



March 2021

Ingham County Bar Association

BRIEFS

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About ICBA

Founded in 1895, the Ingham County Bar Association continues its longstanding tradition of service to the legal profession and the greater Lansing community, bringing lawyers together to join in a strong organization that works to achieve objectives that transcend the individual.



INGHAM COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

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President's Message



Sandra Lake,
ICBA President
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I often read the past ICBA President's Messages for inspiration when it is time for me to draft my next message. I stopped in my tracks when I read Charles (Chuck) Barbieri's March 2020 message. Sadly, it initially appeared to me that we have made no progress in 2021. He wrote about the Coronavirus Pandemic. (Check – still happening.) He mentioned the downturn in the economy. (Check.) He wrote about the “unsettling impeachment of the President and his later acquittal.” (Check, again.) He also wrote about public animosity and how it was spilling over into the judicial system. (Check.)

I was left speechless for a while. I never thought March 2021 would look the same as March 2020. But after pondering the matter, I realized that March 2021 is not the same as 2020. It is true that we are still battling the Coronavirus, the economy is struggling, our former President was impeached and acquitted again, and there is an array of public uncertainty and animosity.

But the last year has also shown us that human beings are strong and creative. It has shown us brave, hard-working people who risk their lives to keep our lives functioning. And perhaps most surprising to me, I discovered that I can work at home with my children present and everyone lived to tell the tale (so far)!

For the ICBA's part in keeping the wheels turning, we held a wonderful Meet the Judges event via Zoom. Thank you to Justice Elizabeth Welch, Hon. Michelle Rick, Hon. Shannon Schlegel, and Hon. Kelly Morton for sharing your time and some of your stories with us. I enjoyed listening to Justice Welch talk about campaigning during a pandemic. Who knew she was so ahead of her time in using Zoom. Judge Rick told us about her diverse talents, including participating in music theater, serving as a swim instructor, and spending time on her parent's deer camp when she was a child. Like Judge Schlegel, I too was the first in my family to obtain a

four-year college degree. Finally, Judge Morton exposed the big secret as to why courtrooms are so cold. If you missed the event and want the answer, you can view the video via the link to the ICBA YouTube channel.

I would also like to thank all of the judges and attorneys who were in attendance. It was a marvelous evening. And once again, thank you to Madelyne Lawry and her amazing staff, as well as Board members Steve Sinas and Emily Jefferson, for all of your efforts in making this event happen.

Looking forward, I may not get to attend in person any ICBA events this year as ICBA President. Nonetheless, we are dedicated to continuing with our annual events virtually and I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Ingham Circuit Court Appoints

Ellison as Youth Center Director

Ingham County's 30th Circuit Court announced today that it has selected Annette Ellison as the next Director of its Youth Center. Ellison, with 24 years' experience in juvenile justice, succeeds Richard Gentry, who is retiring after 16 years running the short-term secure juvenile detention facility. Under Gentry's leadership the Youth Center has become recognized nationwide for its programming.

Ellison, with a Bachelor's Degree in psychology from the University of Notre Dame and a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Michigan, comes to her new position after almost 13 years at the Circuit Court in the position of Clinical Social Worker. Before joining the 30th Circuit, Ellison gained experience as a clinician at Maxey Boys Training School, a therapist at an out-patient sex offender treatment clinic, and a private practitioner counselor.

Ellison is excited to bring her treatment-focused approach to the Youth Center, "I look forward to continuing Richard Gentry's commitment to a clinical-based approach to youth detention," she said. "Complex trauma affects many youth detained in our facility, and it is by being aware of, and responsive to, these conditions that we can ensure a safer and more secure facility."

"I believe my calling is to instill hope and help youth break free from the binds of trauma, unhealthy core beliefs, and relationships, all of which so often act as barriers to them reaching their greatest potential. The Youth Center, through its staff supporting residents through the Stages of Change, is vital to a detained youth's journey toward rehabilitation.

