juveniles," University of Georgia Law Review Symposium, Athens, Oct. 24, 2019.

Honors, Awards, and Activities

McDonald Distinguished Fellow in Law and Religion, Emory University, September 2019.

Appointed by the Supreme Court of Georgia to the Georgia Resource Center Board of Directors.

David Hricik

Professor of Law

Recent Publications

PROPERTY: CASES, DOCUMENTS, AND LAWYERING STRATEGIES (4th ed forthcoming 2020) (co-authored).

REMEDIES: A PRACTICAL APPROACH, (forthcoming 2020).

GEORGIA LAW OF TORTS, 2019-2020 EDITION, (2019) (co-authored with Charles R. Adams III).

Acronyms to Enhance Your Legal Writing, 25 No. 4 GA B.J. 60 (Feb. 2020) (co-authored with Prof. Karen Sneddon).

Tackling Block Quotes, 25 No. 3 GA B.J. 60 (Dec. 2019) (co-authored with Prof. Karen Sneddon).

The 10 Principles of Plain English, 25 No. 2 GA B.J. 60 (Oct. 2019) (co-authored with Prof. Karen Sneddon).

Voice and Tone in Legal Writing, 25 No. 1 GA B.J. 84 (Aug. 2019) (co-authored with Prof. Karen Sneddon).

Organization Matters, 24 No. 6 GA B.J. 76 (June 2019) (co-authored with Prof. Karen Sneddon).

Select Speeches and Presentations

Speaker, Pauline Newman IP Inn of Court, Washington, D.C, September 2019.

"Practical IP Ethics Issues," 15th Annual Advanced Patent Law Institute, University of Texas School of Law, March 2020.

Moderator, "Ethical issues in E-Discovery," Chief Justice's Committee on Professionalism, Atlanta, 2019.

"Recurring Ethical Problems for In-House and Outside Patent Counsel," Practicing Law Institute, April 3 and 24.

"Inequitable Conduct: A Refresher and an Update," with William Covey, Director of the Office of Enrollment and Discipline of the United States Patent & Trademark Office for the Intellectual Property Owners' Association, April 23.

Honors, Awards, and Activities

One of eight elected as a Fellow of the American Intellectual Property Law Association and also appointed by its president to serve on the Committee on the Profession, 2019.

Quoted in *Federal Circuit Inequitable Conduct Case Alarms IP Ethics Attorneys*, LAW360.COM, March 11.

Linda D. Jellum

Associate Dean for Faculty Research and Development and Ellison Capers Palmer Sr. Professor of Law

Recent Publications

MASTERING LEGISLATION, REGULATION, AND STATUTORY INTERPRETATION (3rd ed. 2020).

You're Fired! Why the ALJ Multi-Track Dual Removal Provisions Violate the Constitution and Possible Fixes, 26 GEORGE MASON L. REV. 705 (2019).

Judicial Review in DEVELOPMENTS IN ADMINISTRATIVE LAW AND REGULATORY PRACTICE (Robert Divis ed. 2019) (co-authored with Prof. Richard Murphy).

Auer Two-Steps Forward or One Giant Step Back? in ADMINISTRATIVE & REGULATORY LAW NEWS, Vol. 44 No. 2, Winter 2019.

Will the Supreme Court Retain, Cabin, or Eliminate Seminole Rock & Auer Deference? in ABA SUPREME COURT PREVIEW, March 2019.

Select Speeches and Presentations

"Statutory Interpretation 101," American Bar Association's Section of Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice, 2019 Spring Conference, Arlington, Virginia, May 31, 2019.

"Ejusdem Generis? Statutory Interpretation for Lawyers," California Lawyers Association Annual Meeting, Monterey, California, Oct. 10, 2019.

Presented on the 2019 Supreme Court cases addressing standard of review in administrative law at the ABA Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice Fall Conference Nov. 15, 2019, in Washington, D.C.

Participated in the AALS Administrative Law Section's New Voices program on Jan. 3, which she created while serving as associate director of the Association of American Law Schools.

Honors, Awards, and Activities

Elected chair, American Bar Association's Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice Section, 2019.

Quoted in *United States v. Thomas*, 939 F.3d 1121, 1139, n.14 (10th Cir. 2019) (Matheson, C.J., dissenting) (quoting MASTERING STATUTORY INTERPRETATION (1st 2008)).

Stephen M. Johnson

Professor of Law

Recent Publications

Economics v. Equity: Do Market-Based Environmental Reforms Exacerbate Environmental Injustice?, 56 WASHINGTON & LEE L. REV. 111 (1999), reprinted in NADIA AHMAD, ET AL., ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: LAW, POLICY, AND REGULATION (3rd ed. 2020).

Killing WOTUS 2015: Why Three Rulemakings May Not Be Enough, 64 ST. LOUIS U. L.J. ___ (forthcoming 2020).

Honors, Awards, and Activities

Elected vice president of the Center for Computer Assisted Legal Instruction, (CALI), Jan. 4.

Billie Jo Kaufmann

Interim Director of the Furman Smith Law Library and Visiting Professor of Law

Recent Publications

Law and Cyberspace Series, THE CENTER FOR COMPUTER-ASSISTED LEGAL INSTRUCTION (CALI) (forthcoming 2020) (co-author of 14 lessons).

Select Speeches and Presentations

"Cool Tools: Apps and Other Tools for Lawyers," Internet Legal Research CLE given by Georgia Law Librarians, Feb. 20.

Honors, Awards, and Activities

Selected as chair, ABA Standing Committee for the Law Library of Congress, 2019-2020.

Jeremy Kidd

Associate Professor of Law

Recent Publications

Who's Afraid of Uber?, 20 NEV. L.J. 581 (forthcoming 2020).

Know When to Hold 'Em, Know When to Run: The Ballad of Billy Walters, 14 TENN. J. L. & POL'Y ___ (forthcoming 2020).

Select Speeches and Presentations

Discussion group participant, "Philosophical Reflections on Respondeat Superior Liability" and "Insider Trading Stories," 2019 Southeastern Association of Law School's Annual Conference, July 30-Aug. 5, 2019.

"Agency, Pluricorporality and Respondent Superior Liability," Philosophical Reflections on Respondent Superior Liability, Southeastern Association of Law

Schools Annual Conference, Sept. 7, 2019.

"Know When to Hold 'Em, Know When to Run: The Ballad of Billy Walters," Insider Trading Stories, Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference, Sept. 7, 2019 and *Tennessee Journal of Law and Policy's* Insider Trading Stories Symposium, Nov. 15, 2019.

"What Does the Public Really Think About Insider Trading?" Southern Economic Association annual meeting, Nov. 23, 2019 and Law and the Social Sciences Empirical Works in Progress session, AALS annual meeting, Jan. 5.

Moderator, "Governance by Index: Mutual Fund Involvement in Corporate Governance," Federalist Society Annual Faculty Conference, Jan. 3.

