

# 2024 Suit Up for the Future High School Summer Legal Institute and Intern Program

June 10, 2024 – June 28, 2024

*Award-Winning Diversity Pipeline Program*

**2013 ABA PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM AWARD RECIPIENT**



*Strengthening diversity in the legal profession  
A partnership of the Louisiana State Bar Association,  
Just the Beginning, and Louisiana Bar Foundation  
A Diversity Pipeline Program  
New Orleans, Louisiana*



**Louisiana  
State Bar  
Association**

*Serving the Public. Serving the Profession.*



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## WELCOME ADDRESS

The Louisiana State Bar Association and Just the Beginning are pleased to welcome you to their Summer Legal Institute and Internship Program. Through this program, we hope to encourage your interest in the law as a profession and inform you about trailblazers in the law who have paved the way to make it easier for you to become a lawyer. We aim to lead you to work hard, experience life as a law student, and stimulate your interest and knowledge of the legal profession.



### About Us

#### WHAT IS THE “LOUISIANA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION”?



*We hope to nurture  
your interest in law  
as a profession.*

The mission of the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) is to assist and serve its members in the practice of law, assure access to and aid in the administration of justice, assist the Supreme Court in the regulation of the practice of law, uphold the honor of the courts and the profession, promote the professional competence of attorneys, increase public understanding of and respect for the law, and encourage collegiality among its members.

Through its Diversity Committee, the LSBA is working to assess the level of racial, ethnic, national origin, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation and disability diversity within all components of the legal profession in Louisiana; identify barriers to the attainment of full and meaningful representation and participation in the legal profession by persons of diverse backgrounds; and propose programs and methods by which the LSBA can most effectively work to remove those barriers and achieve greater diversity.



## WHAT IS “JUST THE BEGINNING”?



Just the Beginning (JTB), a diversity pipeline organization, is a multiracial, nonprofit organization comprised of lawyers, judges, and other citizens. It is dedicated to developing and nurturing interest in the law among young persons from various socioeconomic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds who are underrepresented in the legal profession and supporting their continued advancement. JTB’s long-term goal is to increase racial diversity in the legal profession and on the bench.

Just the Beginning began as a celebration of the integration of the Federal Judiciary on September 19, 1992, in Chicago, Illinois. The celebratory event, titled "Just The Beginning - A Celebration of Integration of the Federal Judiciary," honored Judge James Parsons, the first African-American United States District Court Judge, on his retirement after he devoted thirty-one years on the federal bench.

Building on that celebration, Just the Beginning offers pipeline programs aimed at introducing, cultivating and supporting underrepresented students as they travel the path towards the legal profession. JTB’s programs include its Middle School Law Camp, Summer Legal Institutes for high school students and judicial externship programs for law school students. JTB tracks and supports its students from middle school to high school, college, law school, and beyond. JTB partners with a broad and diverse coalition of bar associations, law firms and law schools to host these programs around the country and to sponsor national conferences held every two years in different cities.



*"Law and order exist for the purpose of establishing justice and when they fail in this purpose, they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress."*

## 2024 SUMMER LEGAL INSTITUTE

### SCHOLARS

Name	Grade	School
Charles N.H. Andrews	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Benjamin Franklin High School
Dasia T. Ball	First-Year College	Abramson Sci Academy
Matthew F. Bancroft	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Benjamin Franklin High School
Dillon C. Banks	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	New Orleans Military Maritime Academy
Emma M. Bonney	First-Year College	St. Joseph's Academy
Ray'ven A. Chancellor	First-Year College	De La Salle High School
Anisa M. Cleggett	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Benjamin Franklin High School
Avishka R. Fernando	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies
Ferdell A. Handy	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	New Orleans Science and Math Charter School
Korry J. Hill	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	St. Augustine Catholic High School
Allison L. Honeywood	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Benjamin Franklin High School
Deshan R. Joseph Jr.	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	New Orleans Science and Math Charter School
Olivia E. Magee	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Hammond High Magnet School
Sia P. Mirpuri	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Parkview Baptist
Mia M. Mornay	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Benjamin Franklin High School
Sydnee D. Ragas	First-Year College	Arden Cahill Academy
Magdalena A. Sisto	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Fisher Middle High School
Le'Ge P.J. Watts	First-Year College	Warren Easton Charter High School

## 2024 Suit Up for the Future Program Agenda

### Week One

**Monday, June 10, 2024**

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b> <b>Suit Up Photo IDs</b>
9:00 am – 9:15 am	<b>Welcome</b> Presenter: Stephen I. "Steve" Dwyer, LSBA President 2022-2023
9:15 am – 9:45 am	<b>Welcome</b> <b>Choose Law Video (American Young Lawyers Division)</b> Presenter: Honorable Karen Wells Roby, Just the Beginning (JTB), Magistrate Judge, United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana, New Orleans, LA
9:45 am – 10:30 am	<b>Welcome</b> <b>Orientation/Program Overview</b> <b>Introduction of Interns</b> Presenter: Members of the Pipeline to Diversity and Outreach Subcommittee, Co-chair(s) Denia S. Aiyegbusi, Deutsch Kerrigan LLP, New Orleans, LA; Denice Redd-Robinette, Liskow & Lewis, APLC, Baton Rouge, LA; Suit Up Interns
10:30 am – 10:45 am	<b>Break</b> <b>Suit Up Photo IDs</b>
10:45 am – 11:00 am	<b>Icebreaker</b> Presenter: Members of the Pipeline to Diversity and Outreach Subcommittee, Co-chair(s) Denia S. Aiyegbusi, Deutsch Kerrigan, LLP, New Orleans, LA; Denice Redd-Robinette, Liskow & Lewis, APLC, Baton Rouge, LA; Suit Up Interns
11:00 am – 11:30 am	<b>Introduction of Mock Problem for Oral Argument</b> Presenter: Members of the Pipeline to Diversity and Outreach Subcommittee, Co-chair(s) Denia S. Aiyegbusi, Deutsch Kerrigan, LLP, New Orleans, LA; Denice Redd-Robinette, Liskow & Lewis, APLC, Baton Rouge, LA

11:30 am – 12:30 pm	<b>Lunch</b> <b>Suit Up Photo IDs</b>
12:30 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Legal Research and Writing</b> Presenter: Professor Emily A. Bishop, Director of the Lawyering Program and Professor of Practice, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, New Orleans, LA
1:30 pm – 1:45 pm	<b>Break</b>
2:45 pm – 3:00 pm	<b>Break</b>
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Mock Legal Problem/Questions; Mock Legal Argument Team Assignments; Suit Up Evaluation</b> Presenter: Suit Up Interns
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

#### Tuesday, June 11, 2024

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b>
9:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Memorandum Outline Preparation</b> <b>Discussion of Mock Problem and Case Law</b> Presenter: Suit Up Interns
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Contracts</b> Presenter: Professor Kenya J. H. Smith, Associate Professor of Law, Southern University Law Center, Baton Rouge, LA
2:00 pm – 2:15 pm	<b>Break</b>
3:00 pm – 3:15 pm	<b>Break</b>
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

#### Wednesday, June 12, 2024

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b>
9:00 am – 11:00 am	<b>Memorandum and Oral Argument Preparation</b> <b>Viewing of Past Oral Arguments</b>



	Presenter: Suit Up Interns
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Resume Preparation</b> Presenter: Suit Up Interns
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Memorandum Outline Preparation</b> Presenter: Suit Up Interns
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

#### Thursday, June 13, 2024

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b> <b>MEMO OUTLINE ASSIGNMENT DEADLINE</b>
9:00 am – 9:30 am	<b>College and Law School Admission Preparation Workshop (Personal Statement Tips)</b> Presenter: Addrianne Davis, Associate Director of Recruitment, Dillard University, New Orleans, LA
9:30 am – 10:00 am	<b>Break</b>
10:00 am – 10:30 am	<b>College and Law School Admission Preparation Workshop (Personal Statement Tips)</b> Presenter: Diamond Lee, Admissions Counselor, Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA; Breleigh Bentivegna, Admission Counselor, Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA
10:30 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Transitional Justice and Constitutional Law</b> Presenter: Professor Angela A. Allen-Bell, B. K. Agnihotri Endowed Professor, Southern University Law Center, Baton Rouge, LA
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	<b>Oral Argument Workshop: How to Deliver an Oral Argument</b> Presenter: Professor Jeffrey C. Brooks, Assistant Professor of Professional Practice, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center, Baton Rouge, LA
2:00 pm – 2:10 pm	<b>Break</b>



3:00 pm – 3:15 pm	<b>Break</b>
3:15 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Memorandum Preparation</b> Presenter: Suit Up Interns
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

### Friday, June 14, 2024

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b> <b>DRAFT OF RESUME ASSIGNMENT DEADLINE</b>
9:00 am – 9:45 am	<b>Travel to tour: Loyola University New Orleans College of Law</b> <b>7214 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA</b>
9:45 am – 10:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b> <b>Loyola University New Orleans College of Law</b>
10:00 am – 11:15 am	<b>Loyola University New Orleans College of Law Presentation and Tour</b> Presenter: Kimberly Jones, JD, Associate Dean of Admissions, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, New Orleans, LA
11:15 am – 11:30 am	<b>Travel to tour: Tulane University Law School</b> <b>6329 Freret St., New Orleans, LA</b>
11:30 am – 12:15 pm	<b>Lunch at Tulane University Law School</b> Pizza, Sponsored by Tulane University Law School
12:15 pm – 1:30 pm	<b>Tulane University Law School Presentation and Tour</b> Presenter: Alexandra Garon, Associate Director of Admissions, Tulane University Law School, New Orleans, LA; Tracie N. Ransom, J.D., Assistant Dean for Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, Tulane University Law School, New Orleans, LA; Julia M. Spencer, J.D., Assistant Director of Admission, Tulane University Law School, New Orleans, LA; Emily Wojna-Hodnett, J.D., Assistant Dean of Students, Tulane University Law School, New Orleans, LA
1:30 pm – 2:00 pm	<b>Travel to Louisiana Bar Center</b>
2:00 pm – 2:30 pm	<b>Break</b>
2:30 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Memorandum Preparation</b> Presenter: Suit Up Interns

4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

<b>Week Two</b>
<b>Monday, June 17, 2024</b>

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b> <b>DRAFT OF MEMO ASSIGNMENT DUE</b>
9:00 am – 9:30 am	Travel to tour and Security Check: Orleans Parish Criminal District Court 2700 Tulane Ave., New Orleans, LA STUDENT ID REQUIRED/ MOBILE PHONES NOT PERMITTED
9:30 am – 11:30 am	<b>Orleans Parish Criminal District Court</b> <b>2700 Tulane Ave., New Orleans, LA</b> <b>STUDENT ID REQUIRED/ MOBILE PHONES NOT PERMITTED</b> Presenter: Honorable Tracey E. Flemings-Davillier, Section B, Orleans Parish Criminal District Court, New Orleans, LA
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Travel to Louisiana Bar Center</b>
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 pm – 1:30 pm	<b>Travel to tour: Orleans Public Defenders Office</b> <b>2601 Tulane Ave., New Orleans, LA</b>
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	<b>Orleans Public Defenders Office Presentation and Tour</b> Presenter: Daniel L. Engelberg, Chief District Defender, Orleans Public Defenders Office, New Orleans, LA
2:30 pm – 3:00 pm	<b>Travel to Louisiana Bar Center</b>
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Memorandum Preparation</b> Presenter: Suit Up Interns
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

<b>Tuesday, June 18, 2024</b>
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8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b>
9:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Memorandum Preparation</b> Presenter: Suit Up Interns

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm	<b>Job Shadowing Lunch, Louisiana State Bar Center</b> (Invitation to attorneys, firms, courts, and agencies providing a job shadowing opportunity)
1:30 pm – 2:00 pm	<b>Travel to tour: Orleans Parish District Attorney's Office</b> <b>619 S. White St., New Orleans, LA</b>
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	<b>District Attorney Presentation and Tour</b> Presenter: Jason Williams, District Attorney, Orleans Parish, New Orleans, LA
3:00 pm – 3:30 pm	<b>Travel to Louisiana Bar Center</b>
3:30 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Break</b>
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

### Wednesday, June 19, 2024

8:30 am – 4:30 pm	<b>Job Shadow Placement Day (Do NOT report to the Louisiana Bar Center!)</b> <b>Go directly to assigned locations.</b>
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### Thursday, June 20, 2024

8:30 am – 4:30 pm	<b>Job Shadow Placement Day (Do NOT report to the Louisiana Bar Center!)</b> <b>Go directly to assigned locations.</b>
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### Friday, June 21, 2024

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b> <b>FINAL RESUME ASSIGNMENT DEADLINE</b>
9:00 am – 9:30 am	<b>College and Law School Admission Preparation Workshop (Personal Statement Tips)</b> Presenter: Kristin Guidry, Associate Director, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA
9:30 am – 9:45 am	<b>Break</b>
9:45 am – 11:30 am	<b>Memorandum Preparation</b> Presenter: Suit Up Interns
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	<b>College and Law School Admission Preparation Workshop (Personal Statement Tips)</b>

	<p>Presenter:</p> <p>Victoria Parenti, MA, LPC, NCC, Regional Admissions Counselor, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Lafayette, LA</p>
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	<p><b>Demystifying the Legal Profession Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Leadership LSBA 2023-2024 Class Members</b></p> <p>Presenter:</p> <p>Andrew M. Albritton, McGlinchey Stafford, PLLC, New Orleans, LA; Kristina F. Douglas, City of Shreveport, Shreveport, LA; Stephanie M. Poucher, Phelps Dunbar, LLP, New Orleans, LA; Karina Shareen, Deutsch Kerrigan, LLP, New Orleans, LA</p>
2:30 pm – 2:45 pm	<b>Break</b>
2:45 pm – 4:00 pm	<p><b>Memorandum Preparation</b></p> <p>Presenter:</p> <p>Suit Up Interns</p>
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

### Week Three

**Monday, June 24, 2024**

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<p><b>Arrival and Check-in</b></p> <p><b>FINAL MEMO ASSIGNMENT DUE</b></p>
9:00 am – 10:45 am	<b>Oral Argument Preparation</b>
10:45 am – 11:00 am	<p><b>Travel to Lunch - Shake Shack</b></p> <p><b>333 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70130</b></p>
11:00 am – 12:15 pm	<p><b>Lunch - Shake Shack, 333 Canal St., New Orleans, LA 70130</b></p> <p>Presenter:</p> <p>Shake Shack - Canal, Lunch Sponsor</p>
12:15 pm – 12:30 pm	<b>Travel to Louisiana Bar Center</b>
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	<b>Oral Argument Preparation</b>
1:30 pm – 2:00 pm	<p><b>Travel to tour and Security Check: Louisiana Supreme Court</b></p> <p><b>400 Royal St., New Orleans, LA</b></p> <p><b>STUDENT ID REQUIRED/MOBILE PHONES NOT PERMITTED</b></p>
2:00 pm – 3:15 pm	<p><b>Tour of Louisiana Supreme Court, Library, and Museum</b></p> <p>Presenter:</p> <p>Miriam D. Childs, Director, Louisiana Supreme Court Library, New</p>