I envision a facility where respect, dignity, safety, and accountability are within the very fabric of the culture and programming; it should be a place where both youth and staff thrive."

"I look forward to continuing Richard Gentry's commitment to a clinical-based approach to youth detention." "Complex trauma affects many youth detained in our facility, and it is by being aware of, and responsive to, these conditions that we can ensure a safer and more secure facility."

- Annette Ellison



Ellison is well-versed in evidence-based treatment, including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, trauma-informed therapy, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, motivational interviewing, psychoeducation, social skills training, relapse prevention, and mindfulness. One of her specific focuses has been on treatment of adolescent sexual offenders and provision of trauma-informed care to youth who have been victims of sexual trauma, exploitation, or commercial sex trafficking.

In her current role with the court, Ellison has worked closely with the Youth Center and the population it serves. She has provided crisis management

and mental health support to youth detained at the facility.

According to Judge Richard Garcia, Chief Judge of both the 30th Circuit Court and the Ingham County Probate Court, Ellison and her treatment focus are exactly

what the Youth Center needs to continue its good work for the community. "First and foremost, detained youth, Youth Center staff, and the community deserve a safe and secure facility," he said. "It is through programming with a clinical approach, which Annette Ellison will build on as our new Youth Center Director, that we continue to reach that goal."



Annette Ellison

Juvenile detention facilities are designed for short-term placement of youth in the juvenile delinquency system; the average stay of a juvenile detained at the Ingham County facility is less than 12 days. The 30th Circuit Court's Youth Center, located at 700 E. Jolly Road in Lansing, is a 24-bed facility staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is solely supported by the county's Juvenile Justice Millage, which will be up for renewal after this year.

Contact: Scott LeRoy, Deputy Court Administrator for the Juvenile Division
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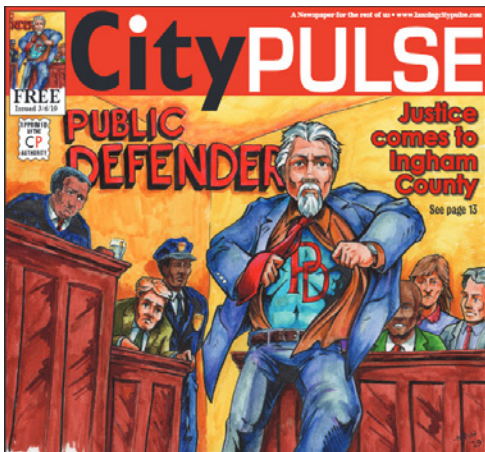
The Ingham County Office of the Public Defender

Where We Came From By Russel Church



rchurch@ingham.org

There are probably many places you could begin the story of the Ingham County Office of the Public Defender. For me, it begins in 2007. I was born and raised in Michigan. I left the state to attend law school and fulfill an obligation to the United States Army. That resulted in my remaining in Tennessee after the obligation was over and in 1989, I joined a newly created public defender office in a 2 county judicial district there. I quickly felt I had found my calling. In early 2006, my wife was hired by the Thomas M. Cooley School of Law. It had been a dream of mine for her to teach at a law school and to make that happen, we moved back to Michigan.



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As I was visiting her while settling affairs down south, I began to sort out what I would be doing. I knew there were very few formal public defender systems in the state and quickly learned that Ingham County did not have one. I considered applying for the appointed counsel list, but it was not a workable solution for me. I was fortunate because the summer I moved here, the Ingham County Prosecutor's office had a number of experienced attorneys retire and they were interested in someone who had been practicing criminal trial work for 25 years.