"Law and Economics Through the Work of Elinor Ostrom," Texas A&M School of Law, Jan. 24-25.

Honors, Awards, and Activities

Selected as an Academic Affiliate, International Center for Law and Economics.

Quoted in *Allegations Against Burford Could Muddy the Waters for Litigation Funding*, *Law Experts Argue*, LAW.COM, Aug. 14, 2019.

Professor Patrick

Longan

William Augustus Bootle Chair in Professionalism and Ethics

Recent Publications

THE FORMATION OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY: THE PATH FROM STUDENT TO LAWYER, (2019) (co-authored with Prof. Daisy Hurst Floyd & Prof. Timothy Floyd).

Legal Ethics: Annual Survey of Georgia Law, 71 MERCER L. REV. 157 (2019)

Oral History of Manley F. Brown, 26 J. S. LEGAL HIST. 1 (2019).

Select Speeches and Presentations

"Mitigation for Attorney Misconduct," special master training, State Bar of Georgia's annual meeting, Orlando, Florida, June 2019.

"Update on Attorney Discipline," Urgent Legal Matters Institute, Jekyll Island, August 2019.

Interviewed, HIDDEN LEGAL FIGURES podcast on the role of Judge William Augustus Bootle in the desegregation of the University of Georgia, September 2019.

Honors, Awards, and Activities

Appointed by the Supreme Court of Georgia to a second one-year term as one of 20 special masters to hear and make recommendations on lawyer disciplinary cases.

Teri McMurtry-Chubb

Professor of Law

Recent Publications

Teaching with Feminist Judgments: A Global Conversation, 38 LAW & INEQ. 1 (2020) (co-authored with B. Crawford, K. Stanchi, L. Berger, G. Appleby, S. Frelich Appleton, & R. Astoria).

There Are No Outsiders Here: Rethinking Intersectionality as Hegemonic Discourse in the Age of #MeToo, 16 LEGAL COMM. & RHETORIC: JAWLD 1 (2019).

The Practical Implications of Unexamined Assumptions: Disrupting Flawed Legal Arguments to Advance the Cause of Justice, 58 WASHBURN L.J. 531 (2019).

Still Writing at the Master's Table: Decolonizing Rhetoric in Legal Writing for a "Woke" Legal Academy, 21 SCHOLAR 255 (2019).

In Search of the Common Law Inside the Black Female Body, 114 NW. U. L. REV. ONLINE 187 (2019).

Honors, Awards, and Activities

Selected as the 2018 Teresa Godwin Phelps Award Recipient for her article titled, *The Rhetoric of Race, Redemption, and Will Contests: Inheritance as Reparations in John Grisham's Sycamore Row*, 48 MEMPHIS L. REV. 889 (2018).

David Ritchie

Director of International Initiatives and
Professor of Law and Philosophy

Select Speeches and Presentations

Round table discussion, entitled
"Comparative Study of the Theoretical
Foundations of Judicial Deference,"
May 30, 2019.

Panelist, "Constitutional Theory:
Developments in Asia and the
Americas," May 30, 2019.

Panelist, "Human Rights in Asia and
the Americas: Armed Conflicts and
International Law," May 31, 2019.

Honors, Awards, and Activities

Hosted the Fourth Annual Mercer-
Estacio Summer Institute on U.S. Law,
June 3 – 7, 2019.

Michael Sabbath

Southeastern Bankruptcy Law Institute
and W. Homer Drake Jr. Endowed Chair
in Bankruptcy Law and Professor of Law

Select Speeches and Presentations

Speaker, Fifth Annual Dinner and
Meeting of the W. Homer Drake Jr.
Georgia Bankruptcy American Inn of
Court, Macon, June 14, 2019.

Panelist, "Aging Gracefully? Trending
Issues Related to the Increase in
Seniors Filing Consumer Bankruptcies,"
Consumer and Business Bankruptcy
Institute, co-sponsored by the
Bankruptcy Law Section of the State
Bar of Georgia, Lake Oconee, Dec. 12,
2019.

Gary Simson

Macon Chair in Law and Professor
of Law

Recent Publications

*Racially Neutral in Form, Racially
Discriminatory in Fact: The
Implications for Voting Rights of Giving
Disproportionate Racial Impact the
Constitutional Importance It Deserves*,
71 MERCER L. REV. 811-55 (2020).

*Constitutional Law and the Culture
Wars: When Religious Liberty and the
Law Conflict, Which Should Prevail?*,
in FREEDOM, AND SOCIETY: ESSAYS ON
AUTONOMY, IDENTITY, AND POLITICAL
FREEDOM (Y. Deng, C. Rosental, R.
Scott, & R. Simson, eds. forthcoming
2020).

*An Essay on Illusion and Reality in the
Conflict of Laws*, 70 MERCER L. REV.
819-64 (2019).

Select Speeches and Presentations

"Legal Barriers to Voting, and the
Supreme Court's Approach to
Disproportionate Racial Impact,"
Mercer Law Review Symposium –
Contemporary Issues in Election Law,
Macon, Sept. 27, 2019.

"Limitations on the Right to Vote, and
the Constitution's Guarantee of Equal
Protection of the Laws," *Emory Law
Journal* Symposium – Election Law in a
Changing Political Landscape, Atlanta,
Feb. 6, 2020.

Honors, Awards, and Activities

Selected as chair, Strategies for Youth
Macon Task Force.

Selected to National Board of Directors,
Strategies for Youth.

Selected as co-chair, Southeastern
Association of Law Schools Scholarly
Research Committee.

Interviewer, Yale Alumni Schools
Committee of Georgia.

Karen Sneddon

Professor of Law

Recent Publications

*Dead Men (and Women) Should Tell
Tales: Narrative, Intent, and Construction
Proceedings*, ___ ACTEC LAW J. ___
(2021) (forthcoming).

*More than IRAC: Acronyms to
Support the Writing Process*, 28
NO. 1 PERSP ____ (forthcoming Spring
2020).

*Clause A to Clause Z: The Transactional
Reader and Narrative Transportation*
(with Prof. Susan M. Chesler), 71 S.C.
L. REV. 247 (2019).

*Voice, Strength, and No Contest
Clauses*, WIS. L. REV. 239 (2019).

*Happily Ever After: Fostering the Role
of Transactional Lawyer as Storyteller*,
20 TRANSACTIONS: THE TENN. J. OF BUS.
LAW 491 (2019) (co-authored with Prof.
Susan M. Chesler).

*Brain Breaks for the Legal Writing
Classroom*, 32 NO. 2 THE SECOND
DRAFT: BULLETIN OF THE LEGAL WRITING
INSTITUTE 46 (Fall 2019).

Editors' Note, 23 J. LEG. WRITING INST.
(2019) (co-authored with Prof. Lindsey
P. Gustafson).