	Orleans, LA; Robert Gunn, Deputy Judicial Administrator/ Community Relations, Louisiana Supreme Court, New Orleans, LA
3:15 pm – 3:30 pm	<b>Travel to Louisiana Bar Center</b>
3:30 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Break</b>
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

### **Tuesday, June 25, 2024**

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b>
9:00 am – 9:30 am	<b>College Admission Session: How I Gained Admission to Harvard University</b> Presenter: Dylan G. Rhoton, 2022 Suit Up Alumnus, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
9:30 am – 10:00 am	<b>Oral Argument Preparation</b>
10:00 am – 10:30 am	<b>Career Path Session: Clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, upcoming term starting October 2024.</b> Presenter: Donovan J. Stone, Williams & Connolly LLP, Washington, D.C.
10:30 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Oral Argument Preparation</b>
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Oral Argument Preparation</b>
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

### **Wednesday, June 26, 2024**

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b>
9:00 am – 9:15 am	<b>Travel to United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana, and Security Check</b> (NOTE: Student ID REQUIRED/ MOBILE PHONES NOT PERMITTED) Hale Boggs Federal Building, 500 Poydras St., Courtroom B437
9:15 am – 10:30 am	<b>Federal Court Presentation, United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana</b> Presenter: Honorable Karen Wells Roby, Just the Beginning (JTB), Magistrate Judge, United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana, New Orleans, LA

10:30 am – 10:45 am	<b>Break</b>
10:45 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Oral Argument Preparation</b>
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 pm – 1:45 pm	<b>Suit Up Jeopardy - Defense versus Prosecution</b> <b>What is ...How well do you know the Mock Legal Problem?</b> Presenter: Suit Up Interns
1:45 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Oral Argument Preparation</b>
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

#### Thursday, June 27, 2024

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b>
9:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Oral Argument Preparation</b> <b>Individual Video Rehearsal</b>
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Oral Argument Preparation</b>
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Suit Up Evaluation</b>
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>

#### Friday, June 28, 2024

8:45 am – 9:00 am	<b>Arrival and Check-in</b>
9:00 am – 9:30 am	<b>Final Oral Argument Preparation</b>
9:30 am – 10:00 am	<b>Travel to United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana</b> <b>Hale Boggs Federal Building, 500 Poydras St., New Orleans, LA</b> <b>STUDENT ID REQUIRED/MOBILE PHONES NOT PERMITTED</b>
10:00 am – 11:50 am	<b>Oral Arguments Presentation</b> <b>United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana</b> <b>Hale Boggs Federal Building, 500 Poydras St., New Orleans, LA</b>
11:50 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Travel to Louisiana Bar Center</b>
12:00 pm – 12:35 pm	<b>Lunch and Suit Up Evaluation, Louisiana Bar Center</b> <b>Deliberation by Judges</b>
12:35 pm – 12:45 pm	<b>Travel to United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana</b>

	<b>Security Check</b> <b>Hale Boggs Federal Building, 500 Poydras St., New Orleans, LA</b> <b>STUDENT ID REQUIRED/MOBILE PHONES NOT PERMITTED</b>
12:45 pm – 2:00 pm	<b>Oral Arguments Presentation</b> <b>United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana</b> <b>Hale Boggs Federal Building, 500 Poydras St., New Orleans, LA</b>
2:00 pm – 2:30 pm	<b>Deliberation by Judges</b> <b>Awards Ceremony (Judges' Overall Impressions of Oral Argument Presentations, Oral Argument Award(s), Memorandum Award(s), and Certificates of Completion)</b>
2:30 pm – 2:45 pm	<b>Sign Out and Transportation Arrival</b>



## FEDERAL FIRSTS

### FEMALE JUDGES

In 1934, **Florence Allen (Deceased)** became the first woman to serve on a U.S. Court of Appeals. She was appointed to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit in 1934.

In 1949, **Burnita Shelton Matthews (Deceased)** became the first woman to serve on a U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

In 1981, **Sandra Day O'Connor** became the first female justice of the United States Supreme Court.

### AFRICAN-AMERICAN JUDGES

In 1950, **William Henry Hastie (Deceased)** became the first African American to serve as an Article III judge and was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

In 1961, **James B. Parsons (Deceased)** became the first African American to serve on a U.S. District Court, appointed to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

In 1966, **Constance Baker Motley (Deceased)** became the first African American woman to serve on a U.S. District Court, when she was appointed to the Southern District of New York.

In 1967, **Thurgood Marshall (Deceased)**, was appointed as the first African American justice on the Supreme Court of the United States.

In 2022, **Kentaji Brown Jackson**, was appointed as the first African American woman justice on the Supreme Court of the United States.

### ASIAN JUDGES

In 1971, **Herbert Choy (Deceased)** became the first Asian American to serve as a U.S. Court of Appeals judge when he was appointed to the Ninth Circuit.

In 1975, **Dick Wong (Deceased)** became the first Asian American to serve on a U.S. District Court when he was appointed to the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii.

In 1998, **Susan Oki Mollway** became the first Asian American woman to serve on a U.S. District Court when she was appointed to the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii.

### LATINO JUDGES

In 1961, **Reynaldo G. Garza (Deceased)** became the first Latino federal judge, appointed to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, and the first Latino Court of Appeals judge, appointed to the Fifth Circuit in 1979.

In 1980, **Carmen C. Cerezo**, became the first Latina Article III judge appointed to the U.S. District Court for Puerto Rico.

In 2009, **Sonia Sotomayor** became the first Latino American justice to be appointed to the Supreme Court of the United States.

### ***NATIVE AMERICAN JUDGES***

In 1979, **Frank Howell Seay** became the first Native American federal judge when he was appointed to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma.

In 2014, **Diane Humetewa** became the first female Native American federal judge when she was appointed to the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona.

## JTBF MEMBER JUDGES IN LOUISIANA- BIOGRAPHIES

### CARL E. STEWART, U.S. FIFTH CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS



Carl E. Stewart, born in 1950, is a judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Appointed by President Bill Clinton in 1994, Judge Stewart previously sat on Louisiana's Second Court of Appeal and served as an accomplished judge, attorney, prosecutor, and professor. Judge Stewart, who has been honored multiple times for his commitment to community service, is the first African-American ever to serve on the Fifth Circuit as it is currently constituted.

### IVAN L. R. LEMELLE, U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE - RETIRED



On May 13, 1998, President Clinton appointed Judge Ivan L. R. Lemelle to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. Immediately prior to his appointment as a United States District judge, Judge Lemelle served for more than a decade as a United States Magistrate Judge (1984-1998). His appointment in 1984 made him the first African-American United States Magistrate Judge in the Louisiana Federal Courts.

Judge Lemelle was educated at Xavier University of Louisiana, where he received his Bachelor of Science, *cum laude*, in 1971. He received numerous scholarships to attend Loyola University School of Law in New Orleans, where he received his Juris Doctorate in 1974.

### NANNETTE JOLIVETTE BROWN, U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE



Nannette Jolivet Brown is a United States District Judge on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. She served as City Attorney for the City of New Orleans until becoming a Federal Judge in 2011. As City Attorney, Judge Brown had been responsible for all city contracts and oversaw all legal matters for the city.

Judge Brown received a Bachelor of Arts degree from University of Southwestern Louisiana in 1985 and later attended Tulane Law School, where she received a Juris Doctorate degree in 1988 and a Master of Laws in Energy and Environment in 1998.

On March 2, 2011, Judge Brown was nominated by President Barack Obama to fill the seat of Judge Stanwood Duval. The United States Senate confirmed her appointment by unanimous consent on October 3, 2011. She received her judicial commission the following day. Judge Brown is the first African American female to serve as a District Judge on the court.

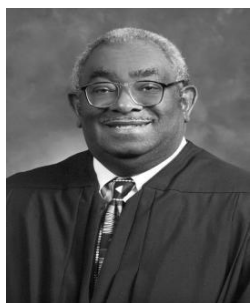
#### **KAREN WELLS ROBY, U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE**



Judge Karen Wells Roby is a Federal Magistrate Judge on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. Judge Karen Wells Roby was appointed to serve as a United States Magistrate Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana on October 16, 1998; she took her oath of office on February 22, 1999, and began her service as a Federal Magistrate Judge.

Judge Roby is the Immediate Past President of the Federal Magistrate Judges Association, a 600-member organization of United States federal judges, and the first African American Woman to serve in this leadership capacity. Judge Roby is also the First African American female to serve on the federal bench in Louisiana. Judge Roby, in addition to helping to coordinate this program, is a speaker and mock trial judge of the Law School Summer School and Intern Program and a Professor at Tulane Law School. She also has traveled to Kenya as a part of the Lawyers Without Borders program and brought U.S. Case Management Best Practices to Magistrates in Kenya.

#### **LOUIS MOORE JR., U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE - RETIRED**



Judge Louis Moore, Jr. served as a federal magistrate judge in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. He was appointed as a federal magistrate judge in 1985. Formerly, Judge Moore was an assistant U.S. attorney and a federal public defender in the Eastern District of Louisiana. Judge Moore also served as an assistant district attorney and an assistant public defender in Orleans Parish.

A native of Bogalusa, Judge Moore earned a B.A. degree from Southern University and a J.D. degree from Southern University Law Center. Judge Moore was inducted into the SULC Hall of Fame in 2006. His portrait was among the first unveiled for the SULC's Judicial Wall of Fame in 2011.

Judge Louis Moore, Jr. retired after twenty-seven years of service.

#### **RALPH E. TYSON, U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE - DECEASED**



Ralph E. Tyson served as a United States federal judge. Born in 1948, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Judge Tyson received a B.A. from Louisiana State University in 1970 and a J.D. from Louisiana State University Law Center in 1973. He was in private practice from 1973 to 1988. He served as an Adjunct Professor at Louisiana State University Law School from 1989 to 1991. He served as a Professor in the Sociology/Law Enforcement Department at Southern University from 1989 to 1998. He was a judge on the Baton Rouge City Court from 1988 to 1993. He was a judge on the Nineteenth Judicial District Court, East Baton Rouge Parish from 1993 to 1998. In late 1998 he was appointed by President Bill Clinton to the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana. There he served as chief judge from 2005 to 2011.

## **BRIAN A. JACKSON, U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE - MIDDLE DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA**



Judge Brian A. Jackson received his J.D. from Southern University School of Law, where he served as the editor-in-chief of the Southern University Law Review, and his LL.M. from Georgetown University Law Center. Judge Jackson was a member of the U.S. Department of Justice for over sixteen years, during which he practiced law as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, an Associate Deputy Attorney General, and as the court-appointed United States Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana. In 2002, he entered private practice as a partner at the law firm of Liskow & Lewis, where he practiced in the firm's Commercial Litigation section. He also served as chair of Liskow's White-Collar Defense Practice Group and a member of the firm's Board of Directors.

On October 29, 2009, President Barack Obama formally nominated Jackson as District Judge and the Senate confirmed Judge Jackson on June 15, 2010. On July 25, 2011, upon the death of Chief Judge Ralph E. Tyson, he became Chief Judge of the court. In 2013, Judge Jackson was appointed by Chief Justice John Roberts to serve on the Judicial Resources Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States. Judge Jackson is a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, a member of the National Association of Former United States Attorneys, and a member of the Federal Judges Association. He previously served on the Admissions Committee for the Louisiana Supreme Court and wrote the examination on Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure and Evidence during this time.

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*"It is the spirit and not the form of law that keeps justice alive."*

Earl Warren

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## PROGRAM SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



**Denia S. Aiyegbusi** takes pride in helping her clients creatively solve litigation problems. Denia knows when choosing a law firm, clients look for an attorney who brings unique perspectives to a matter and provides different solutions in handling any client problems that may arise. Denia is a Partner in Deutsch Kerrigan’s civil litigation department and works on cases ranging from small property subrogation claims to multi-million-dollar traumatic brain injury personal injury cases. She also defends claims of bad faith/extra-contractual litigation, premises liability, products liability, and trucking and transportation defense.

Denia has successfully argued motions in both state and federal courts throughout Louisiana. As an appellate lawyer, she has successfully argued in the Louisiana Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal and briefed to the Louisiana Supreme Court. Denia received her B.B.A. from Loyola University of New Orleans in 2004, and her Juris Doctor from Loyola University of New Orleans in 2007. She was awarded one of New Orleans CityBusiness’s “Women of the Year” in 2020 and was selected for inclusion within The Best Lawyers in America® and Louisiana Super Lawyers Rising Stars lists.



**Andrew M. Albritton** is a Louisiana native, hailing from Morgan City by way of Lafayette. He now serves in the Labor and Employment practice group of McGlinchey Stafford in New Orleans. His practice involves drafting and implementing effective policies and procedures, providing guidance on complying with regulations, and representing employers in litigation involving both federal and state employment laws. He is passionate about promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts for clients and serves as the chair of the firm’s LGBTQ+ employee resource group. Outside of the office, Andrew contributes to local organizations such as Project Lazarus and is involved in both the New Orleans and Louisiana State Bar Associations.





**Matthew S. Almon**, is a member of Stone Pigman Walther Wittman L.L.C. and concentrates his practice in the areas of estate and fiduciary litigation, complex commercial litigation, intellectual property, and employment disputes. He has worked on landmark cases in New Orleans, including successfully defending against an interdiction suit and related multi-jurisdictional legal proceedings designed to wrest control of a national sports franchise from a prominent Louisiana businessman and work on behalf of Dorignac's Food Center, which culminated in the family heirs regaining control of the iconic store. Matt has also successfully defended clients against trademark infringement claims, breach of contract claims and assertions of unfair employment practices.



**Professor Angela A. Allen-Bell** is a graduate of the Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. After law school, she spent ten years working at an appellate court and, in this capacity, gained an expertise in appellate law. In 2008, she left the judiciary and began her career in academia as a law professor. She holds the B. K. Agnihotri Endowed Professorship and is currently a full professor.