Shortly after I started as a prosecutor, the National Legal Aid and Defender Association published their report on a study they had done on the resourcing of trial court level indigent defense. For those of you who haven't seen it, the title pretty much said it all: "A Race to the Bottom". I had worked with the author in Tennessee on caseload studies which resulted in staffing increases in Tennessee and my office was one of the biggest beneficiaries. In late 2008, a summit was held at the convention center in Lansing to discuss the findings. One of the other speakers was the Public Defender from Knoxville, TN. He was running, in my opinion, the most ambitious program in the state. I went to the summit, and educated myself. My opinion was that the situation was not likely to improve without a significant infusion of state money. Most states with effective public defender systems have the state as the primary funding source. For Michigan trial courts, the bulk of the funding came from the county.

Many, many people picked up the ball and ran with it. The State created the

Michigan Indigent Defense Commission (MIDC). They built the structure and the legislative buy-in to get the program off the ground. Unlike most states, the decision was not to usurp the process by making a new state agency. Instead, the MIDC would provide structure and grant funding to local governments to enhance the way they delivered services. Ingham County developed a committee and began planning. The decision was made to seek funding to create a department within Ingham County to provide public defenders in all four adult courts in the state. Funding was sought and approved to create an office in the state fiscal



year that began on October 1, 2018. I was privileged to be selected as the first Chief Public Defender and develop the office.

Very early in the process, I developed what we have come to call the mantra. It is the three things I feel are necessary to cultivate an effective indigent defense practice.

- We see our clients early and often.
- We are known by our ethics.
- We try cases.

I believe that if we do those three things, we develop a program to be proud of.



I started work on January 2, 2019. After hiring some administrative staff, we began the process of getting up and running. Imagine if you will, creating an office with 27 attorneys

and a total staff of 37.5 in about 120 days! Everything involved in that process was happening at the same time. Hiring attorneys and staff, identifying and developing a physical office, acquiring furniture and computers, developing a case management system to suit our needs and training everyone on it. Because this was being done within the framework of a new department of county government, many of the decisions needed to be made by the Ingham County Board of Commissioners.

We began taking misdemeanors and some felonies in early April 2019. By the second week of June, we were taking all cases in the four courts unless we identified a conflict of interest. As I write this, the office has almost 2,500 open cases. This number is significantly impacted by the partial closures of court system and suspension of jury trials county wide. We are looking forward to the day when we can get back to holding them in-person.

I am so proud of the people who have chosen to come work here. Every one of them believes passionately in the mission of the office. I believe we are, and will continue to make a positive impact on the lives of thousands of residents of Ingham County.

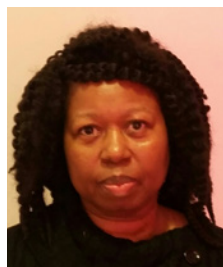


"We see our clients early and often. We are known by our ethics. We try cases." - Russ Church



Public Defender: Through the Eyes of the Accused and Protectors of Democracy

By Veller Morris



THROUGH THE EYES OF THE ACCUSED

If you were to ask any accused person what a public defender means to him, I am certain

you will get several different answers. To some, a public defender, is someone who cares about justice and would fight for the rights of an innocent person. To another, a public defender, is someone to avoid because he does not have your best interest at heart. And still to others who embrace a broader concept of what “public defender” means, they will tell you a public defender is anyone who is a protector of democracy. But first, we will look at the role of a public defender through the eyes of the accused and later we will address the broader concept of the “public defender” in our system of government as we know it today.

Now, what do you think is responsible for the disparity in perception about the role of a public defender in our society? The thing is, many public defenders have become complacent in making deals, simply bargaining away the defendant’s liberty for a lesser sentence or charge, without really fighting for the accused person. Many offenders do not know their rights, and they trust the public defender that is assigned to them to be their strongest ally in protecting their rights.

Most of them do not have any kind of means or the necessary resources to retain a high-profile public defender who will fight for their rights. The legal system has become so complicated, as a matter of fact, both prosecutors and public defenders depend on the art of making a deal to get through their caseloads without any thought about the person who is being affected by the deal.