*Acronyms to Enhance Your Legal
Writing*, 25 NO. 4 GA B.J. 60 (Feb.
2020) (co-authored with Prof. David
Hricik).

Tackling Block Quotes, 25 NO. 3 GA B.J.
60 (Dec. 2019) (co-authored with Prof.
David Hricik).

The 10 Principles of Plain English,
25 NO. 2 GA B.J. 60 (Oct. 2019) (co-
authored with Prof. David Hricik).

Voice and Tone in Legal Writing, 25 NO.
1 GA B.J. 84 (Aug. 2019) (co-authored
with Prof. David Hricik).

Organization Matters, 24 NO. 6 GA B.J.
76 (June 2019) (co-authored with Prof.
David Hricik).

Select Speeches and Presentations

"Effective Legal Writing," ELTE Law,
Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest,
Hungary, October 2019.

"Effective Learning Writing and
Teaching & Learning Methodologies for
the Law School Classroom," University
of Debrecen Faculty of Law, Debrecen,
Hungary, October 2019.

"From Clause A to Clause Z: Narrative
Transportation and the Transactional
Reader," Seventh Biennial Applied
Legal Storytelling Conference, Boulder,
Colorado (with Professor Susan M.
Chesler), July 10, 2019.

Group discussion participant, "What's
a Job Talk?," "The Dead Hand:
Keeping Students Engaged in the T&E
Classroom," "Designing Your Teaching
Package" and "The Next Article,"
Southeastern Association of Law
Schools, 2019.

"Brain Breaks for the Legal Writing
Classroom," Biennial Conference of the
Association of Legal Writing Directors,
Suffolk University Law School, Boston,
Massachusetts, May 31, 2019.

"Seminar: The Characteristics of Good
Legal Writing," University of Strathclyde
Law School, Glasgow, Scotland, May
23, 2019.

Scott Titshaw

Associate Professor of Law

Recent Publications

*ART, Surrogacy, Federalism, and
Jus Sanguinis Citizenship* IN THE
U.S., AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND ASIAN
YEARBOOK OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND
HUMANITARIAN LAW, Vol. 3, 144-168
(2019).

Select Speeches and Presentations

"Hot Topics, Citizenship, and
Immigration, Sexual Orientation and
Gender Identity," Stonewall Bar of
Georgia and State Bar of Georgia ICLE
conference, Atlanta, October 2019.

Panelist, "Family and Immigration,"
ninth annual AILA Rocky Mountain Fall
Conference, Denver, Colorado, October
2019.

Panelist, "The Ethics of Dealing with
Government Surveillance and Client
Confidentiality," AILA Annual National
Conference, Orlando, June 2019.

Honors, Awards, and Activities

Quoted in *Both Parents Are American.
The U.S. Says Their Baby Isn't*, N.Y.
TIMES, May 21, 2019.

Suzianne D.

Painter-Thorne

Associate Professor of Law

Recent Publications

LEGAL WRITING, (4th ed. 2019) (co-
authored with Professors Richard K.
Neumann, Jr., and Sheila Simon).

*Fraying the Knot: Marital Property,
Probate, and Practical Problems with
Tribal Marriage Bans*, 84 BROOKLYN L.
REV. ___ (forthcoming 2020).

CLASSNotes

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1954

Wallace E. Harrell was appointed chief magistrate judge of Glynn County in April 2019. Harrell was previously deputy magistrate judge and a partner at Gilbert Harrell Sumerford & Martin in Brunswick for 55 years.

1963

Kermith Watson completed his most recent book, *Evil Came A-Calling*, the story of Tara Grinstead's disappearance and murder.

1977

D. Jack Sawyer, Jr. joined Cresset as managing director in the Atlanta region. He previously served as southeast region president for Wilmington Trust.

G. Neil Skene, Jr. was named vice president for strategic planning and policy at Pace Center for Girls, a nationally recognized non-residential program helping girls find a better path for their lives after involvement in juvenile justice, human trafficking or academic struggles. He is responsible for national expansion of the evidence-based program now serving 3,000 girls a year with 21 centers and 12 in-school programs throughout Florida. The first expansion will be in Neil's hometown of Macon — a startup in-school program in cooperation with Macon's School-Justice Partnership.

1979

Capt. Donna Price JAGC, USN (Retired), was selected to the Board of Supervisors for Albemarle County (Charlottesville), Virginia. She is the first openly transgender individual to be elected to the board.

1982

Mark W. Clark was included in 26th edition of the *Best Lawyers in America*. Clark, who has been recognized in the publication for more than 10 consecutive years, is the president and managing partner of the firm Clark, Fountain, LaVista, Prather, & Littky-Rubin in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Susan P. McWilliams was listed in *Best Lawyers in America* for employment law: management, labor law: management, and litigation: labor and employment, and has been listed since 2005.

J. William Pierce, Jr. was listed as leading U.S. attorney in the area of real estate and secured lending by the Chambers USA 2019 guide. Pierce's firm Glankler Brown PLLC is based in Memphis, Tennessee.

J. Daniel Speight was appointed chief executive officer and general counsel of Planters First Bancorp. Speight was formerly a partner at James-Bates-Brannan-Groover in Macon.

1983

T. Martin Fiorentino was recognized in the second edition of *Florida Trend's* Florida 500 list, which highlights the 500 most influential executives in

different economic sectors throughout the state. Fiorentino serves as president of The Fiorentino Group, one of the largest government affairs and business development firms in Florida.

Jackie Saylor was again named a 2019 Super Lawyer in estate planning and probate. A founding partner of The Saylor Law Firm LLP, she practices estate planning, wills and trusts, probate and estate administration, estate and trust disputes and will contests in Atlanta. Saylor is currently immediate past chair of the Atlanta Bar Association's Estate Planning and Probate Section.

1984

Michael S. Pemberton, District Court Judge for the Ninth Judicial Circuit in Tennessee, was elected secretary for the Tennessee Judicial Conference.

1986

Sandra H. Taylor was appointed by Gov. Brian Kemp as solicitor general for Troup County. Taylor previously served as the county's chief assistant solicitor since 2013 and currently serves as vice-chair for the board of the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice.

J. Henry Walker, IV, chair and CEO of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP, was named one of Atlanta's Most Admired CEOs by the *Atlanta Business Chronicle* at an awards dinner on Aug. 22, 2019. The award recognizes leaders who demonstrate a strong record of leadership, innovation, stellar financial performance, a commitment to workplace diversity and who have made significant contributions to the community.

1987

Anton F. Mertens started his own firm, The Mertens Firm, focusing on family law issues and family immigration matters. Mertens was previously with Burr Forman in Atlanta.

Ray S. Smith, III was appointed by Gov. Brian Kemp as chairperson of the Stone Mountain Memorial Association for a term of office ending Oct. 24, 2020.