Professor Bell is a respected local, national and international legal scholar and expert on constitutional law; criminal procedure; civil and human rights; social, restorative and transitional justice; and the interplay between race and justice. It was her research that catapulted the movement that successfully ended the use of non-unanimous juries in Louisiana in 2018. And she is one of the founding members of the advocacy team that led this effort to reform Louisiana's jury system through the adoption of legislation requiring unanimous juries in criminal trials in Louisiana state courts. She has the distinction of having worked on several other historic advocacy campaigns, such as the 50th Commemoration of Students United and the 1972 Southern University student movement, the Angola 3 case, Soledad Brother John Clutchette's case, Vincent Simmons' case and the case of Robert Holbrook. When, in January 2022, Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards issued a posthumous pardon to Homer Plessy, Professor Bell was selected to speak as the historian for the occasion. The House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana has commended her "for her achievements as a legal scholar" and has recognized and recorded "the tremendous pride and honor that she brings" to the state of Louisiana.

Professor Bell is an activist scholar who has made many media appearances and participated in many local, national and international collaborations to discuss her scholarship and advocacy work, including *La Presse* (France), *Le Nouvel Observateur* (France), MSNBC (News Nation with



Tamron Hall), CBS News, NBC Nightly News and National Public Radio (All Things Considered). She has twice submitted written testimony to the United States Senate's Judiciary Committee on the Constitution, and she has been published in or quoted in a range of print media sources, such as the Washington Post, Capital B News, Law 360, Russia Today TV, the New Yorker, the Huffington Post and the Advocate.

She is a member of the National Black Lawyers-Top 100, an invitation-only society, and the Fellows of the American Bar Foundation, an invitation-only society whose membership is limited to one percent of lawyers licensed to practice in each jurisdiction. She has been recognized by the Girl Scouts Louisiana East as a Woman of Distinction and is a recipient of the National Civil Rights Conference Civil Rights and Social Justice Award. In 2021, she was named by the Drum Newspaper as one of its "People for 2021." In 2022, she was selected, through a national search, as a member of the first cohort of the Culture of Health Leadership Institute for Racial Healing. She was also chosen for inclusion in the 2022 inaugural edition of *Louisiana Leading Ladies* publication. Jeremiah 5:1, says "give me one who seeks justice." Professor Bell has adopted this call as her personal edict. Her signature traits are her never-ceasing desire to fight injustice and her tireless commitment to dismantling racial hierarchies and systems of oppression.



**Kaleena Arnold** (Suit Up Intern) was born and raised in Lorain, Ohio. She graduated from the Ohio State University in 2005. In 2008, Kaleena entered into the workforce with US Dept. of Agriculture for almost a decade. Afterwards, she enrolled in Paralegal Studies at Louisiana State University. Now Kaleena is a Juris Doctorate Candidate at Southern University Law Center for the class of 2026.



**Troy N. Bell** is a member of Courington, Keifer, Sommers, Marullo & Matherne, L.L.C. Mr. Bell was admitted to practice in Louisiana in 1990, and he is admitted to practice before all federal and state courts in Louisiana, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He received his education from Loyola University (B.A. 1985) and Southern University Law Center (J.D. 1990) where he was an Associate Editor of the Law Review. In addition to his varied litigation experience, he was privileged to serve as law clerk for the Honorable Revius Ortique Jr., Associate Justice, and the Honorable Felicia Toney Williams, Associate Justice Pro Tempore of the Louisiana

Supreme Court.

Troy has served as an Administrative Law Judge for the City of New Orleans, and he has served on National and Regional Trial Teams for National Clients. He has tried numerous cases throughout Louisiana and Mississippi, and he has managed thousands of complex mass tort claims. Troy has been appointed co-chair of the Louisiana State Bar Association Diversity Committee.

Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, he is active in the community where he serves as mentor to disadvantaged youth, he is a speaker in the local public schools, and he is involved in the New Orleans Pro Bono Project. In addition, he is active as a coach and assistant coach at area playgrounds and is a member of his church's Male Chorus.



**Breleigh Bentivegna** is from Paulina, Louisiana, but currently lives in Hammond, Louisiana, where she studied at Southeastern Louisiana University. Breleigh graduated from Southeastern in 2023 with a Bachelor's Degree in General Studies and a minor in Marketing. During her time at Southeastern, Breleigh was on the Lionettes Dance Team for five years and captured two national championships. Breleigh currently works as an Admission Counselor for Southeastern Louisiana University.



**David F. Bienvenu** has extensive litigation experience in state and federal courts throughout Louisiana, representing clients in general casualty, insurance and commercial litigation. In addition to maintaining an active litigation practice, David serves as a mediator on the Perry Dampf Dispute Solutions mediation panel. He completed formal mediation training at the Straus Institute of Dispute Resolution of Pepperdine University School of Law.

An active bar leader throughout his career, David has served as president of the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA), the Louisiana Bar Foundation and The Historical Society of the Louisiana Supreme Court. He has dedicated his efforts to addressing the legal needs of the poor, establishing the LSBA's Access to Justice Program, serving as Chair of the New Orleans Pro Bono Project and on the boards of the New Orleans Legal Assistance Corporation, Legal Aid Bureau and Louisiana Civil Justice Center. In 2011, the LSBA presented him with the David A. Hamilton Lifetime Achievement Award for his lifetime commitment, outstanding service and dedication to Louisiana's indigent.

David currently serves as a Louisiana Delegate in the American Bar Association (ABA) House of Delegates and as a member of the Standing Committee on Public Education. He completed a

three-year term as Chair of the Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service in 2022. He previously served on the Board of Governors, where he served on the Finance, Public Service and Diversity, Investments, and Governance Committees and as Liaison to the Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants, the Section of Litigation and the Forum on Construction Law. Previously, he served on various ABA committees and as a member of its House of Delegates, serving nine years as Louisiana State Delegate, a member of the Conference of State Delegates and the Nominating Committee. David is also a former Chair of the ABA Special Committee on Disaster Response and Preparedness, a former member of the ABA Center for Racial and Ethnic Diversity, and a former member of the ABA Standing Committee on Delivery of Legal Services.

While in law school, David was a member of the Moot Court Board and a recipient of the Milton Sheen Award in recognition of his leadership and service to the law and community. Upon graduation, he served as law clerk to the Honorable Judge Patrick E. Carr of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. He is a recipient of the Gillis Long Public Service Award and a past Chair and Emeritus Member of the College of Law Visiting Committee.



**Professor Emily A. Bishop** earned her J.D., *cum laude*, from New York University School of Law and her undergraduate degree, *summa cum laude*, in American Studies from Georgetown University. While in law school, Professor Bishop spent a summer interning for The Honorable Ricardo Urbina on the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. She served as the Senior Notes Editor of the *New York University Law Review*, and her student Note, “A Child’s Expertise: Establishing Statutory Protection for Intersexed Children Who Reject Their Gender of Assignment,” was published in May 2007.

After graduation, Professor Bishop clerked for The Honorable Shirley Wohl Kram on the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. She then practiced for three years at the Washington, DC office of WilmerHale LLP in the areas of Securities Litigation and Securities Enforcement. Her pro bono work focused on reproductive rights litigation.

Professor Bishop has been teaching at Loyola University New Orleans College of Law since 2013. She is currently the Co-Director of the Lawyering program and teaches courses on legal research, objective legal writing, persuasive legal writing, and oral advocacy.

Since 2018, Professor Bishop also has served as the faculty advisor for Loyola’s ABA Moot Court Team, which competes annually in the ABA National Appellate Advocacy Competition. Her article, “Avoiding ‘Ally Theater’ in Legal Writing Assignments,” was published in 2018 in the legal writing journal *Perspectives: Teaching Legal Research and Writing*. Her past service

includes serving as a Managing Editor for *The Second Draft*, a publication of the Legal Writing Institute; as a member of the New Directors Committee for the Association of Legal Writing Directors (ALWD); and as a member of the Conference Program Committee for ALWD.



**Professor Jeffrey Brooks** is a Professor of Professional Practice at the LSU Law Center in Baton Rouge, LA. He directs LSU Law's award-winning moot court, mock trial, and dispute resolution training programs. He also teaches courses in international law and advanced advocacy skills. Prior to joining LSU Law's faculty, Professor Brooks practiced law as an attorney for the City of New York, where he specialized in civil rights litigation. Brooks is a 2006 graduate of Tulane University Law School, and he earned his bachelor's degree in Geography & Anthropology from Vassar College. He is a licensed member of the New York state bar.



**Claire H. Carter** (Suit Up Intern) is an upcoming third-year law student at Loyola Law School in New Orleans. She is actively involved in the Sports and Entertainment Law Society as well as the International Law Society. Prior to her legal studies, Claire completed her Master of Business Administration at Belmont University in Nashville, TN. She also holds an undergraduate degree from the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College at the University of Mississippi.



**Miriam Childs** has been the Director of the Law Library of Louisiana in New Orleans since May 2016. She started with the Law Library in 2003 as an assistant librarian responsible for serials and acquisitions. In 2006, Ms. Childs was promoted to Head of Technical Services, and then to Associate Director in 2013. During her tenure at the Law Library, Ms. Childs has been responsible for or provided support to all areas of library operations, including staff management and training; cataloging; database maintenance; reference and research services; government documents; and preservation. She came to the library with a strong technical services background. Her previous positions include serials librarian at the University of New Orleans, reference and collection management librarian at Jefferson Parish Public Library, and assistant librarian at Exxon Chemical Baton Rouge. She received her B.A. in

History from Louisiana State University in 1992 and her M.L.I.S. from Louisiana State University in 1993.



**P. Hogan Crosby Jr.** assists both the Adams and Reese Litigation and Labor and Employment practice area groups. Hogan gained prior experience as a former law clerk, developing litigation plans, drafting initial pleadings, providing case valuations, analyzing case discovery targets, attending depositions, mediations, and drafting summaries of the proceedings. He drafted legal analysis memoranda on various issues, including forum non conveniens, contractor liability, and spoliation. He also worked with attorneys on drafting final court pleadings and client communications.

Receiving his J.D. from Tulane University School of Law, Hogan was the Senior Business Editor of the Tulane Journal for International and Comparative Law, Vol. 29; a competitor and coach of the Judge John R. Brown Admiralty Appellate Moot Court Team; tutor for the 1L Academic Support Program; and an active member of the Tulane Maritime Law Society, Tulane Civil Law Society, and Tulane Business Law Society.

Hogan is a graduate of Rhodes College, with a B.A. in Commerce and Business, a concentration in Finance, and a minor in History. He played on the varsity football team, and in addition to being a student athlete, he devoted time to the community as a volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America at Springdale Elementary School in Memphis.

Before pursuing a law degree, Hogan worked in the Financial Services industry, working with clients on financial planning and advice. He obtained a FINRA Series 7 license and Colorado life accident and health insurance licenses. He researched and analyzed clients' financial data to determine strategies, products, and services that could help them meet their financial objectives.



**Hailey G. Cummiskey** is a member of the Adams and Reese Litigation Practice, assisting the group's attorneys in litigation and transactional matters on state and federal levels.

Hailey has experience in all aspects of the litigation process, from inception of any matter and consultation with clients, to the resolution of the case and situation tailored to assisting the legal needs of a business. Through her various clerkships, Hailey gained experience in several practice areas, including oil and gas, labor and employment, intellectual property, maritime, and international trade.





On April 1, 2006, the **Honorable June Berry Darensburg** was elected Judge to the Twenty-Fourth Judicial District Court, Division C, for the Parish of Jefferson, State of Louisiana. She was re-elected without opposition in July 2008, August 2014, and July 2020. Judge Darensburg is the first African-American female elected to a judgeship in Jefferson Parish. Judge Darensburg is a 1980 graduate of Grace King High School. Pursuing her first career ambition, she enrolled at Xavier University of Louisiana where she majored in Pharmacy. She received her Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from Xavier in 1985. While working as a Pharmacist, Judge Darensburg developed an interest in the law. She attended Loyola University College of Law full time, while working part time as a Pharmacist. In December 1994, Judge Darensburg graduated from Loyola. She worked in private practice and was employed by the Jefferson Parish Indigent Defender Board providing legal services to those unable to afford representation. She was also employed as an Associate Attorney by The LeBlanc Butler Law Firm where she was a litigator in the areas of Products Liability and Insurance Defense. Judge Darensburg is a member of the National Bar Association, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, National Association of Women Judges, American Bar Association, Louisiana State Bar Association, Louisiana Judicial Council-NBA, Louisiana District Judges Association, Fifth Circuit Judges Association, Fourth and Fifth Circuit Judges Association, Jefferson Bar Association, Louis A. Martinet Society and Louisiana Pharmacy Association. She is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the Westwego Rotary Club, the Xavier University Investigational Review Board, Leadership Jefferson Task Force and Loyola Law Alumni Association Board of Directors. Judge Darensburg presides over civil, criminal and domestic cases, and volunteers as an Intensive Probation Drug Court Judge. She currently serves as Chairwoman of the LJC/NBA and Treasurer of LJCF/NBA. She served as Chief Judge of the 24th Judicial District Court from January 1, 2014, until December 31, 2015.



**Addrianne Davis** is the Associate Director of Recruitment, Admissions, and Programming at Dillard University, located in New Orleans, Louisiana. Mrs. Davis has held various roles in higher education, including Director of International Admissions (Large Public Institution) and Financial Aid Counselor and Assistant Director of Technology for Financial Aid (Large Private Institution) and is a HBCU graduate. In Mrs. Davis's role as Associate Director at Dillard University, Mrs. Davis is leading the initiative to increase the international student population as well as restore Dillard University's dual enrollment program as Dillard University strives to be a

Communiversity. In Mrs. Davis one-year at Dillard University, she has implemented various admission/recruitment practices and is directly involved in the implementation/integration of an innovative campus-wide CRM system which will transform the administrative practices at the institutional level. Mrs. Davis holds a Bachelor of Arts from Grambling State University and a Master of Business Administration (*Concentration: Public Administration*), from Southern New Hampshire University.



**Monette M. Davis** is an associate at Stone Pigman Walther Wittman L.L.C. and concentrates her practice on insurance defense and commercial litigation matters. Monette dedicates time to the legal community by serving in leadership positions with the American Bar Association and the Greater New Orleans Louis A. Martinet Legal Society where she mentors minority young lawyers and law students. She is also responsible for planning award-winning training programs to help law students navigate their journey through law school and then becoming a lawyer.



**Endya E. Delpit** is a New Orleans native, and for nearly 30 years, she has practiced law and developed expertise in the energy and utility industries. She was a shareholder at Liskow & Lewis in Houston before joining Exxon Mobil Corporation where she supported both downstream and upstream business units in a broad range of multi-million dollar domestic and international commercial transactions. She currently serves as Assistant General Counsel at Entergy Services, Inc. where she negotiates and manages commercial transactions, including asset transfers, vendor contracts, and joint venture and customer agreements. Endya also serves as primary legal contact on issues related to political activity throughout the Entergy system. She co-chairs the Diversity Council for Legal and is an active member of the Women's Leadership Advisory Committee. Endya graduated from Howard University in 1992, with honors, and she is a 1995 Southern University Law Center (SULC) *magna cum laude* graduate.