Many defendants are told that if they plead guilty, they will get a lesser sentence without knowing the ramifications of pleading guilty. These defendants are hauled into jail and then wonder - what just happened to me! What the public defender forgot to tell the defendant was that s/he is not going home when s/he pleads guilty. And, more often than not, sometimes s/he is incarcerated for a crime s/he did not commit. But, not all public defenders are callous or have a cruel disregard for others.

If we take a hard look at the criminal justice system, we would realize that there are many people who are behind bars that should not be there. Many of the people are who were wrongfully accused/convicted, were locked up, and are behind bars today, are because of wrongful convictions.

There are many ways in which one can be wrongfully convicted, to name a few, they are: misidentification, false eyewitness testimony or simply by the implication of a jail house informant

also known as a “snitch”, who is paid or bribed to make up stories about the accused. Most times these snitches are given certain facts about the accused to study and then they regurgitate them as “truths”, when in reality the accused never told them anything.

Now one thing is clear, whether you are in jail because you deserve to be locked up for the crime committed or not, one thing is certain, everyone behind bars whether they are guilty or innocent, realizes the price of freedom once it is taken away.

As a prisoner of the state, one’s freedom is not only taken away but the very notion of being human is a concept that is no longer ascribed to him/her. S/he is treated as being less than human. S/he is dehumanized, made to feel less than, stripped of all his rights and he is no longer a person but a number. He loses the sense of who he is, he has no identity because that is taken away from him and from that moment he ceases to exist.

Now, let us look at the harsh reality of the conditions of the prisoner: They are allowed one phone call, and that call is monitored. There is no privacy. They are now told when to wake up, when to go to sleep and even how to think, and, if per chance s/he voiced an opinion - that could land them in isolation. Some prisoners think that isolation is brutal, that you are treated as less than human. As part of the punishment, they strap heavy chains about your ankle because

they deem you to be “dangerous” or you are considered to be “hostile” and a danger to the rest of the inmates. One unidentified inmate was quoted as saying “he never want to go back in isolation again because they treat you as a terrorist.”

One thing is certain about all these prisoners, whether they are innocent or guilty, they are all trying to get out of prison and, they are looking for that one person, that perfect person called a “public defender” to listen to them so they could tell their stories. Some are literally screaming for help, while others are silently screaming for help, their pleas are all the same: please see me, hear me, I need your help, I am here because someone lied on me falsely, or misidentified me as the “shooter” or someone was paid to “snitch” on me; if only someone could listen to me, I know I will be set free. Oh! The many cries that go down in dead silence with no one in sight or coming to their aid.

Most of their cries go unheard because their voices are silenced by the myriad levels of a legal process that they do not understand. It does not matter how much appeal letters they write or how many letters are sent to different organizations, only a handful of them actually get the help that leads to their exoneration.

However, in the midst of this uncertainty and helplessness, there was a strong public defender who seriously believed in the fight for justice and equality and freedom. This was a public defender who believed in the dignity of human life and the restoration of one’s rights to liberty and the struggle to set those prisoners free who are wrongfully convicted.

This was one bright light that left us too soon, the late Ken Thompson, the

former District Attorney for Brooklyn’s finest. A young, vibrant man, who had a vision and passion to make changes to the criminal justice system in New York City. He talked about his bold ambitions to free black men who were locked up for minor infractions, like a few ounces of marijuana (which is now legal in most states).

I distinctly remembered him, coming to our congregation and telling us about all the positive plans he had for the future of incarcerated men in Brooklyn, to have programs that were specifically geared for them, to rehabilitate them back into society. But oh! That was not to be, his life was snatched away by dreaded disease called cancer. However, his dreams still live on, and the work is carried on by his successor, Eric Gonzalez, the current District Attorney for Brooklyn.