1988

Joan G. Crumpler was promoted to director of legal services for the Georgia Department of Public Safety (DPS) on Aug. 1, 2019. DPS includes the Georgia State Patrol, Georgia Motor Carrier Compliance Division and the Georgia Capitol Police. Crumpler served as DPS deputy legal director for the past six years.

Robert A. Mason was named to the 2020 edition of the North Carolina Super Lawyers. Mason is one of the first attorneys to be board-certified in elder law by the North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization. He is also a certified elder law attorney by the National Elder Law Foundation, past chair of the Elder Law Section of the North Carolina Bar Association, and a fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel.

Jay D. Mitchell joined Jackson Healthcare as general counsel and corporate secretary in December 2018. Mitchell was most recently with King & Spalding in Atlanta.

1989

Elizabeth K. Presley received the 2019 Assistant District Attorney Award of the Year by the District Attorneys' Association of Georgia at the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council annual summer conference. Presley is chief assistant district attorney for the Towaliga Judicial Circuit.

J. Christopher Clark was inducted into the American College of Trial Lawyers for his distinguished trial practice, his leadership in his local community, his high ethical and moral standards, and the intangible quality of his collegiality.

Anita Wallace Thomas was re-elected to the State Bar of Georgia's Board of Governors representing Atlanta Circuit Post 39. Wallace Thomas is a partner at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP and serves as a member of the Law School's Board of Visitors.

Christopher W. Yokom was appointed by the Fulton County Superior Court to be a presiding juvenile court judge in Fulton County. Yokom was previously a juvenile court associate judge for over two years.

1990

Sally B. Akins was elected secretary for the State Bar of Georgia at its annual meeting on June 8, 2019.

J. Jeffrey Deery was selected as 2019 Florida Super Lawyer in general litigation. Deery is a shareholder with the law firm of Winderweede, Haines, Ward and Woodman in Winter Park, Florida.

1991

Thomas R. Burnside, III was re-elected to the Board of Governors of the State Bar of Georgia. Burnside will continue to serve in the Post 3 seat from the Augusta Circuit.

Bruce E. Carney was appointed by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis as Citrus County Judge, a newly-created judgeship passed in the 2019 Legislative Session. Carney was selected from 11 candidates for the position. He was sworn in and started his new position in December 2019.

Denise D. Dell-Powell joined Dean Mead in Orlando, Florida, as chair of the bankruptcy and creditor's rights practice group. Dell-Powell was previously with Burr Forman.

Shelba Dawn Sellers joined the National Society of Colonial Dames Seventeenth Century. Sellers lives and practices law in Thomasville.

1995

Sharell Fincher Lewis was appointed and sworn in by Gov. Brian Kemp as the new judge for Bibb County State Court. Lewis was formerly chief assistant solicitor general for Bibb County.

Jeffrey N. Powers was selected as a 2019 Georgia Super Lawyer for personal injury litigation. Powers practices personal injury and workers compensation in Macon.



CLASS OF 2019

Final Honors

Because spring semester grades were not due until several weeks after graduation, honors were conferred in mid-June. They were as follows:

Summa Cum Laude

Caitlin W. Harris

Magna Cum Laude

Michael Berthiaume

Matthew Collum

Maggie Cropp

Terrika Crutchfield

Ezra Gantt

Leesa Guarnotta

Dylan Hasty

Brittain Hunt

Jared Lee

Alec Settle

Noah West

Matthew White

Robert Wright

Cum Laude

Alicia Adamson

Matthew Balcer

Gabrielle Biggs

Richard Custard

Benjamin Davidson

Nicole Esuola

Matthew Gilbo

Meagan Hurley

Richard Jenkins

Clayton Kendrick

Kyle Lankhorst

Mary Mahfoud

Antonio Matos Cabrera

Chase McFarlin

Christopher Meredith

Olivia O'Brien

Jonathan Richardson

Caroline Scaff

Melissa Sport

Olivia Warner

Lois Weldon

Michael Whitehead



PHOTOGRAPHY, LLC

ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS

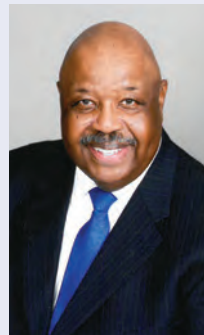
We are thrilled to honor three very deserving individuals with our 2020 alumni awards. Judge O'Connor, Judge Brown and Justice Boggs demonstrate their commitment to public service and the legal profession by serving on the judiciary at all levels throughout the state of Georgia.

— DEAN CATHY COX, '86



The Meritorious Service Award

The Hon. Michael P. Boggs, '90, received the Meritorious Service Award for demonstrating his support of the Alumni Association and the Law School through his contribution of time and gifts. Boggs continuously gives back to his alma mater as a guest speaker and mentor. He recently endowed a scholarship fund that will give preference to law students who are from rural communities. Boggs will serve as the Law School's 2020 commencement speaker in August. Gov. J. Nathan Deal, '66, appointed Boggs to the Supreme Court of Georgia in December 2016.



The Outstanding Alumnus Award

The Hon. Carl C. Brown, '73, received the Outstanding Alumnus Award for serving the profession of law in an outstanding manner, and in so doing has brought honor to himself and the Law School. In 1982, Brown became the first African American judge in the history of Augusta when he was appointed chief judge of the municipal court. Brown is a U.S. Army veteran and an advocate for justice in his community. He currently serves as chief judge of the Superior Court of the Augusta Judicial Circuit and administrative judge for the Tenth Judicial District.



The Young Alumni Council Volunteer of the Year Award

The Hon. Rizza P. O'Connor, '10, is the inaugural recipient of the Young Alumni Council Volunteer of the Year Award for providing valuable service and selfless commitment to enhance the experience of Mercer Law students. Through mentoring young lawyers and frequently serving as a guest speaker for law school programs and classes, she demonstrates the importance of service to the development of future Mercer lawyers. In 2013, O'Connor was appointed chief magistrate judge for Toombs County, making her the youngest Asian-American in Georgia to serve as a judge.

What makes Mercer Law special is, we have this strong alumni group that keeps ties wherever you may go.

— JUDGE RIZZA P. O'CONNOR, '10

CLASSNotes

1996

Christian E. Hardigree was appointed founding dean of the Metropolitan State University of Denver School of Hospitality, Events and Tourism, beginning Jan. 2, 2019. The School has an operating hotel and restaurant, with Tivoli brewery on campus for internships and work experience, and offers degrees in brewery operations, event management, restaurant management, travel and tourism, and hotel operations.

Paola Parra Harris received the Ultimate Attorney Award in Family Law by the *Jacksonville Business Journal*. Parra Harris was also recognized as a Woman of Distinction by the Girl Scouts Gateway Council and received the Business Leadership Award by the Jacksonville Mayor's Hispanic American Advisory Board. She opened her family law litigation boutique firm in Jacksonville, Florida in Jan. 2016.