The **Honorable Eva J. Dossier** is a federal magistrate judge in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. She took her oath of office on April 11, 2024. She served on the Lawyer Disciplinary Committee for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana from 2017 to 2023. Formerly, Judge Dossier was a partner with the law firm of Stanley Reuter Thornton Alford, focusing on litigation in Louisiana's state and federal courts. Part of her practice involved the representation of lawyers and law firms in ethics and professional responsibility matters. Judge Dossier is an adjunct professor at Tulane Law School, where she teaches an upper-level experiential course on

written discovery, and she is a frequent speaker on issues relating to ethics and professional responsibility. Judge Dossier was recognized by the New Orleans Chapter of the Federal Bar Association with the Jack Martzell Professionalism Award in 2021. Judge Dossier is the Secretary of the New Orleans Bar Association and an American Bar Foundation Fellow.

Judge Dossier earned a Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience from Tulane University, where she was a Deans' Honor Scholar and graduated *cum laude* with academic honors. She then graduated Order of the Coif from Vanderbilt University Law School, where she was editor-in-chief of the Vanderbilt Law Review and a John W. Wade Scholar. After law school, she clerked for the Honorable James B. Loken, of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit and then the Honorable Lance M. Africk, of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.



**Kristina F. Douglas** is a native of Shreveport, Louisiana, and graduated from Louisiana State University and Southern University Law Center, and currently serves as the Assistant City Attorney for the City of Shreveport, whereby she also serves as a Hearing Officer for the Electronic Traffic Enforcement Program, and a Special Assistant District Attorney. Prior to working for the City of Shreveport, Kristina served as a judicial law clerk at the First Judicial District Court for Judge John Mosely, Jr., and Judge Ramon Lafitte. Kristina currently serves on the executive committee for the Louisiana City Attorney's Association, is a member of the 2023-

2024 LSBA Leadership Class, and serves as the social co-chair for the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals Initiative. Kristina was recently selected as a recipient of the top 40 under 40 award for the Louisiana State Bar Association Young Lawyers Division. In her free time Kristina enjoys spending time with friends and family, playing tennis, watching horror movies, and volunteering.



**Judge Bernadette D'Souza** is the first Family Court Judge of Civil District Court in New Orleans and the first Asian-American Judge for the State of Louisiana. She served as Chief Judge of Civil District Court from 2021-2023. Prior to the bench, she was a public interest lawyer, representing indigent clients at the Southeast Louisiana Legal Services for over 18 years. Judge D'Souza received her Juris Doctor degree from Tulane Law School. After graduation, she spent time promoting awareness to domestic violence issues and educating law students as an adjunct professor at Tulane Law School. She is a frequent guest speaker at Tulane and Loyola Law Schools and participated on panels for the American Bar Association. Judge D'Souza has served on many community and professional boards. In 2019, she was elected as President of the National Association of Women Judges.

Internationally, Judge D'Souza has presented at several Conferences in Yerevan, Armenia; United Nations Status of Women Convention; the First Pan-American Judges Summit, at the Vatican in Rome; a Keynote Speaker at Human Rights Conference in Trinidad and Tobago; the International Association of Women Judges Biennial Meetings in Marrakech, Morocco and more recently at the Seoul Family Court International Conference in Seoul, South Korea.

Judge D'Souza has received several prominent awards for her professional and personal commitment to the community and was recognized as one of New Orleans City's Icon and Women of the Year Award. For her outstanding leadership, Judge D'Souza received awards from the National Association of Women Judges, the American Judges Association and distinguished jurist award from New Orleans Pro Bono Project. Judge D'Souza was married for 41 years to the late Dr. Terence D'Souza. She is most proud of their three children and four grandchildren.



**Stephen I. (Steve) Dwyer** is a founding member and managing partner of Dwyer, Cambre & Suffern, APLC, in Metairie. He received a BA degree in 1970 from Holy Cross College in Worcester, Mass.; an MA degree, with distinction, in 1972 from the University of New Orleans; and his JD degree, *magna cum laude*, in 1976 from Loyola University College of Law (editor-in-chief, *Loyola Law Review*).

Dwyer served as 2023-24 immediate past president, 2022-23 president and 2021-22 president-elect of the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) and as the Second District representative on the LSBA's Board of Governors from 2011-14 and 2017-20. He serves on the *Louisiana Bar Journal's* Editorial Board. He is a member of the Committee on the Profession, the Bar Governance Committee and the Audit Committee. He

served as an adjunct faculty member for Loyola University College of Law and as a lecturer for various CLE programs.

He has been recognized by *New Orleans City Business* "Leadership in Law," "Who's Who Among American Lawyers," *Best Lawyers in America* and *Louisiana Super Lawyers*. He is a member of Alpha Sigma Nu Honor Society.

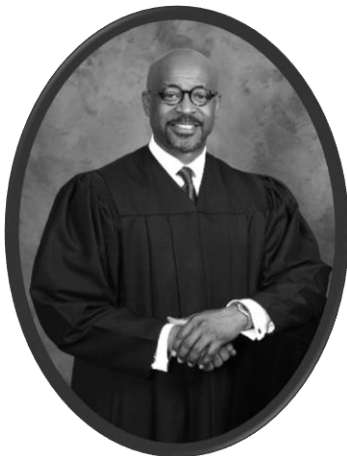
Dwyer chaired the award-winning St. Tammany Recreation District #14 (Coquille Parks and Recreation) and led the financing and development of the 150-acre sports, recreation and park complex in western St. Tammany Parish. He chairs the Miracle League Northshore for special needs children, serves as president of the Jefferson Performing Arts Society, is a long-time member of the Loyola University College of Law Visiting Committee, and serves on the Holy Cross College President's Council and on the boards of directors of the Holy Cross Lawyers' Association and the Holy Cross Alumni Association. He has served as president of the Loyola Law School Alumni Association and on the Loyola Alumni Association's Board of Directors.



**Daniel L. (Danny) Engelberg** is the Chief Defender of the Orleans Public Defenders (OPD). Prior to his appointment as Chief Defender, Engelberg served as the Deputy Chief Defender and previously the Chief of Trials. He has been integral in the evolution of OPD post-Katrina and the elevation of public defense in New Orleans over the last almost two decades, and has dedicated his career to public interest, having joined OPD in 2007 as a Staff Attorney, followed by Felony Attorney Supervisor, Training Supervisor and Deputy Chief of Trials over the years. OPD has since grown from an office of a few attorneys

and administrators, to one that is a full visualization of a community-based, client-centered public defender office. Through the work of countless people on the ground, in the courts, or in front of stakeholders and decisionmakers, OPD continues to fulfill our mission and vision of fighting for the rights of our clients and community and increase the level of representation for low income New Orleanians.

Throughout his tenure at OPD, Engelberg has been part of innovative programming. Additionally, Engelberg has been integral in securing funding equity between OPD and the district attorney, which guarantees 85% the appropriation allocated to the DA be given to OPD. Realizing funding parity was the result of more than a decade of collective advocacy, and now is allowing us to more fully and adequately represent our clients by hiring more attorneys and supporting them outside the court with additional social workers and peer and client advocates, instead of operating within continuous fiscal crises.



The **Honorable Lee V. Faulkner, Jr.**, was born in New Orleans, Louisiana and is a lifelong resident of Jefferson Parish. He is a graduate of West Jefferson High School, Xavier University of Louisiana and the Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Following law school, Judge Faulkner entered into private practice. His practice consisted of personal injury, criminal, domestic and civil litigation. He also served as an Assistant Public Defender for the Jefferson Parish Public Defender's Office.

Prior to being elected as Judge, he was appointed by the Louisiana Supreme Court to serve as Judge Pro Tempore for Second Parish Court for the Parish of Jefferson. He also served as a Traffic Hearing Officer for Second Parish Court. He was elected as a District Judge, Division "P" in 2008, following the retirement of the Honorable Melvin C. Zeno.

He is a member of numerous social, judicial and legal organizations, including but not limited to the Louisiana State Bar Association, National Bar Association, American Judges Association, Board Member of the Louisiana Judicial College, New Judgeship Committee Chair of the Louisiana Supreme Court Judicial Council, Board Member of the Fourth and Fifth Circuit Judges Association, Past President of the Jefferson Bar Association, Past President of the Fifth Circuit Judges Association. He is proud member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated, Vice-Basileus of the Gamma Rho Chapter, New Orleans, Louisiana. He also serves as the President of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Playground Booster Club and previously served as the Legal Advisor of the Old Harvey Canal Civic Association.

He and his wife, Toyane are the proud parents of three children, Brisyn, Cameryn and Dawsyn.



**Catherine R. (Catt) Filippi** is an associate in the firm's New Orleans office. She is part of the civil litigation department handling insurance defense matters for a broad range of clients. Catt received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Houston, and her J.D. from Tulane University School of Law.

Prior to joining Deutsch Kerrigan, Catherine was the Knowledge Manager at a large local firm. In that role, she had responsibilities ranging from firm growth initiatives to business development.

While she was still in law school, Catherine had the unique opportunity to become a "certified legal intern" in the Miami-Dade Public defender's office. During her time in Miami, Catherine second-chaired several felony and misdemeanor jury trials as well as arguing motions,

communicating with incarcerated clients, and assisting in voir dire. Catherine credits her time in Miami for her patience and love of the fast-paced nature of litigation.



**Judge Tracey E. Flemings-Davillier** has served as a Louisiana State Court Judge since March 2010. She currently serves as Chief Judge of the Orleans Parish Criminal District Court, where she has presided as Judge in Section B since January 2013 and Deputy Chief Judge from 2021-2023. As Chief Judge, in addition to managing a complex docket in an efficient and professional manner, Judge Flemings-Davillier oversees Court administration, operations, programs and budgetary matters. Judge Flemings-Davillier previously presided as Judge in Orleans Parish Juvenile Court from 2010 to 2012, where she served as Deputy Chief Judge in 2011 and 2012.

Judge Flemings-Davillier, appointed by Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Bernette Johnson (retired), serves on the Louisiana Judicial College Governing Board, which develops and oversees educational and training programs for judges statewide. Judge Flemings-Davillier also serves as a member on the Federal Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee; the City of New Orleans Blueprint for Safety; the City of New Orleans Criminal Justice Council and the Ethnic and Racial Disparities Working Group.

Throughout her judicial career, Judge Flemings-Davillier has served on various criminal justice reform and judicial/legal related panels and is a member of various Judicial/Bar and civic organizations, including The National Bar Association Judicial Council; The Louisiana Judicial Council/NBA; The Louisiana State Bar Association.; The Louisiana District Judges Association (Department of Public Safety & Corrections Committee and New Judges Committee); The Executive Board of the Fourth Circuit Judges Association, The Greater New Orleans Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, Inc.; The New Orleans Bar Association and The Women's Leadership Academy (WLA) at Loyola University, Cohort 3.

Judge Tracey Flemings-Davillier is a proud graduate of St. Mary's Academy High School, where she graduated with honors. Judge Flemings-Davillier graduated *cum laude* from Loyola University New Orleans with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology. Thereafter, she attended Loyola University New Orleans, College of Law on a full academic scholarship and received her Juris Doctorate.

Prior to her election to the Judiciary, Judge Flemings-Davillier's professional career spanned approximately 15 years as a practicing attorney at Phelps Dunbar, LLP from September 1994 to February 2010. Judge Flemings-Davillier has also served as a Federal Judicial Law Clerk to United States District Court Judge Ivan L.R. Lemelle of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.



Throughout her legal career, Judge Flemings-Davillier has always understood and appreciated the significance of supporting youth programs. She regularly participates in leadership/mentor programs geared toward working with high school students across the Metropolitan New Orleans area. She participates in the *Suit Up for the Future High School Summer Legal Institute and Intern Program* sponsored by the Louisiana State Bar Association, the American Bar Association's Law Day program and various similar programs. In addition, she has participated in career days across the City, including at her Alma Mater, St Mary's Academy.

In recognition for her service to the community, she has been recognized as a City Business Women of the Year, and has been awarded the St. Mary's Academy Legacy Award; City Business Leadership in Law Award; Crystal Gavel Award (Louisiana State Bar Association); Gillis Long Poverty Law Center Award (Loyola University School of Law); Woman of the Year award by the Louisiana Federation of Business and Professional Women; Jack and Jill of America, Incorporated, New Orleans Chapter Mother of the Year Award; Distinguished Service as a Pro Bono Volunteer Award (2003, 2004 and 2006); and Young Leadership Award (Greater New Orleans Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, Inc.).



**Paige H. Franckiewicz** is a member of the Adams and Reese Litigation Practice, assisting the group's attorneys in litigation and transactional matters on state and federal levels. Paige is a former summer associate for Adams and Reese, where she shadowed attorneys and gained experience in several practice areas including insurance, maritime, energy, bankruptcy, commercial litigation, and labor and employment. Paige has experience in all aspects of the litigation process, from inception of any matter and consultation with clients, to the resolution of the case and situation tailored to assisting the legal needs of a business.



As the Associate Director of Admissions at Tulane University Law School, **Alexandra Garon** assists with the recruitment and enrollment of J.D., L.L.M., and S.J.D. students by leading on and off campus recruitment events and counseling prospective law students through the application process. Born and raised in New Orleans, Alex received her B.A. in International Relations from the University of Alabama in 2015 and her M.B.A from Tulane University's Freeman School of Business in 2021.



**Rene Gautreaux** spent the first 22 years of his legal career in private practice, representing clients in domestic, business, probate, and personal injury matters. For 16 of those years, he also served as an Assistant District Attorney in Lafourche Parish, prosecuting felonies under two administrations. In the 2 years prior to joining the team at Hair Shunnarah, he worked for a large law firm handling personal injury cases exclusively.

In his private practice and as a felony prosecutor, Rene gained considerable courtroom experience trying domestic cases and criminal motions before the bench. Further, he successfully tried as first chair dozens of criminal jury trials, securing convictions for serious felonies including aggravated rape, armed robbery, and vehicular homicide. He brings a wealth of trial experience to the team at Hair Shunnarah.

Rene earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Louisiana State University in 1988. He taught high school English and psychology and worked as an operator at a chemical plant along the Mississippi River before attending law school at Louisiana State University Law Center. He graduated from LSU Law in 1997 and opened a solo practice that year.