In an article written by Jen Cheng, *Brooklyn DA Ken Thompson Remembered as “visionary prosecutor,”* Gothamist, October 12, 2016, said “his earliest and perhaps bravest move was to call into question his predecessor’s long record of winning convictions based on dubious evidence or prosecutorial wrongdoing. To date, Mr. Thompson’s conviction-review unit has identified and reversed the conviction of 21 people, all Black or Latino, who collectively spent hundreds of years in prison. He also stopped prosecuting people for low-level marijuana offenses and spearheaded a program aimed at helping more than a quarter million Brooklyn residents erase outstanding warrants for minor offenses. Versions of both programs have now been adopted citywide.”

Now, let’s see what progress has been made since Eric Gonzalez, Brooklyn, D.A., has taken the mantle to lead Brooklyn into a safer posture and

strengthening the community trust. From the office of the District Attorney Newsroom (2021), this comment written about Eric Gonzalez says, “following his swearing in as District Attorney in January, Gonzalez launched a groundbreaking initiative known as Justice 2020, to help him carry out his vision of keeping Brooklyn safe and strengthening trust in our justice system by ensuring fairness and equal justice for all. Justice 2020 consists of a 17-point action plan – created by a committee of criminal justice reform experts, defense groups, service providers, law enforcement, formerly incarcerated individuals, clergy and community leaders – to make the Brooklyn District Attorney’s office a national model of what a progressive prosecutor’s office can be. This blueprint will transform the work of Gonzalez’s office by shifting toward preventative and accountability solutions with a track record of success, and away from over-reliance on criminal convictions and incarceration.” This is welcoming news to all people. We see other trail blazers lighting the pathway in the person of Valarie Newman, Esq., who recently joined the prosecutor side to help free innocent people who were incarcerated wrongfully.

In an article written by Tresa Baldes, *Battle for the wrongly convicted will join Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office,* Detroit Free Press, (Nov. 13, 2017). States that “After years of going head-to-head with Wayne County prosecutors, a veteran criminal defense attorney is switching gears: She’s going to help her former opponents get better at what they do so that innocent people don’t get locked up. And it was the prosecutor’s office that asked for her help. Former State Appellate Defender Valerie Newman, who built a reputation freeing the

wrongly convicted, started her new job Monday as director of the newly formed conviction integrity unit within the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office. The unit, which will look at possible wrongful convictions, is the 30th of its kind in the country and will have two full time lawyers, a project consultant lawyer, a full-time investigator, part-time investigator, and an administrative staff person. The group will be covered by the county's general fund for \$660,000 a year and will focus primarily on murder cases - a task that up until now has been left up to innocence clinics, universities and social justice law firms whose resources are limited. For example in June 2020, a Detroit man who spent 25 years in prison for the shooting death of a man outside a burger joint was released after ballistics evidence showed his mother's gun couldn't have been involved in the killing. The defendant, Desmond Ricks, has since filed a civil suit against the two Detroit officers he claims framed him. That same month, another Detroit man who had spent 40 years in prison for a 1976 homicide was released after prosecutors conceded that hair evidence was flawed. The Michigan Innocence Clinic, which has freed 16 wrongfully convicted defendants in eight years, believes there are many more such innocent victims out there who need help. And, it believes the new unit will provide much needed relief - at least in terms of finding the wrongfully convicted, and helping exonerate them."

Also, we have the Western Michigan University-Cooley Law School Innocence Project, under the leadership of Tracy Brame, Esq., as Director, and Joshua Fahlsing, Esq. as Assistant Director for the clinic, doing a phenomenal job for the Lansing Campus. The clinic celebrated one of its success stories as most recently as

September 2020 when an innocent man incarcerated for more than 26 years was exonerated.