1997

Shondeana C. Morris was appointed Superior Court Judge for the Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit by Gov. Brian Kemp. Morris is a former deputy district attorney in Fulton County, assistant solicitor for the City of Atlanta, and has been a DeKalb State Court judge since 2017. She is vice president of the Mercer BLSA Alumni Council.

T. Mark Sandifer joined the law office of Moore, Clarke, DuVall and Rodgers P.C., which acquired his practice in Tifton, effective Oct. 1, 2019. Sandifer will be a firm partner in charge of its Tifton office providing a full range of business and real estate-related legal services.

Mason S. Weiss retired from the U.S. Army after spending twenty years in the JAG Corps.

1998

Mark E. Beatty was promoted to the role of senior vice president, global total rewards for ViacomCBS Inc. following the merger of the two media companies. In this role, Beatty leads all compensation and benefits-related functions for the combined company.

Jonathan J. Tuggle, founding shareholder of Boyd Collar Nolen Tuggle & Roddenberry, was named Fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. Tuggle was recognized by Super Lawyers for 2020 in the area of family law for the ninth year in a row.

1999

James A.W. Balli joined as a partner in the litigation practice group at Taylor English Duma LLP.

Jeffrey R. Harris was named to Georgia Super Lawyers' Top 100 list of attorneys. Harris, a partner at Harris Lowry Manton LLP in Savannah and Atlanta, is a 12-time Georgia Super Lawyer and three-time Top 100 honoree.

2000

Laura F. Moorer was appointed the new librarian for the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, the highest court in the district.

Stacy M. Youmans was appointed judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit Court by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis. Youmans was most recently with the law firm of Blanchard, Merriam, Adel & Kirkland.

Jonathan B. Zeitlin was promoted to assistant legal attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

2001

Robin Ann Golivesky started her own firm, The Law Office of Robin A. Golivesky LLC, specializing in the area of workers' compensation.

Gregory K. Smith was elected as a new partner at Smith Gambrell & Russell. Smith practices in both the firm's Atlanta headquarters and its Washington, D.C. office. Smith has government contracts and construction practice, handling procurement and construction contracts as well as dispute resolution and litigation.

Sandra N. Wisenbaker received the 2019 Solicitor-General of the Year Award by the Georgia Association of Solicitors-General at the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council annual summer conference. Wisenbaker has served as solicitor-general for Coweta County since 2013.

2002

Tomieka R. Daniel was presented the Dan Bradley Award by the State Bar of Georgia at the Pro Bono and Public Interest Awards Reception in Atlanta on Nov. 12, 2019. The Bradley Award honors the memory of Mercer Law graduate Dan J. Bradley, '67, for excellence and commitment to the delivery of quality legal services to the poor and to providing equal access to justice.

Bradley M. Harmon was selected as a 2020 Georgia Super Lawyer in the area of Business Litigation. This is Harmon's third recognition as a Super Lawyer. He is managing partner at HunterMaclean in Savannah.

2003

Jason E. Downey was selected as vice chair of the State Board of Education. Downey represents the 8th Congressional District of Georgia.

Darrell L. Sutton was installed as the 57th president of the State Bar of Georgia at its annual meeting on June 8, 2019.

Carl R. Varnedoe won a record-setting settlement in the Southern District of Georgia for a deliberate indifference, civil rights claim, wherein a young man died as a result of the denial of life-saving medical treatment while incarcerated at the Chatham County Detention Center. Varnedoe was also re-elected to the State Bar of Georgia's Board of Governors representing Atlantic Circuit Post 2.

2004

Jennifer Kennedy Coggins joined Travelers Insurance on July 16, 2019 as senior counsel and claim center general counselor for the Tennessee and Ohio Valley Claim Center located in Franklin, Tennessee. She and her family relocated to the Nashville, Tennessee area from metro Atlanta.

S. Elizabeth Hall joined James-Bates-Brannan-Groover's Macon office focusing on commercial litigation. Hall was formerly with CarMax Auto Finance in Atlanta.

Brandon L. Peak won a record-setting verdict in Muscogee County, Georgia. Peak's verdict of \$280 million is the largest verdict in U.S. history awarded in a trucking case. He is a trial lawyer who handles cases across a wide array of practice areas in state and federal courts throughout the nation. Peak is a member of Mercer Law Board of Visitors and was elected to the State Bar of Georgia Board of Governors as representative for Chattahoochee Circuit Post 2. Peak is a partner at Butler Wooten Peak in Columbus.

Zachary H. Thomas was elevated as a named partner, and the firm's name has been changed to Bergen, Bergen & Thomas to represent this appointment. Thomas has been a partner in the Savannah firm since 2013. He practices medical malpractice and personal injury.

2005

Jeffrey H. Perry was elected partner at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP effective Jan. 1. Perry practices at the firm's Atlanta office focusing on venture capital and corporate mergers and acquisitions.

2006

Rebecca McKelvey Castañeda a member at Stites & Harbison PLLC, was named to the Super Lawyers list of Mid-South Super Lawyers' 2019 edition.

Kristin Starnes Gray was promoted to partner at the labor and employment law firm of FordHarrison LLP in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Gray focuses her practice on helping employers navigate human resources-related issues and litigation.

Crystal Jones was sworn in as Macon-Bibb County's new municipal court judge in 2019. Jones was most recently senior assistant county attorney for Macon-Bibb.

Jed D. Manton was named a Georgia Super Lawyer for 2020. Manton, a partner at Harris Lowry Manton LLP in Atlanta and Savannah, is an eight-time Rising Star honoree.

Zachary A. McEntyre was chosen as a Rising Star by *Law360*. McEntyre is a partner at King and Spalding's Atlanta office practicing high-stakes class actions and other complex commercial litigation.

2007

Ivy Cadle was re-elected to the Board of Governors of the State Bar of Georgia and will continue to serve in the Post 3 seat from the Macon Circuit. He was also elected to the State Bar of Georgia Executive Committee. The Board of Governors elects six of its members to serve on the Executive Committee with the organization's officers. The Executive Committee meets monthly and exercises the power of the Board of Governors when the board is not in session.

2008

Matthew R. Brooks was named partner at Troutman Sanders, LLP as of January.

Brittany Adams Lavalley began serving as disciplinary counsel for the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Supreme Court of Tennessee in July 2019.

Patrick M. Mincey was listed among the 2020 North Carolina Rising Stars. Mincey is a partner in the Raleigh and Wilmington offices of Cranfill Sumner and Hartzog, LLP.

2009

Phillip Eubanks joined the music and technology company Q&A in May 2019 as the company's chief operating officer. Eubanks was formerly the global head of strategy and operations for the creator services division of Spotify.

Jennifer S. Lowndes joined Holland & Knight's Orlando, Florida office as a partner in its construction law practice. Lowndes was most recently a partner at Jones Walker in Atlanta.