Rene served in the Louisiana State Bar Association House of Delegates in 2002-04; as president of the Lafourche Parish Bar Association in 2005; and as an adjunct professor at Nicholls State University in 2018-19. In his spare time, Rene enjoys kayaking, cycling, distance running, and playing guitar, and he was awarded a black belt in Shotokan karate in 2015. He and his wife Debbie love spending quality time with their three young adult children.



**Matthew Gerrets** was born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana. During his time at Holy Cross High School, he became interested in the legal field through the Speech and Debate Team. Matthew then moved on to study Criminal Justice at St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas. Matthew will be attending Loyola University College of Law this Fall 2024. Matthew served as a summer intern for the Honorable June Berry Darensburg.





**Kelly A. Gismondi** is an associate at Simon, Peragine, Smith & Redfearn, LLP and focuses her practice on construction and commercial litigation. She has significant experience in formal and informal court advocacy through plea and sentencing negotiations with judges and district attorneys.

After her first year in law school, Kelly served as a Judicial Law Clerk to the Honorable Judge John Marshall Kest of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida where she spent her summer researching and assisting in creating procedural materials for the judge's bench book to use during hearings. Kelly also clerked for a construction litigation firm after her second year of law school.

Kelly received her J.D., *cum laude*, from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law where she was the Executive Board Selection Chair and National Team Coach of Moot Court, an Executive Board Symposium Editor for The Loyola Journal of Public Interest Law and a member of the St. Thomas More Inn of Court. She received a Master of Education from Lipscomb University in 2014 and her B.A. from the University of Central Florida. During her undergraduate and graduate work, she worked concurrently as a middle school English teacher for Teach for America.



**Demarcus J. Gordon** is a partner in the oil and gas and environmental litigation sections for Kelly Hart Pitre in New Orleans. His practice includes general litigation, environmental litigation, environmental due diligence, crisis management, oil and gas litigation, premises liability litigation, and mass tort and class action lawsuits. He represents clients in premises liability cases and in personal injury cases involving alleged chemical exposures. He defends oil and gas exploration and production companies in legacy litigation by landowners and public entities alleging environmental damage arising from oil and gas exploration and production operations. He is involved with the immediate response to crisis or other emergency situations. He received a BS degree in 1991 from the University of Illinois and his JD degree in 1997 from St. Louis University.



**Eugene J. Green, Jr.** has for many years worked in areas in which he has had an opportunity to build his own business, and to create employment and wealth generating opportunities for our citizens. He currently serves as the New Orleans City Councilmember for District D.

Eugene J. Green, Jr.'s successes as a high school, college, and business graduate student have influenced his business success in New Orleans. He graduated from St. Augustine High School in 1976. He was the Salutatorian, a four-year member of both the Marching 100 and Concert Bands, President of the Student Body, Class Speaker, and recipient of the Purple Knight Award.

The Award is St. Aug's highest honor, awarded to the best all-around student, as voted by faculty and staff.

Eugene J. Green, Jr., earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree, after four years of intense study, in Economics from Harvard University in 1980. He worked as an Assistant Manager and then Manager of the Catering Division of Harvard Student Agencies, still the largest student run corporation in the United States. He also served as the elected President of the Harvard Black Students Association his Senior Year. He received the Frederick Douglas award for outstanding leadership, voted on by fellow students.

He also serves as a member of prominent Boards and Commissions that have a positive impact on the economic and social impact opportunities available to our citizens. At present, he serves as the Chairman of the Board of the New Orleans Council on Aging ([noco.org](http://noco.org)), where he has worked to enhance the Council's financial position to place it in a better position to provide meals and other services to elderly citizens in our community.

Eugene J. Green, Jr. served as the former Vice Chairman and present Commissioner of the Lakefront Management Authority ([nolalakefront.org](http://nolalakefront.org)) and as the former Chairman of the Authority's Commercial Real Estate Committee. Early in his Board tenure he worked to get Lakeshore Drive completely opened to vehicular traffic always.

Green serves the City of New Orleans in other capacities. He is a former member of the New Orleans City Planning Commission, appointed by former Mayor Mitch Landrieu. He is motivated to help businesses and investors to understand and to use the processes that lead to enhanced investment and economic activity. Nominated by former City Councilman James Gray, he served as a member of the Industrial Development Board of the City of New Orleans ([idbcno.com](http://idbcno.com)).

Eugene Green, Jr. is Chairman of the Board of the ACTION Community Network, which is supported by the United Methodist Church. The agency was founded in 2017 to provide services to the Seventh Ward community of New Orleans, one that has been targeted by the United Methodist Church to enhance the level of community services available to its citizens.

The Network worked to restore the former Martinez School site on North Roman Street into a center that will provide educational services to area residents and the public.

Eugene J. Green, Jr. has contributed greatly to the New Orleans community as the Founder and President of Nationwide Real Estate Corporation ([nationwiderealestatecorp.com](http://nationwiderealestatecorp.com)), a nearly thirty-year-old property management and real estate brokerage firm. The company's agents have created scores of new homeowners in the city. In addition, the firm has facilitated the renovation and rebuilding, and manages, tens of millions of dollars of metropolitan real estate. Nationwide played a very important role in assisting many citizens' returns to New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina.

Eugene J. Green, Jr. is married to Jennifer French Green. They have three children: Eugene, III, Melanie, and Jonathan.



**Kristin Guidry** is Associate Director of Admission at Tulane University. Kristin was born and raised in New Orleans and was Middle School teacher for 10 years before switching over to Higher Education. She has been with Tulane for eight years and primarily recruits students from the New Orleans metro area and Transfer Students. Kristin oversees all on-campus events, communications, marketing, student workers, and serves as campus liaison for many of other departments on campus. She has held various positions within SACAC, including Dry Run Faculty, Legislative Liaison, and Louisiana Communications

Director, as well as presented at both the Regional and National Conferences. On the personal side, Kristin loves all things New Orleans and lives for Jazz Fest, and she is the proud mom of a 13-year-old daughter! Roll Wave!



**Robert Gunn** serves as Deputy Judicial Administrator/Community Relations for the Louisiana Supreme Court. In this role, Mr. Gunn is responsible for managing the operations of the Community Relations Department to further its mission of promoting public trust and confidence in the judiciary via a number of methods including developing community outreach programs to explain the work and role of the judiciary, responding to information requests from both the public and media, designing and producing court publications, updating and maintaining the Court's website, [www.lasc.org](http://www.lasc.org), and leading tours of the Supreme Court building for

school and community groups. Mr. Gunn previously served as Community Relations Project Coordinator/Website Coordinator for the Supreme Court and was part of the web team which

spearheaded the redesign and relaunch of the Supreme Court's website, which in 2005 was awarded a spot on the Top-10 Court Web Sites list by Justice Served, an alliance of court management and justice experts, for being among the best in providing online court services, placing the Court's website as one of the top ten court websites worldwide.

Mr. Gunn is a member of the Conference of Court Public Information Officers (CCPIO), and serves on the CCPIO Website Committee. He additionally is a member of the National Association for Court Management (NACM), where he serves on the NACM Communications Committee and served on the CORE® Public Relations Curriculum Revision Committee.

Mr. Gunn holds a BA in Journalism with an emphasis in Public Relations, and a minor in Psychology.



**Galen M. Hair** is a partner at Hair Shunnarah Trial Attorneys. Mr. Hair is an aggressive and relentless litigator, is licensed in multiple states and boasts clients from around the world. With large wins both at home and across the country and an impressive record of favorable results, Mr. Hair gained a reputation for getting the job done both inside and outside the court room early on in his career.

He focuses not only on the litigation in front of the client, but the long term personal and business effects that his clients' issues will cause. Viability is key and no small victory is worth it if the client is put in a more detrimental position. With both

large firm and boutique firm experience, he combines a large firm comprehensive approach to a small firm low-cost model to achieve impressive results with minimal financial expense. His clients are family to him, and it shows.

Mr. Hair has been fortunate enough to have several clients enlist him in "bet the company" litigation and has been tasked with protecting clients' assets during litigation. He enjoys nothing more than fighting for his clients and he uses his unique work ethic, his diverse background, and his courtroom skills to do just that.

Mr. Hair is involved in several community-based organizations including Access Louisiana and the 610 Stompers. When he is not fighting for clients or raising money for a good cause, he is focused on skills enrichment – often attending continuing education "just to brush up."

This unwavering success to continual improvement has led him to be named as a Super Lawyer Rising Star, a Top Lawyer by New Orleans Magazine, the Pro Bono Publico Award and numerous other accolades.



**Micah R. Ince** is Chief of Staff and Executive Assistant District Attorney at the Orleans Parish District Attorney's Office. Prior to this role she served as Legislative Director with the New Orleans City Council, where she worked on a number of justice reform and quality of life initiatives. Having spent the majority of her career in public service, she is committed to helping government agencies build public trust and deliver positive change in the community. Ms. Ince received her Master of Public Administration from Ball State University and her Juris Doctorate from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law.



**Sania B. Islam** (Suit Up Intern) is a New Orleans native and current undergraduate student at Tulane University pursuing a B.A. in Philosophy and a B.A. in Gender & Sexuality Studies. She also works part-time as a legal assistant at the Khan Law Firm L.L.C. and as a server at G's Tasty Pizza in Midcity. Throughout her academic career, she has competed in various mock trial and moot court competitions as well as representing student interests in community and civic organizations. Now, most of her time not at work or school is spent learning from and advocating for diverse and marginalized perspectives, aspiring to one day write public policy or represent public interests within the legal field. She was a student at the LSBA's Suit Up for the Future in 2021 and is thrilled to return as an alum this year.



**Shay F. Jaume** loves nothing more than defending the rights of policyholders against insurance companies. She joined Hair Shunnarah Trial Attorneys as a law clerk in 2020 before becoming a full-time attorney with the firm in 2021.

Shay started her professional life as an accountant in Shreveport with a degree from Louisiana State University before shifting her focus to law. She graduated Loyola University New Orleans College of Law in May 2021 and was a member of Phi Delta Phi, the oldest legal fraternity in continued existence in the United States. A New Orleans native, Shay enjoys all things local and loves spending time with her family.





**Kimberly Jones** joined Loyola University New Orleans College of Law in March 2016 and currently serves as the Associate Dean of Law Admissions. She leads all aspects of the recruitment, admissions, and yield processes for the College's JD, MA, and LLM programs. Prior to joining Loyola University New Orleans, Ms. Jones was the Director of Admissions and Multicultural Affairs at her alma mater, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law.

After law school, Ms. Jones practiced law in the area of creditors' rights and served on the State Bar of Michigan's Diversity and Inclusion Committee. She is a first-generation college and law school graduate and is licensed to practice law in Michigan and Louisiana.

A native of Detroit, Ms. Jones is happy to call New Orleans home. At her church, she serves as a youth bible study leader, Youth Advisory Board member, and Personnel Committee member. Ms. Jones is a member of the Mystic Krewe of Femme Fatale.



**Robert Jones** is a New Orleans native and 2017 exoneree for serving more than 23 years in prison for crimes he did not commit. Since being freed and cleared of all charges, Mr. Jones has become a renowned community activist, serial entrepreneur, published author, and co-founder of Free-Dem Foundations, Inc., a nonprofit organization that mentors and guides youth in a positive direction.

Mr. Jones currently serves as the Director of Community Outreach/ Lead Organizer for the Orleans Public Defenders. He also sits on several boards and committees such as the Innocence Project New Orleans (IPNO), Unanimous Jury Coalition committee, New Orleans City Council Advisory Committee, Advisory Board for the Center for Racial Justice at Dillard University, and the New Orleans Community Advisory Group for the MacArthur Safety and Justice Challenge Initiative.

Mr. Jones is the recipient of the 2023 Fellows of American Bar Foundation Award, 2022 Southern University Annual Civil Rights and Social Justice Award, 2019 New Orleans Martinet Legal Society's Earl Amdee Award for a non-lawyer advancing justice in New Orleans, and the 2017 Paris Bar Association Bronze medal of Justice Award.



**Christy F. Kane** began her career as a class action litigator at Adams and Reese, LLP in New Orleans. While at the firm, she was on the Ethics and Conflicts Committee, the Recruiting Committee and was the volunteer pro bono coordinator for her office. In 2007, she was named the ConocoPhillips/Adams and Reese Fellow for Louisiana Appleseed. While a partner at A&R, Ms. Kane won numerous pro bono awards, including 2008 Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year; she was also named a CityBusiness Woman of the Year in 2007. In late 2008, after eleven years of private practice at A&R, Ms. Kane left the firm to become Louisiana Appleseed's full-time Executive Director. Then, after directing the nonprofit for eleven years, in 2018, she departed to become Entergy's first-ever Pro Bono Counsel. In her current role, she works closely with members of Entergy's Legal Department to develop and drive its pro bono program, supporting current initiatives and implementing new programs that grow, promote and advance the department's pro bono efforts and strategy. She has a law degree from The George Washington University; her undergraduate degree is from Loyola University. Ms. Kane is a member of the Louisiana State and Federal Bar Associations. She is a Fellow of the Loyola Institute of Politics and the Louisiana Bar Foundation. Ms. Kane previously acted as co-chair of the FDIC Southeast Alliance for Economic Inclusion's Committee to Address Needs of the Unbanked and Underbanked. She has also served on the Louisiana Supreme Court's Pro Se Task Force, as well as the ABA's Language Access Standards Project. Ms. Kane has been an appointed member of the Louisiana Access to Justice Commission since 2016. In 2010, Ms. Kane was awarded Volunteer Advocate of the Year by ASI Federal Credit Union's A Shared Initiative, Inc. The following year, the New Orleans Chapter of the Federal Bar Association awarded Ms. Kane the Camille Gravel Award for public service. In 2019, Louisiana Appleseed presented Ms. Kane with its 10-year Legacy Good Apple Award.



**Judge LaKeisha N. Jefferson** is a native of New Orleans, Louisiana, and an attorney in the greater New Orleans area with a concentration in family and domestic law. She earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1999, from Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, where she majored in English and Writing. She later earned a Juris Doctorate Degree from Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 2002. Upon graduation from law school, LaKeisha served as a legislative intern for the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and then began her professional career as a law clerk. LaKeisha began her own practice in 2005, focusing primarily on domestic and family law and began advocating for the



rights and protections of domestic violence victims. LaKeisha also served as an Assistant City Attorney for the City of New Orleans, as a Staff Attorney for Project SAVE, a contract attorney for Southeastern Louisiana Legal Services as well as conflicts counsel for the Orleans Indigent Defender Program. Additionally, LaKeisha is a child custody mediator qualified by the Louisiana State Bar Association and has been appointed to mediate contentious child custody cases.