In an article *WMU-Cooley Innocence Project Helps Earn Release of Lacino Hamilton, After 26 Years in Prison*, published by Cooley Newsroom (Sep.30, 2020), said, "Today, Wayne County Judge Tracy Green set aside the conviction of Lacino Hamilton who was wrongfully convicted of second degree murder and felony firearms in 1994. DNA testing facilitated by the Western Michigan University Cooley Law School Innocence Project was used to help win Hamilton's release. Assistant Prosecutor Valerie Newman, director of the Wayne County Prosecutor Office's Conviction Integrity Unit, moved to have Hamilton's conviction vacated and requested dismissal of all charges. The motion was joined by Hamilton's legal counsel, Mary Chartier (Johnson Class, 2002) and Takura Nyamfukudza (Moore Class, 2013) of CN Defenders. Both are WMU-Cooley law graduates and well-respected defense attorneys. Hamilton was convicted of the murder of a Detroit woman when he was 21 years old. He served 26 years in prison. There were no eyewitnesses in the case and Hamilton's conviction was based, in large part, on the testimony of a jailhouse informant, who later proved to be unreliable." Hamilton was later quoted as saying "I'm a little overwhelmed right now," during the virtual court hearing, "I am extremely grateful and look forward to being a productive citizen in our community."

Another is Archie Williams, a Louisiana man wrongly convicted and incarcerated for 37 years behind bars for a crime he did not commit. In an article written by Lea Skene, *From Angola Prison to 'America's Got Talent': Archie Williams*,

gives hope to Louisiana inmates, The Advocate, May 25, 2020, said "Williams was sentenced to life without parole for the 1982 rape and stabbing of a woman at her Baton Rouge home after the victim identified him in a photographic line up despite almost no other evidence supporting his guilt. He was exonerated after new fingerprint technology matched another man to the crime." Skene further states that "When Archie was freed last spring after serving almost four decades for crimes he didn't commit, his mind kept returning to the thousands of men he was leaving behind - an untold number facing wrongful convictions and excessive sentences in Louisiana's massive prison system." She quoted him as saying "I'm not free until they're free."

Ms. Skene in her article highlighted a bright spot in Mr. Williams's life when she said, "Now those men would be watching from behind bars as Williams fulfill one of his biggest dreams: singing on 'American Got Talent.'"

I was fortunate to witness a young man some 15 years ago, who immediately, upon his release from prison, made his way to my church to ask us to pray for him. He was so excited that he was out of prison that he wanted to have a good start on his newfound freedom. Our congregation prayed for him and I never saw him again or knew his name, but I am certain he is just one out of the thousands that were fortunate to be set free.

PROTECTORS OF DEMOCARCY

A public defender, as I established earlier could mean different things to many people. However, the traditional definition for public defender is currently too narrow to deal with the most recent attack on our system of governance. So, I am expanding the

definition for a “public defender” to mean anyone who is a protector of democracy. Most recently, our US Capitol, identified as the “Seat of Democracy” was attacked by a vicious mob who refused to accept the results of the election. You see Democracy is only as strong as its weakest link. If you have a chain and it is broken, if you do not fix it, then chances are, whatever you are trying to protect cannot happen until you mend the breach.

So, the very idea to extend this concept to a broader sector of the society is truly remarkable because if there were no gatekeepers to intercept the destructive behavior of a few, then of our system of Government as we know it today will cease to exist. Then, the question is, who are you going to blame if democracy was to crumble in America. We are all “public defenders” or gatekeepers of this precious gem called “freedom” and if we want to see Democracy thrive in America, we all need to be protectors of it. This is why fragmentation of pockets

of people who no longer embrace a system that guarantees freedom for all people can actually bring down a system that stood the test of time for over 200 years.

As I write this, today, February 9, 2021, Congress is in session over an impeachment trial of the former President, Donald J. Trump, for inciting a riot on the US Capitol. These jurists are “public defenders” of our democracy. However, everyone is entitled to due process under the law and so both sides will be given an opportunity to present their case before legislative body of the congress that convenes as a court in session today. No one knows what the outcome of the impeachment trial will be, but whatever the outcome is, it will have lasting impact for decades to come that could either bring about healing or more fractions that could lead to the demise of democracy in America as we know it. But as a public defender I know you will do the right thing to preserve democracy for our future generations.