Amber Aiken Pelot was elected partner at Alston & Bird. Pelot was recently elected as secretary for the Mercer Law School Young Alumni Council.

Sunny R. Sandos was hired as staff attorney for Johnson City, Tennessee. Sandos is the first woman to hold that position. She was most recently executive director of planned giving for East Tennessee State University.

2010

Bethany A. Begnaud-Ströberg established Begnaud-Ströberg Law Firm focusing on juvenile, real estate and estate planning law. Begnaud-Ströberg was previously with the Ocmulgee Circuit Public Defender's Office, where her husband, **Kevin D. Ströberg, '11**, was promoted to chief assistant public defender. They married on Jan. 25, 2019 and reside in Milledgeville.

Candice L. Branche was appointed associate probate and magistrate judge in Newton County. Branche was previously deputy chief assistant district attorney in the Alcovy Circuit.

Erica L. Opitz, shareholder at Chamberlain Hrdlicka in Atlanta, was selected to *Georgia Trend's* 2019 Legal Elite in the corporate category. Opitz was also named a 2020 Rising Star in business and corporate law by Super Lawyers.

CLASSNotes

Adam F. Peoples was named partner at Hall Booth Smith, P.C. He is a civil defense attorney at its Asheville, North Carolina office. On July 11, 2019, Adam and **Lucie H. Peoples, '11**, announced the birth of their daughter, Abigail Grace.

Barclay R. Taylor was recognized by Super Lawyers as a Rising Star in the area of tax law. Taylor is an associate at Chamberlain Hrdlicka in Atlanta.

Seth K. Trimble was made partner at Taylor English Duma LLP as of Jan. 1. Trimble focuses his practice in technology litigation and intellectual property disputes involving patents, trade secrets, trademarks and copyrights. He has nationwide experience litigating patent and trademark infringement cases, including cases in federal district courts in Georgia, California, Texas, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Florida, New York and Virginia.

Bethany L. Whetzel joined the State Inspector General's Office as general counsel on Oct. 1, 2019. Whetzel was formerly with the Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission. She is a member of the Mercer Law Young Alumni Council as class representative.

2011

Dustin E. Davies was named partner at Hasty Pope LLP in Gainesville. Davies is a Young Alumni Council member representing Mercer Law Class of 2011.

Tyler James Oldenburg was selected as vice-chair of The Players. The Players annually combines the best field in golf with the world-class venue that is The Players Stadium Course at TPC Sawgrass. Proceeds benefit Northeast Florida charities and have totaled \$100 million since the event moved to Ponte Vedra Beach in 1977, including a record \$9 million generated in 2018.

Christopher A. Steele shareholder at Chamberlain Hrdlicka in Atlanta, was selected to *Georgia Trend's* 2019 Legal Elite in the taxes/estates/trusts category. Steele was also selected as a 2020 Rising Star in the area of estate planning and probate by Super Lawyers.

Ryan E. Spell was elected partner at Coleman Talley LLP effective Jan. 1. Spell practices in the firm's Atlanta office focusing on commercial real estate and secured real estate lending.

2012

LaToya S. Bell was recognized with the ABA Government and Public Sector Lawyers Division's Dorsey Award for serving as an outstanding public defender.

Janene D. Browder joined the staff of the Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission. She previously served as an assistant attorney general representing the Georgia Department of Community Health in Certificate of Need administrative appeals.

Ronald Edward Daniels and his wife, Maggie, announce the birth of their daughter, Joanna, on Sept. 6, 2019. Daniels was also elected secretary of the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of Georgia starting June 2019. Daniels practices consumer protection law in Middle Georgia.

Norbert D. "Bert" Hummel IV was promoted to partner at Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith in Atlanta. Hummel is president-elect of the State Bar of Georgia Young Lawyers Division.

2013

Ashley A. Akins was installed as co-editor of *The Young Lawyers Division Review*, the newsletter of the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of Georgia, on June 7, 2019, during the organization's annual meeting. Akins is an associate at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough in Atlanta.

Tamorra Buchanan Boyd welcomed her first child, Desmond, with her husband, Lamar, on May 12, 2019. Boyd has her own firm, Boyd Legal Counsel LLC, in Duluth focusing on business and intellectual property law.

Edward J. Cochran was elected partner at Coleman Talley LLP effective Jan. 1. Cochran practices in the firm's Valdosta office focusing on commercial real estate, commercial transactions, affordable housing and banking.

Foss G. Hodges was promoted to partner at the Decatur criminal defense firm Peters, Rubin & Sheffield P.A., which now has a new name, Peters, Rubin, Sheffield & Hodges P.A. Hodges and the firm focus on defending people accused of crimes against children, sexual offenses and other serious crimes throughout Georgia.

Eleanor deGolian Kasper joined Mulliken Weiner Berg & Jolivet P.C. in Colorado Springs, Colorado, as an associate attorney practicing commercial, construction and employment litigation. Kasper was formerly a law clerk at the United States Magistrate Court in Colorado Springs.

B. Patrick O'Grady joined the law firm of Harman Claytor Corrigan & Wellman as an associate in the firm's Richmond, Virginia office. His practice focuses on the defense of individuals, small businesses and insurers in connection with personal injury, premises liability, wrongful death and business litigation. O'Grady has tried more than 100 cases to verdict in courts throughout Virginia.

Alumni REUNIONS & EVENTS



Alumni and students attended the 2019 annual Cocktails & Conversation hosted by Baker Donelson.



Mercer Law BLSA hosted their annual Introduction to the Bar event Oct. 26, 2019.



The Class of 1974 enjoyed their 45-year reunion at Woodruff House.



The 2019 Law School homecoming tailgate was another success! Save the date for Homecoming 2020: Nov. 6-8.



The class of 1969 celebrated their half century reunion at Mercer Law School in the Robert L. Steed Lobby.

2014

Adam M. Miller was accepted to Leadership Orlando Class 98. Miller practices insurance defense with Gray Robinson in Orlando, Florida.

2015

Nicolas D. Bohorquez was recognized as a Super Lawyers Rising Star in 2020. Bohorquez practices real estate law at Williams Teusink, LLC in Decatur.

Michael G. Kaufman married Sophie Loghman in Joshua Tree National Park in California. Kaufman practices personal injury and workers compensation in Atlanta.

Stephen G. Swinson joined Gray Pannell & Woodward LLP in Savannah focusing his practice on municipal bond law and public finance, business law, estate and asset protection planning, and ancillary real estate matters.

2016

David B. Anderson joined the Macon office of James-Bates-Brannan-Groover LLP as an associate practicing in all areas of banking and real estate law. Anderson resides in Macon with his wife, Megan, and daughter, Autumn.

Alisha A. Dickie joined the firm of Drew Eckl & Farnham LLP as an associate focusing her civil litigation practice on premises liability and insurance defense. Dickie was formerly with Moore Ingram Johnson & Steele.