LaKeisha's affiliations include: the Louisiana State Bar Association, Independent Women's Organization, Les Femmes PAC, Greater New Orleans Martinet Legal Society, New Orleans Bar Association, Jefferson Bar Association, New Orleans Chapter of the Alumnae Association of Spelman College, and the New Orleans Black Chamber of Commerce. Lakeisha was recently elected to the Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans, Division H and will be serving New Orleans' families as a family court judge in January 2024.



**Jasmin Kumar** is a first-year student at the George Washington University, studying international affairs and economics in the Elliott School. Jasmin served as a summer intern at Simon, Peragine, Smith & Redfearn, LLP., and is an alumna of the 2023 Suit up for the Future Program.



**Alexandra R. Lamb** is an associate at Adams and Reese LLP and concentrates her practice on general litigation and appellate work. Her experience is diverse, representing clients in a variety of areas including insurance defense and coverage disputes, energy and environmental litigation, complex litigation, and labor and employment disputes. Alex also has experience with alternative dispute proceedings and is guided by her formal training in both psychology and the law when negotiating settlements and resolving disputes for her clients. Alex is a member of the

firm's appellate, insurance, and labor and employment teams.

Alex graduated *magna cum laude* from Loyola University New Orleans, where she also served as Managing Editor of the Loyola Journal of Public Interest Law and a member of the Trial Advocacy team.



**E. Grant Laizer** is a member of the Adams and Reese Litigation Practice, assisting the group's attorneys in litigation matters at state and federal levels. Grant was a structured finance intern for Ernst & Young, working on CLO audits with issuance sizes between \$450 million and \$1.5 billion, and following interest rate environments, particularly LIBOR, as well as market trends and their effects on CLO issuance. Grant earned his MBA from the Loyola University New Orleans College of Business. Grant is a former summer associate for Adams and Reese, where he shadowed attorneys to gain experience in all aspects of the litigation process - from inception of client consultation to resolution of the case and situation, all specifically tailored to

assist the legal needs of a business. Grant also gained experience through an internship and externship with The Hon. Jay C. Zainey (Section A) and The Hon. Jane Triche Milazzo (Section H), of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, respectively. In 2024, Grant was appointed to serve as a Junior Council Member on the Louisiana State Law Institute. Grant earned his J.D. from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law where he graduated *summa cum laude* and earned the distinction of Crowe Scholar. He was a member of the *Loyola Law Review* and Phi Delta Phi Honor Society. He also earned the "Law Excellent Award". Graduating from LSU, Grant received a Bachelor of Science in Finance with a minor in Information Systems and Decisions Science. Grant received the award of University Medalist in Finance and was a recipient of the Baton Rouge Board of Realtors Frances R. Ingalls Scholarship. He was a member of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society and Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society. A New Orleans native, Grant is proud of his commitment to volunteerism and community service, formerly participating in the Best Buddies Program Baton Rouge, a charity organization that aids children and adults with disabilities.



**Diamond Lee** graduated from Southeastern Louisiana University in 2021 with a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Studies. During her undergraduate years, Diamond worked in many areas on campus and participated in a few organizations as well. She has worked at Southeastern as a professional for a year and a half. Since then, Diamond has also started a Master's degree in School Counseling. Her goal is to work at a K-8 school once she graduates and eventually open her own private practice. Diamond currently serves as an Admission Counselor at Southeaster Louisiana University.



**Justin P. Lemaire** is a member at Stone Pigman Walther Wittman L.L.C. and concentrates his practice on business litigation. He assists clients with a wide variety of business issues, including state and local tax disputes, products liability litigation, oil and gas litigation, public bid law cases and government procurement cases.

His experience ranges from defending independent oil and gas companies in legacy oilfield site lawsuits to representing a large chemical corporation in a multimillion-dollar arbitration over a chemical distribution agreement. Justin has a strong background in representing businesses through products liability claims, lease and defamation claims, as well as wrongful termination claims.



**Judge Brandon S. Long** was sworn in as a U.S. District Judge in the Eastern District of Louisiana on December 21, 2023. He began his legal career in 2005 as an associate at King & Spalding in Washington, DC, where he practiced in the areas of white-collar criminal defense and corporate compliance. In 2010 he joined the U.S. Justice Department, first as a federal prosecutor in Washington, DC, then as a federal prosecutor in his hometown of New Orleans. In these roles, Judge Long directed the investigation and prosecution of murder and other violent crimes, narcotics offenses, public corruption, insurance fraud, money laundering, tax offenses, social security fraud, and sex offenses. From 2020 to 2021, Judge Long was detailed to the FBI to serve as the Deputy Chief of Staff and Acting Chief of Staff to

Director Christopher A. Wray. In this role, he worked on a variety of policy, public affairs, congressional, and internal operational matters. He received his B.A. and B.B.A. degrees *cum laude* from The University of Texas at Austin and his J.D. degree *cum laude* from Duke University School of Law, where he was a staff editor on the Duke Law Journal.



**Heather S. Lonian** practices primarily in the areas of complex litigation, class action and mass litigation, and insurance. As Chief Diversity Officer and Chair of the Stone Pigman Diversity Committee, Heather leads Stone Pigman's diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies and assists clients with diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Her most notable cases include defending a public housing agency in class actions asserting fair housing, racial discrimination, and mold claims; representing a national insurance company in multiple class action lawsuits challenging policy provisions and claims handling procedures; representing a national computer equipment manufacturer in a complex dispute involving allegations of breach of contract and unfair trade practices (for which the plaintiff sought in excess of \$1 billion punitive and compensatory damages); and defending an international construction firm in class and mass actions arising from levee breaches.



**Sowmya Mandava** is the Judicial Staff Attorney for the Honorable June Berry Darensburg at the Twenty Fourth Judicial District Court for the Parish of Jefferson, Louisiana.

Mrs. Mandava is an active member of the Louisiana State Bar Association, where she serves as a member on the House of Delegates for the 24th District. Mrs. Mandava also serves as a co-chair on the LSBA Outreach Committee and as a member on the LSBA Diversity Committee, the LSBA Children's Law Committee, and the LSBA Continuing Legal Education Committee. She was a member of the 2019-2020 Leadership LSBA class. In addition to LSBA activities, Mrs. Mandava currently serves as the chair of the Jefferson Bar Association, Young Lawyers Division and is an active member of the New Orleans Bar Association and St. Thomas More-Loyola Inn of Court.

Mrs. Mandava started her career as an interim law clerk for the Honorable June Berry Darensburg. She then served as a law clerk for the Honorable Bernadette D'Souza at Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans before returning to the Honorable June Berry Darensburg's chambers in August 2017 as the Judicial Staff Attorney.

Mrs. Mandava earned her Juris Doctorate degree from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law. She also holds a Master of Science in Criminal Justice Administration and Bachelor of Science in Psychology. During law school she served as the President of the Asian Pacific American Law Student Association and a Rule XX Student Practitioner in the Family Law Clinic.

She interned for the Honorable Lee V. Faulkner, Jr. at the Twenty Fourth Judicial District Court for the Parish of Jefferson, Louisiana; the Honorable Fredericka Homberg Wicker at the Louisiana Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal; and CASA New Orleans. Prior to attending law school, Sowmya was a litigation assistant at Fishman Haygood, LLP in New Orleans.

Mrs. Mandava is married to Sree Harsha Mandava, who is also an Attorney. They are the proud parents of two rambunctious children Saheli (6) and Veer (2).



**Kiera C. Martin** (Suit Up Intern) is a rising 2L at Southern University Law Center. Kiera wants to practice criminal law and property law once she graduates. Kiera is from North Carolina and obtained an undergraduate degree in Behavioral Social Science from North Carolina Central University. She has served in the United States Navy Reserve, and she loves going thrifting. Kiera is dedicated to helping young people turn their dreams into reality and live a life of purpose.



**Katelyn G. McGibney** practices business litigation and insurance defense. She has assisted independent oil and gas companies in corporate disputes and breach of contract claims.

Prior to joining Stone Pigman, Katelyn assisted legal teams in medical malpractice claims and disputes involving employment law and maritime matters. She also gained experience at the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.



**Brittany Carnes Melancon** is an associate at Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann L.L.C. and focuses her practice on corporate and business law, mergers and acquisitions, and real estate matters. She has represented several start-up companies looking to raise capital through the sale of securities, including performing research on state-specific blue sky laws and drafting corporate consents.

Brittany also has experience assisting legal teams in construction matters, arbitration awards, and business disputes.





**Andrew D. Mendez** is a member of Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann L.L.C and concentrates his practice in the areas of commercial litigation, complex litigation, family law, and bankruptcy. He has represented individuals, privately-held companies, and publicly-traded corporations in a wide variety of disputes as plaintiffs, defendants, debtors, and creditors. Andy began his career at the main office of a multi-national law firm before joining Stone Pigman. He has substantial experience defending product liability and toxic tort personal injury claims, including mass and class actions. He has also represented both shareholders and corporations in securities law cases. In the area of insurance law, he represented an insured making a claim under a vessel title insurance policy, the first known claim of its type. He has also represented parties involved in disputes over control of some of the most prominent business in the city and state.



**Trinity A. Morale** is a litigator in the Liskow & Lewis, APLC New Orleans office. Her practice involves representing global exploration and production companies and general commercial clients in a range of matters, including “legacy”/environmental, royalty, and personal injury matters, as well as contractual disputes. Trinity’s litigation experience includes trial and appellate work, and she has represented a range of clients before state and federal appellate courts. She has been recognized for her practice by The National Black Lawyers’ organization as a National Black Lawyer Top 40 Under 40. Trinity received her Juris Doctor from Yale Law School, and her Bachelor of Arts from Duke University, *cum laude*. She was a member of the Worker and Immigrant Rights Advocacy Clinic and the San Francisco Affirmative Litigation Project at Yale Law School and a Reginaldo Howard Memorial Scholar and a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow at Duke University.



**John W. Myles Jr.** concentrates his practices on corporate law and real estate transactions. He joined Stone Pigman in 2023 after graduating *cum laude* from Southern University Law Center where he was a member of the *Southern University Law Review*, represented Southern University Law Center as a student ambassador, and served on the Board of Student Advisors as a teaching assistant. He gained legal experience working as a summer associate for Stone Pigman and clerked for the Orleans Public

Defenders and Southeast Louisiana Legal Service.



**Jared E. A. Nelson** is an energy litigator practicing in the Liskow & Lewis' Lafayette office. He has experience in multiple facets of litigation, including drafting motions, exceptions, demand and settlement letters, discovery requests and responses and direct and cross examination questions.

Prior to practicing law, Jared served as a Probation and Parole Officer for the State of Louisiana, Department of Public Safety and Corrections for seven years. Prior to joining the firm, Jared served as an Assistant Attorney General for the Louisiana Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General handling tort and civil rights litigation for the State of Louisiana. Jared received his Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, from Southern University Law Center in 2018.



**Victoria Parenti** is a regional admissions counselor for the University of Louisiana at Lafayette living in the New Orleans area. She has a background in clinical mental health and school counseling and has previously worked as a school counselor in some of the local New Orleans private high schools. Victoria has a plethora of knowledge related to Louisiana board of regent high school graduation requirements as well as a great deal of experience advising students on how to improve their overall academic GPA to meet TOPS qualifications. Victoria is also a small business

owner and runs her own private practice where she works with adolescents and young adults in the greater New Orleans area through individual therapy.



**Brinley B. Pethe** (Suit Up Intern) is a freshman at Tulane University double-majoring in Psychology and Political Science. Following graduation, she hopes to pursue a career in either law or psychology. Brinley participated as a student in the 2022 Suit Up Program.





**Loulan J. Pitre** is a partner at Kelly Hart Pitre and has extensive experience with the development, construction, operation, and decommissioning of energy, environmental, and infrastructure projects. He has represented energy and other industrial companies, real estate developers, financial institutions, ports, levee districts and other public entities, and participants in the construction and service industries such as contractors, engineers, and material suppliers. His work has included entity formation and governance, traditional and innovative financing methods, complex land

rights issues, construction procurement and management, environmental and coastal permitting issues, and complex disputes. In addition to his traditional scope of complex work, in recent years he has developed deep industry knowledge in the business and legal aspects of the growing U.S. offshore wind energy industry.

While serving as an elected member of the Louisiana House of Representatives from 2000 to 2008, Mr. Pitre was intimately involved in the development of the state's coastal restoration and protection program and large transportation infrastructure projects such as the elevated highway to Port Fourchon. He is highly ranked in Chambers, BestLawyers, and SuperLawyers and is an Adjunct Associate Professor of Law at Tulane Law School. He is an experienced negotiator trained in both arbitration and mediation and a frequent speaker and writer.

Mr. Pitre is also extremely well known for his practice in legacy litigation in which landowners and public entities sue oil and gas companies alleging environmental damage from oil and gas exploration and production operations. These cases often involve claims in the hundreds of millions of dollars. As lead trial counsel in *Meaux et al. v. Hilcorp et al.*, he defended two oil and gas exploration and production companies from claims of environmental damage. After a three-week trial, plaintiffs asked the jury for over \$60 million dollars. Instead, the jury's verdict resulted in no liability for defendants, a result that withstood appeal.

Mr. Pitre grew up in Cut Off in southern Lafourche Parish, Louisiana, which has grown in the past century from a collection of small Cajun French fishing villages to the central hub of the Gulf of Mexico deepwater oil and gas industry at Port Fourchon. Thus, from an early age he has understood the intricate challenges of living and working on the Louisiana coast. At South Lafourche High School, Mr. Pitre was a National Merit Scholar, a Presidential Scholar (one of 121 nationwide), and a Telluride Association Summer Program Scholar (one of 20 nationwide). He then spent seven years at Harvard, where he earned his bachelor and law degrees and numerous honors. He wrote his Harvard College *magna cum laude* honors thesis about a 19th century village on the Louisiana coast and his Harvard Law School senior paper about aspects of the Louisiana Constitution. He then returned to Louisiana, ultimately serving his hometown as

attorney to the Greater Lafourche Port Commission during a period of explosive expansion and as a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives.



**Stephanie M. Poucher** is a native of Springfield, Virginia. She attended James Madison University on a soccer scholarship and later attended law school at American University Washington College of Law, graduating *summa cum laude*. Before attending law school, Stephanie worked as a teacher in New Orleans, Louisiana. While at WCL, Stephanie was elected Editor-in-Chief of the American University Law Review. After law school, Stephanie served as law clerk to the Honorable Carl E. Stewart on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit and later as law clerk to the Honorable Susie Morgan and the Honorable Eldon E. Fallon on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. Presently, Stephanie is an associate at Phelps Dunbar LLP in New Orleans, Louisiana, working primarily in Phelps' Labor & Employment section.