The call is for all Public Defenders everywhere, whether you are on the prosecutor’s side, the defense’s side, the judge, or in Congress, is to stand in defense of the down trodden, the weak and helpless individuals who need your help. To stand up for democracy because your country needs you. And, in order to achieve this unity we need to make sure that we are not exacting any heavy burden on anyone that is far greater than he could bear.

Also, we need to do justly and walk humble before our God, then and only then can we be true repairers of the breach, a true “public defender” in the truest sense of the word. So, if you are a Public Defender, this call is for you to be a protector of democracy in the broadest sense of the word and as seen through the eyes of the accused. You are the voice of the future, a public defender!

Veller Morris, JD candidate, Comment–
Public Defender: Through the eyes
of the Accused and Protectors of
Democracy (Feb. 9, 2021)

Disclaimer, this is an opinion piece. The views of the guest writer are viewpoints of the guest writer only and not that of the Ingham County Bar Association.



Sentencing Preparation



Judge Dranganchuk

On Friday, February 19, 2021, the Ingham County Bar Association Criminal Defense Law Section hosted, “Sentencing Preparation and Presentation and Other Current Issues.” Over 40 attended via Zoom to hear the

Honorable Judge Joyce Draganchuk of the 30th Circuit Court discuss current issues that she’s seeing with regards to plea agreements and sentencing and to discuss what she does (and doesn’t!) find worthwhile with regards to sentencing before her. If you were not able to attend this must-view presentation for those practicing criminal defense, you’re in luck because the presentation was recorded! Email co-Chair Chris Wickman at cwickman@nicholslaw.net if you would like the link to the video.

The ICBA-CDLS extends a huge thank you to Judge Draganchuk for

the wonderful presentation and her continued support of the practice of criminal defense in Ingham County!

Prior to Judge Draganchuk speaking, Chris Wickman briefly reviewed the new court rule changes related to presentence interview reports including: (1) defense attorneys being able to be present during presentence interviews; and (2) assisting in receiving corrected PSIRs after sentencing.

If you have ideas for future presentations, please feel free to contact Mary Chartier, Takura Nyamfukudza, or Chris Wickman.



DDBA and ICBA-YLS

Celebrate Black History Month

By Marisa Vinsky



Marisa Vinsky

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The Davis-Dunnings Bar Association and the Ingham County Bar Association's Young Lawyer Section hosted a virtual trivia night on February 18, 2021. This event specifically focused on Black history, commemorating the works of various Black artists, inventors, and poets, as well as legal figures in Ingham County. In a fun, Jeopardy-style manner, participants were split into two teams. This provided an opportunity for members of each organization to socialize and meet new people.

This event was not only about having fun, but it also served as a great educational opportunity. Everyone who attended learned something new and

enjoyed themselves while doing it. The special prize for the first place team was a \$100 donation to a local charity of their choice, while the second place team received \$50 to donate. The first place team chose to donate \$100 to the WMU-Cooley Innocence Project, while the second place team chose to donate \$50 to the Association for Children's Mental Health.

Thank you to all who participated! Both organizations look forward to the continued support and involvement of those in Ingham County.





Meet the Judges Event

By Steve Sinas

On February 11, 2021, the Ingham County Bar Association hosted its 10th annual Meet the Judges event. Unfortunately, due to the circumstances with Covid-19, the event could not take place in person as normally and had to be done virtually through Zoom. The good news is that because of the time and effort put forth by the judges who participated in the event, as well as ICBA board and staff, the virtual version of the event turned out to be a great success. Over 80 people attended the event.

The event featured the judges who had taken the bench following the November 2021 election. These judges included Michigan Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth Welch, Michigan Court of Appeals Judge Michelle Rick, Clinton County Circuit Court Judge Shannon Schlegel, and Eaton 56-A District Court Judge Kelly Morton.