J. Micah Dickie joined Fisher Phillips' Atlanta office as an associate, counseling clients on best practices for mitigating risk of workplace incidents and defending against OSHA inspections and investigations.

Barret W. Kirbo and **Kate R. Kirbo** announced the birth of their first child, William "West" Kirbo, on Sept. 25, 2019.

Priya M. Patel married Dr. Shalin Patel on Dec. 22, 2019, in Ahmedabad, India. Patel is an associate at Smith, Welch, Webb & White LLC in McDonough.

Ruslyn Daves Ruby and her husband, Jeffrey, proudly announce the birth of their daughter, Hayden Clarice Ruby, born on Oct. 17, 2019.

Nyonnohweah S. Seekie announced the formation of her own firm, The Seekie Law Firm, which focuses on CrImmigration, the cross section of criminal defense, immigration law and the relating social justice issues in Middle Georgia and beyond. Seekie also graduated from the State Bar of Georgia Young Lawyers Division (YLD) Leadership Academy Class of 2019 and was elected to serve on the State Bar of Georgia YLD Representative Council representing the Middle District for the July 2019-July 2021 term.

Gala Villahoz joined Decatur firm Williams Teusink as an associate attorney focusing her practice on real estate and corporate law.

Morgan G. West and husband Eric are happy to announce the birth of their third daughter, Birdie Belle West, on Jan. 17.

2017

Elizabeth Manley Brooks joined the Savannah office of the law firm Harris Lowry Manton LLP as an associate practicing in the areas of complex personal injury, product liability, medical malpractice, business torts and wrongful death cases.

Kaylie O'Neil Brewton and **Tyler B. Brewton** welcomed a baby girl on Jan. 13! Olivia Louise was six pounds 12 ounces, and 20.5 inches long.

Graham W. Davis joined Progressive Casualty Insurance Company as a house counsel attorney in its Atlanta office. Davis was formerly with Downey & Cleveland in Marietta.

Robert A. Divis completed his second year as editor of *Developments in Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice*, an annual publication of the American Bar Association. Divis practices consumer protection, probate/estate planning, and veteran's law at Divis Law, LLC in Macon.

Bruce D. Dubberly joined the Macon office of James-Bates-Brannan-Groover LLP as an associate focusing in general civil litigation. Dubberly was most recently with Cooper Barton & Cooper in Macon.

Jasmin Severino Hernandez married Jose Luis Hernandez on Oct. 19, 2019. In April, Hernandez joined the Atlanta office of Chamberlain Hrdlicka as an associate in its trusts and estates practice group, where she works closely with private wealth clients to establish estate and business succession plans. Hernandez was chosen as Latinx Community Impact Award recipient by Emory University's Latin American Law Student's Association in April.

Ashley C. Thompson joined Brian Douglas & Associates LLC in Atlanta on July 1, 2019, focusing on estate planning and probate law. Thompson was formerly with Dunlap Gardiner of Hiram.

Moses M. Tinch joined the Atlanta office of Troutman Sanders LLP as an associate specializing in labor and employment litigation. Tinch recently served as a clerk for the U.S. District Court of Middle Georgia.

Hannah Beth Reynolds joined the Atlanta office of Swift Currie McGhee & Hiers as an associate in its coverage and commercial litigation team.

2018

Beatrice C. Hancock started as associate attorney at Chambless Higdon Richardson Katz Griggs LLP in Macon. She previously served as law clerk at Dougherty County Superior Court in Albany.

Kelsey L. Kicklighter joined Hall Booth Smith PC as an associate in its Atlanta office, focusing on medical malpractice, products liability, government liability and long-term care. Kicklighter was most recently with Brown Readick Bumgartner Carter Strickland & Watkins LLP in Brunswick.

Meghan J. Vickers married Jimmy Heckman in Bainbridge on Nov. 9, 2019.

THANK YOU *to* ALL OUR SPONSORS *who made our alumni events during the 2019-2020 academic year successful!*

Because of you, we were able to raise nearly \$60,000 in sponsorships to host events that foster alumni engagement.

Adams Law Firm
Autry Hall & Cook LLP
Balch and Bingham LLP
Bowen Painter Trial Lawyers
Burnside Law Firm, LLP
Butler Wooten & Peak LLP
Childers & McCain, LLC
Clark, Smith & Sizemore, LLC
Cook Law Group, LLC
Daniels Law, LLC
Davis Matthews & Quigley PC
Drew Eckl & Farnham LLP
Ellis, Painter, Ratterree, and Adams LLP
Georgia Association for
Women Lawyers, Inc.

Georgia Power Foundation, Inc.
Glass and Robson, LLC
Hall Booth Smith PC
Hull Barrett, PC
J. Henry Walker, IV Family Fund
James-Bates-Brannan-Groover LLP
Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP
The Law Office of Tanya D. Jeffords
Lazenby Law Group, LLC
Macon Bar Association
Slappey & Sadd, LLC
Southern Company
Sutton Law Group, LLC
Tucker Long PC
Wargo French

William P. Adams, '77
Ivy N. Cadle, '07 & Leslie L. Cadle, '07
Josh Carroll, '07
Michael L. Chapman, '89 &
Yvette Chapman, '89
Cathy Cox '86 & Mark Dehler
W. Homer Drake, Jr., '56 &
Taylor B. Drake, '00
Eric K. Dunaway, '96

Jill U. Edmondson, '05
Zandra V. Hall, '15
John Ryd Bush "Jack" Long, '06
Rizza P. O'Connor, '10 and
Daniel J. O'Connor, '12
Bethany M. Rezek, '06
Mary Jane Desrosiers Saunders, '81
Robbin K. Shipp, '96
Tiffany N. Watkins, '15

The Mercer University School of Law and its Alumni Association are looking for businesses and individuals to help sponsor alumni events. For future sponsorship opportunities, clubs and benefits, please contact Leslie Cadle at 478-301-2232 or cadle_l@law.mercer.edu.

2019

Alicia Abel Adamson joined the family law firm of Reese-Beisbier & Associates PC in Griffin.

Carole W. Collier joined the family law firm of Reese-Beisbier & Associates PC in Griffin.

Meagan R. Hurley started as Alabama Fellow for the Georgia Innocence Project in September 2019. Hurley also started as adjunct professor of media law and ethics at Reinhardt University in January.

L. Carrie Weldon joined the office of Pasley Nuce Mallory & Davis LLC in Griffin.

Noah C. West joined the Huntsville office of Maynard Cooper & Gale as an associate in its corporate, securities and tax practice group.

CLASSNotes

University Trustee and Tireless Advocate for Mercer Law School Tommy Malone, '66

Distinguished alumnus and renowned trial lawyer Thomas “Tommy” William Malone Sr. died Oct. 1, 2019, following a courageous battle with cancer. He was 77.