**Denise C. Puente** serves as Simon Peragine Smith & Redfearn's Managing Partner and is a commercial litigator practicing primarily in the areas of construction and surety law. She also represents contractors and property owners in the preparation and negotiation of construction contracts for condominiums, hotels, apartment buildings, parking garages, industrial facilities, mixed use facilities and other projects. Denise has litigated numerous public bid disputes cases, represented many contractors before the Louisiana Licensing Board of Contractors, and appeared before various other board and agencies throughout Louisiana on behalf of the firm's clients. Denise also represents plaintiffs and defendants in commercial litigation involving redhibition, employment, copyright and trademark matters in state and federal court. Denise is a frequent lecturer on construction and surety-related matters and has conducted numerous in-house training seminars for companies and public bodies on Title VII employment issues. In 1997, Denise received the Sam Dalton Capital Defense Award from the Louisiana Association of Criminal Defense Counsel. She is fluent in Spanish.



**Tracie N. Ransom** is the inaugural Assistant Dean for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for Tulane Law School. Leveraging two decades of experience in the practice of law and the advancement of DEI within the profession, Ransom practiced complex litigation for nearly a decade with Porter Wright in Columbus, OH, first as an associate and later as the first Black woman to be elected partner. She then left private practice to go in-house as Associate General Counsel and Director of Complaints for Edward Jones.

In 2019, she founded Ransom Strategies Group, specializing in providing DEI consulting, coaching and training nationally for law firms, corporations and academic institutions. Ransom has served on several boards throughout her career, including most recently the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. An honors graduate of the University of Alabama and the University of Illinois College of Law, Ransom clerked for the Honorable Jeffrey S. Sutton of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit and the Honorable James L. Graham of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio.



**M. Davis Ready** represents businesses in a variety of litigation, business, and employment matters. His clients include several Fortune 500 companies; large self-insureds; and excess insurers for retail, transportation, product liability and other claims. He also serves as regional counsel for several large companies for matters throughout Louisiana and neighboring jurisdictions.

Davis's practice involves the defense and tendering of contractual defense and indemnification. He provides rapid response assistance for catastrophic losses, understanding that clients and claim departments manage operations and claims 24 hours a day, every day of the week.

Prior to joining Simon, Peragine, Smith & Redfearn in 2000, Davis served as a law clerk to the Honorable Walter J. Rothschild in the Twenty-Fourth Judicial District for the Parish of Jefferson. Davis conducts client seminars and presents at industry events annually, and he has spoken at events for the American Bar Association, Transportation Law Association and DRI – Lawyers Representing Business.



**Denice Redd-Robinette** is an environmental lawyer focusing on litigating complex oil and gas matters. She has experience representing clients in legacy lawsuits, tort claims, contract disputes, land contamination, and personal injury claims.

Prior to practicing law, Denice was a Litigation Paralegal for the Louisiana Department of Insurance in Baton Rouge where she assisted in regulatory and legislative matters. She also served in the United States Navy. Denice received her Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, from Southern University Law Center in 2019.



**Dylan G. Rhoton** is an incoming first-year at Harvard University (Government and Data Science) and a recent graduate of Brother Martin High School, where he was named a Valedictorian and received the Richard E. Lambert Outstanding Graduate Award. In high school, he participated in the United States Senate Youth Program and was named an AP Scholar with Honors and a National Merit Finalist. He interned at the Jefferson Parish District Attorney's Office in 2023 and was recognized for the "Best Oral Argument; Defense" through the Louisiana State Bar Association's Suit Up Legal Internship in 2022. Additionally, he served as the National President of Mu

Alpha Theta, the high school mathematics honor society with over 140,000 members. Finally, this past year, Dylan served as the Communications Officer of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council, where his bill proposition, HB577 (2024) concerning minors' privacy rights and social media companies' use of targeted advertising, passed both chambers unanimously to become law in Louisiana.



**Sally Brown Richardson** was the Interim Dean and is A.D. Freeman Professor of Civil Law at Tulane Law School. She received her undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and is a *summa cum laude* graduate of the LSU Law Center. Ms. Richardson specializes in property law, community property law, and comparative law. She is the author of the textbook *Community Property in the United States* and has written extensively on Louisiana community property and property law. She currently serves as the

Reporter for the Louisiana State Law Institute's Property Committee and has served at the national level as a Reporter for a Uniform Law Commission on property law issues. Ms.

Richardson's scholarship has been previously selected for the Yale-Stanford-Harvard Junior Faculty Forum and she has received the President's Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching, the highest teaching award offered at Tulane University. In 2021, Ms. Richardson was elected to membership for the American Law Institute. Before joining the Tulane Law faculty, Ms. Richardson practiced at Skadden, Arps in Washington, D.C., clerked on the U.S. Fifth Circuit for the Honorable W. Eugene Davis, and worked on the legislative and communications staff for former-U.S. Senator Mary L. Landrieu.



**Honorable Karen Wells Roby** is a United States Magistrate Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana with twenty-five (25) years of service. She has had a variety of experiences in civil and criminal matters including mediating disputes and rendering reasoned legal decisions in complex matters. Formerly, she served as the Chief U.S. Magistrate Judge of the Eastern District from 2017-2021. Also Judge Roby in 2012 served as the President of the Federal Magistrate Judges Association ("FMJA"), a national organization of over 600 U.S. Magistrate Judges across the country. As President of the Association, she worked to secure pay raises for all active and recently retired federal magistrate judges. She is a graduate of Tulane Law School and Xavier University. In May 2023, she received a Masters of Judicial Studies from Duke Law School. The Judges thesis was on the use of technology in conducting detention hearings during COVID19 which is published in the Georgia Journal of Criminal Law. Judge Roby is an Adjunct Professor at Tulane Law School, frequent speaker and thought leader in E-Discovery. She is the chair of the Tulane Law School's Black Alumni Reunion, which celebrated 50 years of graduating black law students in February 2019.



**Eric J. Roshak** (Suit Up Intern) is a 3L at LSU Law. A native of Phoenix, Arizona, Eric received a B.A. in Law, and a German language minor, from the University of Arizona. Eric moved to Louisiana to attend law school in 2022 and has enjoyed it so thoroughly that he intends to sit for the Louisiana Bar Exam upon graduation. Eric continues to admire Louisiana's unique and ancient Civil system of laws. More, he hopes to share that interest with the program's participants. Eric excelled in his Contracts, Bankruptcy, and Legal Traditions (Civil Law history and systems) law school courses. Eric also works for the Baton Rouge Bar Association's Pro Bono Project. He believes that an attorney's primary mission is to help people.





**Karina Shareen** is an associate in Deutsch Kerrigan's New Orleans office. Karina represents insurance companies and their insureds in a wide range of matters including automobile accidents, slip-and-falls, premises liability and toxic tort cases.

Ms. Shareen also handles Bankruptcy matters, assisting commercial creditors in Chapter 11 and 13 bankruptcy cases in Florida, Texas and Louisiana. She has assisted clients in a broad range of industries regarding debt restructuring, asset recovery and transactions to protect bankruptcy assets.

Karina was born in Jakarta, Indonesia, but was raised in Metairie, Louisiana and considers herself a Louisiana native. She enjoys volunteering at the local food banks and animal shelters and walking in the park with her dog, Beauregard.



**Professor Kenya J.H. Smith** is an experienced attorney, educator, executive and advocate with more than 20 years of corporate, community engagement and governmental regulatory experience gained in numerous successful policymaking, legal, executive, academic and business leadership positions. He is a community centered, creative, results oriented self-starter with a demonstrated ability to manage dynamic, culturally diverse environments, simplify complicated issues, motivate colleagues and build consensus around common interests to reach organizational goals.

After graduating from McMinn Magnet High School, Smith earned his B.A. (*cum laude*) in Political Science from Southern University at New Orleans. He then went on to earn his J.D. from the University of Wisconsin Law School and began his legal career with Adams and Reese, LLP as a member of the firm's transactions and corporate advisory services team. He next served in various senior executive positions in the New Orleans city government, including Executive Counsel to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor for Intergovernmental Relations and Deputy Mayor for Community Development. He also worked closely with the BP Gulf Coast Recovery Leadership team in the wake of the MC-252 incident.

As an educator and scholar, Smith maintains a robust package of business law courses including Business Associations, Commercial Law, Federal Income Tax, Contracts and Obligations, with a focus on the formation and taxation of business entities, constitutional law and legislation. He has taught in legal institutions across the Americas, including Phoenix, Arizona, Miami, Florida, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Mexico City, Mexico. He is enthusiastic about education and scholarship, and loves to share that enthusiasm with academic, business

and community stakeholders. He has publications in the *Louisiana Law Review*, *Marquette Law Review*, *Michigan Journal of Law Reform*, *Pennsylvania Journal of Business Law*, *Rutgers University Law Review* and *Tulane Law Review*. Smith is a member of the Wisconsin and Louisiana State Bar Associations, has served as a leader of various local chapters of civic and charitable organizations, including the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels.



**Julia M. Spencer**, Assistant Director of Admission at Tulane University, counsels prospective law students throughout the application process, plans and implements post-acceptance recruiting activities, and travels to off-campus events throughout the United States. Born and raised in New Orleans, Julia received her B.A. in Asian Studies from Vassar College in 2014, and her J.D. from Tulane University Law School in 2019.



**Donovan J. Stone** is a litigation associate at Williams & Connolly LLP in Washington, D.C. Starting in October 2024, Donovan will begin a one-year clerkship with Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson at the U.S. Supreme Court. Previously, he clerked on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit and the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama. Donovan earned his J.D. from Duke Law School, where he served on the law review, was a member of the moot court team, and led the Black Law Students Association. A native of Shreveport, Louisiana, Donovan received his B.A. from Centenary College of Louisiana, where he majored in history and political science.



**Harper G. Street** assists the Adams and Reese Litigation Practice Group. As a former law clerk and office administrator at several firms throughout Louisiana, Harper gained experience in legal research and drafting memorandums, organizing deposition summaries, attending client meetings, and shadowing attorneys on various substantive and procedural legal issues within several practice areas. Receiving his J.D. from Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center, Harper was a Hebert Scholar, ranking in the top 10% of his class. He was a junior associate with the *Louisiana Law Review*, Volume 81,



and later served as Development Editor for Volume 82. As a member of the Louisiana Law Review, Harper published two scholarly works. Harper also served as a judicial extern for Chief Judge Shelly D. Dick of the United States District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana.

Harper earned his B.A. in Political Communications, with a minor in Political Science, from Louisiana State University.



**Mary K. Taliancich** was born and raised on the bayou in Buras, Louisiana. Mary joined the Hair Shunnarah family as a law clerk in 2019 before becoming a full-time attorney with the firm in 2020. Prior to that, Mary served as a law clerk with the Plaquemines Parish District Attorney's Office.

Mary graduated from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law with a Certificate in Civil law. During law school, Mary served as a Loyola Maritime Journal associate.

Prior to law school, Mary attended Ursuline Academy in New Orleans and then graduated from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette where she earned a degree in Business Administration.

Mary's practice is focused primarily on property casualty and commercial litigation. She is admitted to all Louisiana state and federal courts and is a member of the Louisiana Bar Association.

When Mary isn't tirelessly working to defend the rights of policyholders, she enjoys spending time with family and friends and can be found in the Superdome on Sundays screaming "Who Dat!"



**Oliver M. Thomas Jr.** is a proud son of the City of New Orleans. He is the only person in the history of New Orleans to have been elected to serve in three positions on the same legislative body having served as the City Councilman for District B, City Councilman-at-Large and in his current capacity as City Councilman for District E.

Oliver, affectionately known as OT, is a native of the lower Ninth Ward, a historic community located within the district he now serves. Oliver began his political career as a Legislative Aide and Public Policy Analyst for Councilmember Jim Singleton. The son of a laborer and telephone operator, his life has been rooted in hard work, constituent relations, and a genuine commitment to improving the lives of others. A graduate of Joseph S. Clark High School, he went on to receive a bachelor's degree in

Business Studies from the College of Santa Fe in New Mexico. In addition, Councilmember Thomas attended the Aspen Institute in our nation's capital. Lastly, he is a graduate of the John F. Kennedy School of Government Executive Program for State and Local Leaders at the prestigious Harvard University.

Known as the "People's Councilman," Oliver Thomas is a servant leader with a proven track record of getting things done. His experience in city government is unmatched, his record of accomplishments is undeniable and his love for the people of New Orleans is unquestioned.



**Brooke C. Tigchelaar** is a member at Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann L.L.C. and concentrates her practice in family law, including divorce, property partition, custody, and support. She regularly handles high-conflict situations, intricate property partitions, and evolving custody and support agreements for high-net-worth individuals. She is skilled in conflict resolution, delivering sound guidance and service to each client with discretion and compassion. Brooke also has experience in commercial litigation, including general business litigation and

products liability disputes.



**Janae A. Torrence** joined Hair Shunnarah Trial Attorneys in 2023. She began her legal career as a judicial law clerk at the Louisiana Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal for Judge Paula A. Brown. Janae received a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication from Loyola University New Orleans in 2018, and in 2021, she earned her Juris Doctor from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law. While in law school, she interned with the ACLU of Louisiana and several judicial campaigns. When not advocating for her clients, Janae is an avid home cook and loves trying new restaurants.



**Donesia D. Turner** currently serves as the City Attorney for the City of New Orleans. As City Attorney, Ms. Turner directs all legal affairs of the City of New Orleans. This work includes legal advice to the Mayor; the City Council; and all City departments, boards, and commissions. Additionally, Ms. Turner oversees the Law Department and its divisions, which include: Litigation, Contracts, In-House, Code Enforcement, and Municipal & Traffic. Ms. Turner is responsible for the daily management and supervision of complex legal matters and related interactions involving elected officials and other city leaders,

corporate and community stakeholders, City employees, and the public. Just prior to her appointment as City Attorney, Ms. Turner served as Sr. Chief Deputy City Attorney for the City of New Orleans.

Ms. Turner's background in the law spans more than two decades and includes a distinguished track record of handling agency oversight; collaborating with legislative bodies, elected officials, law enforcement and community partners; and advancing policies that promote public safety as well as criminal justice reform.

Ms. Turner is a graduate of Loyola University and received her Juris Doctor from Loyola University College of Law. Ms. Turner is an active member of numerous professional and civic organizations, including: the Louisiana Bar Association; the American Bar Association, the New Orleans Bar Association, the National Bar Association, the Greater New Orleans Louis A. Martinet Society, A.P. Tureaud Chapter of the American Inns of Court and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., a public service sorority.



**Kyle C. Usner** is Of Counsel at Hair Shunnarah Trial Attorneys. Mr. Usner's litigation focus is primarily mass torts. He represents clients across the nation who have been injured by dangerous pharmaceutical drugs and defective medical devices.