“When I arrived at Mercer 14 years ago, I asked Judge Griffin Bell who was the finest trial lawyer in Georgia. Judge Bell didn’t hesitate. He told me that Tommy Malone was the best,” says Mercer President William D. Underwood. “Over the ensuing years I came to understand that Tommy was not only one of the finest trial lawyers in the country, he was a loyal alumnus, a faithful trustee and board chair, and a trusted colleague and friend to me and to many, many others in the legal profession. Tommy made a difference in the lives of his clients, in the world, and he left an indelible mark on Mercer University.”

Malone, founder of Malone Law, spent the majority of his 50-year career representing individuals and their families in catastrophic personal injury and wrongful death cases throughout Georgia and beyond. Malone was a pioneer in his field, obtaining record-setting verdicts and earning a nationwide reputation for his trial skills.

Malone was well regarded for having the highest standards of character and integrity, still in the courtroom, and an incredible talent to simplify, solve and explain the most complicated and complex problems.

“What I remember most about Tommy was the way he helped us prepare the next generation of lawyers,” says Professor Timothy Floyd, who holds the Tommy Malone Distinguished Chair in Trial Advocacy. “Tommy never turned down a request to speak to our students, taking the time to travel to Macon to meet with them on many occasions. Tommy’s advice to students as to technical trial skills was always excellent, but it

was his wisdom about being a lawyer that had the most impact on the students — and on me.”

Malone was a leader in numerous state, national and international legal organizations, as well as several non-legal organizations including the Carter Center Board of Councilors and the Shepherd Center Foundation Board of Trustees. He served on Mercer University’s Board of Trustees and served as chairman of the board from 2015-2017.

“Tommy’s trial skills and instincts were surpassed by none. He always gave back by mentoring other lawyers and by actively supporting Mercer Law School and charitable organizations such as the Shepherd Center,” says Fred Bergen, ’86, a friend of Malone and attorney at Bergen Bergen & Thomas in Savannah.

“Most importantly, Tommy always put the interest and needs of his clients first,” claims Bergen. In 2018, Bergen joined other friends of Malone, including Brent J. Savage, Brent J. Savage Jr., ’09, and Robert Bartley “Bart” Turner, ’88, to establish the Tommy Malone Endowed Scholarship.

“Tommy’s dedication to the law and to his clients was legendary and provides the kind of lesson we want to continue sharing with our students,” says Dean Cathy Cox, ’86. “His memory will live on through the Tommy Malone Distinguished Chair in Trial Advocacy here at Mercer Law School. Tommy’s death was truly a loss for the legal profession, for the Mercer Law community, and for the scores of friends who knew and loved him.”



ROBERT DENNEN

In Memory

1950s

E. Mullins Whisnant, '50, of Columbus, Oct. 12, 2019.

John Seaborn Harrison, '55, of Grayson, Oct. 7, 2019.

1960s

Robert J. NeSmith, '62, of Greensboro, North Carolina, June 26, 2019.

Tom A. Edenfield, '63, of Savannah, Oct. 15, 2019.

Whitney T. Evans Jr., '63, of Macon, July 26, 2019.

Billy E. Moore, '63, of Gainesville, Nov. 25, 2019.

Frank W. Armstrong III, '64, of Gainesville, May 16, 2019.

Thomas William Malone Sr., '66, of West Palm Beach, Florida, Oct. 1, 2019. (see above)

Robert Robider Markwalter, '66, of Macon, Feb. 14.

Carl Padgett Rollins, '66, of Dalton, Sept. 25, 2019.

William Lonnie Barlow, '67, of Cochran, July 30, 2019.

William Farris McGee, '67, of Flagler, Florida, Dec. 14, 2019.

William Walter Keith III, '69, of Chatsworth, July 26, 2019.

1970s

Edgar Allan Fry Jr., '71, of Macon, Sept. 3, 2019.

Kenneth T. Taylor, '71, of Huntsville, Alabama, Oct. 28, 2019.

Donald Neil Wilson, '71, of York, Pennsylvania, June 9, 2019.

Henry Osmund Jones III, '73, of Cordele, May 28, 2019.

Marc H. Glick, '74, of New York, New York, July 2, 2019.

Donald Walter Huskins, '74, of Eatonton, Oct. 13, 2019.

James Albert Sparks, '74, of Tyrone, Dec. 29, 2018.

Alexander G. Sandy Paderewski, '75, of Sarasota, Florida, Dec. 26, 2019.

1980s

Emily Pate Powell, '82, of Lawrenceville, Dec. 31, 2019.

Mignon Upchurch Beranek, '83, of Tallahassee, Florida, Nov. 29, 2019.

Michael A. Pannier, '83, of Atlanta, Jan. 19.

1990s

John Taylor Willett, '90, of Dallas, Texas, June 4, 2019.

2000s

Jackson Allen Lancaster, '01, of Kennesaw, Nov. 10, 2019.

Matthew Mahon "Matt" Myers, '03, of Macon, Sept. 5, 2019.

One of the most important ways you can be involved at Mercer Law School is through your financial support. Gifts to the Law School help our students obtain a quality legal education and prepare them for a successful career.

The Class of '74

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE



In 2019, the Class of 1974 celebrated the 45th anniversary of their graduation from Mercer Law School. The class also celebrated another milestone — the 40th recipient of the Class of 1974 Scholarship, Marissa Merrill.

“As a first-generation college student, receiving the Class of 1974 Scholarship means so much to me because the high cost of a legal education almost deterred me from going to law school. I am so grateful for their generosity and I truly hope that one day I can make the difference for a future Mercer lawyer that this scholarship did for me. I am so honored to receive the Class of 1974 Scholarship and to forever be a little part of a group of such influential and esteemed members of the Class of 1974.”

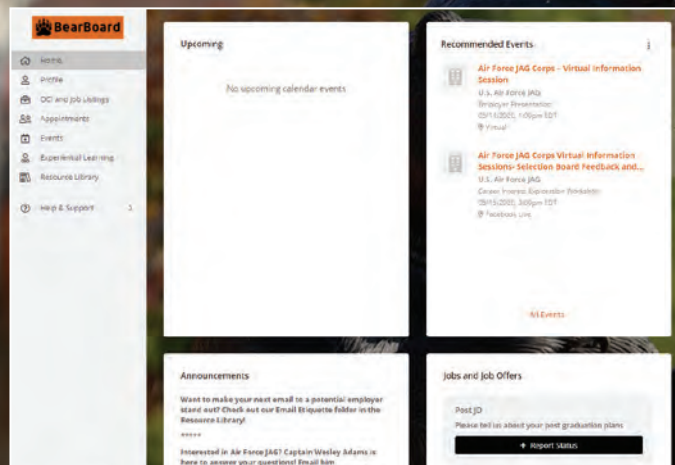
MARISSA MERRILL, CLASS OF 2020

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