A native of Louisiana, Kyle completed his undergraduate degree at Louisiana College in 2012. Kyle attended Mississippi College School of Law in Jackson, Mississippi, earning his Juris Doctor degree and Certificate in (Louisiana) Civil Law Studies in 2019. While in law school, Kyle was an Executive Editor on the school's law review as well as a research and teaching assistant. He also interned for the Supreme Court of Mississippi and the United States Bankruptcy Court in Jackson, Mississippi.

Prior to law school, he worked as a paralegal for a mass torts law firm in Alexandria, Louisiana. When not working, Kyle enjoys playing video games, cheering on the New Orleans Saints, and watching British murder mysteries with his wife.



**Sarah K. Warren** (Suit Up Intern) is a rising third year law student at Loyola University New Orleans. She moved to New Orleans from Montana, where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Forensic Anthropology and Certificate of Forensic Science at the University of Montana. Sarah has a strong interest in international law and plans to pursue a career in international humanitarian law upon graduating.



**Lori A. Waters** is Of Counsel at Hair Shunnarah Trial Attorneys and has dedicated herself to protecting the rights of injured Louisianans. The significance of having seen both sides in the courtroom makes her a valuable and respected asset to her clients. Her understanding of corporate defense has prepared her to take on the challenges of seeking justice for plaintiffs who require an experienced and empathic voice to represent them in their time of need.

As a skilled property casualty and personal injury trial attorney, Lori is both diligent in her practice of law and wholly committed to the legal profession.

Lori is a graduate of The Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History, and a graduate of Seton Hall University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. In 2004, she earned her Juris Doctor from Loyola University School of Law in New Orleans.

Lori began her legal career as a judicial law clerk at the Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans. Subsequently, she practiced in the areas of toxic tort and environmental litigation, product and premise liability, commercial litigation, employment discrimination, insurance defense, insurance coverage, uninsured motorist coverage, medical malpractice, and redhibition defense. Lori is admitted to practice before all state courts in Louisiana, the United States District Court for the Eastern, Middle, and Western Districts of Louisiana, as well as to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Lori is a member of the Louisiana State Bar Association, New Orleans Bar Association, American Bar Association, A.P. Tureaud Inn of Court, and National Association of Professional & Executive Women.

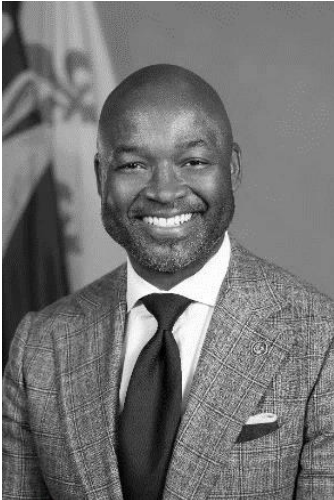
Lori is recognized as an AV Preeminent rated lawyer. She serves as a Member of the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board. Additionally, Lori is an Assistant Examiner for the Louisiana State Bar Committee on Bar Admissions. Lori resides in the New Orleans metropolitan area with her husband, Erik, and their two daughters. When she's not representing her clients, Lori spends time with her family and traveling the country with her youngest daughter, who plays competitive tennis.



**Nicholas J. Wehlen** is a member of Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann L.L.C. and focuses his practice on appellate and business litigation matters. He has significant experience assisting individuals and businesses in filing and opposing supervisory writ applications in Louisiana's appellate courts and petitions for certiorari in the Louisiana Supreme Court. Nick has been engaged by clients to serve as their appellate counsel before trial in the district court, in order to assist trial counsel in preserving arguments and improving the chance of success on appeal. Nick

has successfully argued to the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and in Louisiana appellate court, and guides clients through all aspects of the appellate process.

Nick also routinely represents clients in complex business disputes, many of which involve claims of unfair trade practices, breach of contract, and fraud. He notably obtained a dismissal on summary judgment of a \$100 million securities claim in federal court, and he has successfully defended law firms and attorneys in cases involving allegations of legal malpractice.



**Jason R. Williams** is a true example of a born leader. From an early age, his parents, Sidney Williams and Janice Rogers instilled in him the values of hard work and dedication. Throughout his youth, he attended the Woodward Academy. Upon returning to his hometown to attend Tulane University, he continued to demonstrate his leadership abilities, both on and off the football field. District Attorney Williams's serves the community with his tireless work ethic and commitment to excellence.



**Sharonda R. Williams** is a 1994 *summa cum laude* graduate of Xavier University of Louisiana where she was a Biology Pre-Med major, a student in the Honors Program, and graduated with honors in English and Biology. She was a Xavier University cheerleader and became a member of the Epsilon Tau chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated in the Fall of 1993. After completing her course requirements at Xavier on an accelerated basis, Sharonda was hired as a research assistant in the Department of Neurology, Alzheimer's Disease Research Center at Duke University. Sharonda then entered medical school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. During her time at UNC, Sharonda received a grant from the National Institutes of Health to perform research in the Department of Psychiatry related to the impact of psychological stressors on cardiovascular health. After completing her medical studies in 1998, Sharonda decided to pursue a law degree, and she received a full scholarship to Loyola University New Orleans College of Law. At Loyola, Sharonda was a member of the Loyola Law Review and the president of the mock trial team, which competed nationally. In 2001, Sharonda graduated, *cum laude*, from Loyola, and began her career as a patent attorney at a law firm (Kilpatrick Stockton-now Kilpatrick Townsend) in Atlanta, Georgia.



Sharonda returned to New Orleans where she became the first African-American partner at Sher Garner law firm, where she was a litigation lawyer handling cases ranging from construction disputes, medical malpractice, insurance coverage disputes, entertainment law contract negotiations, intellectual property licensing issues, and bankruptcy adversary proceedings. During that time, Sharonda was one of the trial lawyers that litigated an intellectual property case against the City of New Orleans and Dell Computers related to crime camera technology, and that case led to the discovery of evidence that led to the criminal prosecution of several public officials.

Sharonda left Sher Garner in 2011 to join the administration of former Mayor Mitchell J. Landrieu, and she served as City Attorney for the City of New Orleans from May 2013-November 2015. As City Attorney, Sharonda was the lead attorney handling the most comprehensive police consent decree in the history of the United States. At the same time, she represented the City in another consent decree aimed at reforming the Orleans Parish Jail, which was then-recognized as one of the worst prisons in America. Both of those consent decrees required Sharonda to engage in negotiations with the United States Department of Justice on a near daily basis. Sharonda also was the lead attorney representing the City in settling a more than 30-year dispute relating to back pay and pension issues for the New Orleans Firefighters. Sharonda had served as Chief Deputy City Attorney from October 2011 until May 2013.

After leaving her post as City Attorney, Sharonda joined Fishman Haygood, LLP in New Orleans, where she continued to represent numerous public entities and was the external counsel to the Orleans Parish School District. Since July 2021, Sharonda has served as Vice-President/General Counsel and Director of Government Affairs for her alma mater, Loyola University.

Sharonda has been an active member in her community serving in various capacities on non-profit boards and public boards and commissions. Sharonda was recently appointed by former Gov. John Bel Edwards to serve as a Commissioner for the Board of the Port of New Orleans, and she has served as the Chair of the Board of Commissioners of the Regional Transit Authority, the Chair of the Louisiana Judiciary Commission (appointed by Gov. Kathleen Blanco). Sharonda is Vice-President of the Board of the French Quarter Festivals, Inc., a member of the boards of Appleseed, Louisiana, Bridge House/Grace House, LCMC Health system, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, the New Orleans Bar Foundation, the Federal Bar Association, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, and she is secretary of the Board of the Urban League of Louisiana. Sharonda is a graduate of the New Orleans Regional Leadership Institute, Leadership Louisiana, and the Norman C. Francis Leadership Institute. Sharonda has received numerous awards recognizing her professional work and civic engagement from organizations such as the Urban League, Loyola University, the National Bar Association, the New Orleans Bar Association, the Pro Bono Project, and the Greater New



Orleans Louis A. Martinet Legal Society. Sharonda is a past president of the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, a past Regional Director of the National Bar Association, and she was recently honored as an alumna of the Norman C. Francis Leadership Institute. Sharonda is a member of the Alpha Beta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.



**Michelle Woodfork** is the current Director of Forensics and Intelligence for the Orleans Parish District Attorney's Office and the former Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department. A native and lifelong resident of New Orleans East, she is the youngest daughter of Richard and Tina Woodfork and the proud mother of Nicholas M. Woodfork.

Michelle graduated from St. Mary's Academy High School in 1988. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice with a minor in Political Science from Southern University at New Orleans in 1995, and a Master of Arts in Criminal Justice with a concentration in Law Enforcement in 2003. While attending Southern University, she joined the Zeta Theta Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and is currently an active member of the Omicron Lambda Omega Chapter.

Woodfork has over 33 years of law enforcement experience with the New Orleans Police Department. She began her career as a patrol officer in the 7th District on January 27, 1991, and has served in five of the department's eight districts, holding ranks of patrol officer, sergeant, and lieutenant. She dedicated 12 years to the Sex Crimes/Child Abuse Unit, where she investigated and supervised cases involving physical and sexual abuse as well as child fatalities. In 2012, she was selected by former Superintendent Ronal Serpas to launch the Alternative Police Response Unit, which she led until 2016 when she was promoted to lieutenant by former Superintendent Michael Harrison and assigned to the 7th and later the 2nd District.

In 2021, Woodfork was promoted to captain and assigned to the Management Service Bureau, overseeing the Recruitment and Applications Division, Training Academy, Human Resources, Fiscal/Budgeting, Fleet Division, and Carpenter Shop.

On December 22, 2022, Mayor LaToya Cantrell appointed Woodfork as the first female Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department on an interim basis. During her tenure, she implemented a strategic plan focused on violent crime reduction, recruitment and retention, and Federal Consent Decree compliance. Her efforts led to a 25% reduction in violent crime, a 23% decrease in murders, and a 45% decrease in carjackings. The Recruitment and Applications Division hired 104 police recruits— three times more than the previous year—and added 107 civilian professional staff members. She also launched community engagement programs such as the Junior Citizens Academy and the Summer League Basketball program.

Under her leadership, the department made significant progress towards full compliance with the Federal Consent Decree and is now nearing the two-year sustainment period. Woodfork's contributions have left a lasting impact on the department's trajectory.

Throughout her career, Woodfork has completed several specialized trainings and received numerous awards and commendations, including the prestigious Purple Heart Letter Award in 2017. Her greatest honor was serving as Superintendent of Police, leading the dedicated men and women of the New Orleans Police Department and serving the citizens and visitors of New Orleans. After 33 years of service, she retired on March 2, 2024, to spend more time with her family and explore new career opportunities.

On April 30, 2024, Woodfork was appointed as Director of Forensics and Intelligence for the Orleans Parish District Attorney's Office by District Attorney Jason Williams. In this role, she leads the Open Source Intelligence Task Force, enhancing communication strategies and protocols between the New Orleans Police Department and the District Attorney's Office to streamline investigations from arrest to indictment to trial through the use of forensic analysis and open source intelligence data. By accepting this appointment, Director Woodfork continues her commitment to the safety and well-being of the citizens and visitors of New Orleans.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO 2024- 2025 LSBA PRESIDENT PATRICK A. TALLEY JR.  
FOR HIS SUPPORT OF THE SUIT UP FOR THE FUTURE PROGRAM**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE AREA COLLEGES AND LAW SCHOOLS THAT  
COLLABORATED ON THIS PROGRAM AND/OR PROVIDED PROFESSORS FOR  
THE PROGRAM'S LAW INSTITUTE**

Dillard University

Loyola University New Orleans College of Law

Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Southeastern Louisiana University

Southern University Law Center

Tulane University Law School

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

**THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING COURTS AND AGENCIES FOR ALLOWING OUR  
STUDENTS TO VISIT AND/OR OBSERVE THEIR PROCEEDINGS**

Louisiana Supreme Court

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana

Orleans Parish Criminal District Court

Orleans District Attorney's Office

Orleans Public Defenders Office

**THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING JUDGES, LAW FIRMS, LAW DEPARTMENTS  
AND AGENCIES THAT PROVIDED JOB SHADOWING OPPORTUNITIES  
TO THE SUIT UP SCHOLARS**

Honorable June Berry Darensburg, Twenty-Fourth Judicial District Court

Honorable Lee V. Faulkner Jr., Twenty-Fourth Judicial District Court

Honorable Bernadette D'Souza, Orleans Parish Civil District Court

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Liskow & Lewis, APLC

Loyola University New Orleans College of Law

Simon, Peragine, Smith & Redfearn, L.L.P.

Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann L.L.C.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO  
THE LSBA PIPELINE TO DIVERSITY SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO ASSISTED IN  
COORDINATING THE PLANNING OF THIS PROGRAM**

Denia S. Aiyegbusi, Co-chair

Denice Redd-Robinette, Co-chair

**SPECIAL THANKS TO  
Larry Panna  
FOR RECORDING THE SUIT UP STUDENT SCHOLARS  
DURING THE FINAL ORAL ARGUMENT**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SUIT UP FOR THE FUTURE ALUMNI  
FOR ASSISTING THE STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAM**

Sania B. Islam (2021)

Brinley B. Pethe (2022)

**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE LAW STUDENT INTERNS FOR ASSISTING THE  
STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAM**

Kaleena Arnold, Southern University Law Center

Claire H. Carter, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law

Kiera C. Martin, Southern University Law Center

Eric J. Roshak, LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center

Sarah K. Warren, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law

**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE LSBA STAFF MEMBERS WHO WORKED TIRELESSLY ON  
THE DETAILS OF THIS PROGRAM:**

Leah Joly

Mike Montamat

Tricia R. Pierre

George Kouniaris

Mary Langley

**ADDITIONAL THANKS TO LSBA STAFF MEMBER FOR CREATING THE  
TECHNOLOGY RELATED TO THE PROGRAM:**

Darin Trittel

**SPECIAL THANKS TO  
THE JUDGES WHO SERVED ON THE PANEL FOR THE ORAL ARGUMENTS  
PRESENTATIONS**

Honorable Karen Wells Roby  
Honorable Brandon S. Long  
Honorable Eva J. Dossier  
Honorable LaKeisha N. Jefferson



***CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SUIT UP FOR THE FUTURE STUDENT WINNERS!***

**BEST WRITTEN MEMORANDUM WINNERS:**

Prosecution: Sydnee D. Ragas

Defense: Allison L. Honeywood

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**BEST ORAL ARGUMENT WINNERS:**

Prosecution: Sydnee D. Ragas and Avishka R. Fernando

Defense: Emma M. Bonney and Matthew F. Bancroft

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