Each judge was interviewed by an ICBA member. The judges were

asked about their backgrounds, their interests, and thoughts about taking the bench. It was a great way for ICBA members to learn more about who these judges are as people. Following the interviews, attendees were allowed to move about through Zoom breakout rooms where they could socialize with Judges and other ICBA members. Special thanks to ICBA Executive Director, Madelyne Lawry, and her great staff Valerie Sowuleski and Matt Hinkle for their respective efforts in planning and handling the technological logistics of the event.

There is no question we all would have preferred to have Meet the Judges Event take place on the first floor of the Cooley Law School downtown Lansing, where we have traditionally held this January event. But it is also clear that because of the effort of so many, we made the most of the virtual event and it allowed the bench and bar to connect during these difficult times.

Meet the Judges



Update: Vaccines for Lawyers

By ICBA



COVID-19 vaccines are a hot commodity right now. Many lawyers are anxious to be vaccinated to be able to safely get back into the courtroom.

Background: Advocacy for Lawyers as Essential Workers

In December, Chief Justice Bridget McCormack wrote a letter to Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, Michigan's Chief Medical Executive, asking that judges, lawyers, and court personnel who are still working in person at courthouses be considered "essential workers" for vaccine eligibility. <https://courts.michigan.gov/COVID/CJ%20McCormack%20to%20Dr%20Khaldun%20Ltr.pdf>.

In January, the State Court Administrator sent a memo to Dr. Khaldun, outlining why certain attorneys and court personnel are at higher risk for contracting COVID-19: "As local health departments begin vaccinating members of the public in Phase 1B, we would like to draw your attention to the risks faced by attorneys and court employees whose positions require them to enter juvenile justice facilities, prisons, jails, and police lockups. These individuals are at a higher level of risk for acquiring and transmitting COVID-19 than

other essential court personnel and attorneys. They should be prioritized with sheriff's correction deputies. We urge the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and local health departments to include attorneys and court personnel whose jobs require them to interact with prisoners, inmates, and juvenile respondents incarcerated or held in detention or residential facilities, in Phase 1B (Group B) in the vaccination prioritization schedule." <https://courts.michigan.gov/News-Events/covid19-resources/COVID19/01-11-21Khaldun-Vaccinations.pdf>.

Also in January, the State Bar of Michigan indicated that some Michigan attorneys are "frontline essential workers in sectors essential to the functioning of society and at substantially higher risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 because their work related duties must be performed on-site and involve being in close proximity (i.e., within 6 feet) to the public or to coworkers." <https://www.michbar.org/News/NewsDetail/nid/5759/Michigan-Attorneys-and-the-COVID-19-Vaccination>.

Current Status

The Ingham County Health Department indicates that those in Phase 1, Group A and Group B are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. It is a bit unclear whether that includes lawyers and other court personnel but other

counties are including them as essential workers. Ingham County has two mass vaccination sites—at the old Sears in Frandor, and at the Michigan State University Pavilion. But, so far, many people who are eligible are unable to secure vaccine appointments.

How to Register

You can register for the vaccine with the Ingham County Health Department by visiting its website: [http://hd.ingham.org/DepartmentalDirectory/CommunicableDisease/Coronavirus\(COVID19\).aspx#8789307-vaccine-information](http://hd.ingham.org/DepartmentalDirectory/CommunicableDisease/Coronavirus(COVID19).aspx#8789307-vaccine-information).

The Health Department also recommends registering with multiple providers in addition to the Health Department, including Sparrow, McLaren, Meijer, and Rite Aid Pharmacy.

If you do receive an appointment from a provider, please be sure to cancel any other appointments or remove yourself from waiting lists, to free up those spots for other qualified people.

ICBA Update Nominations



The Ingham County Bar Association (ICBA) currently is accepting nominations for three (3) open seats on its Board of Directors for the 2021-22 membership year, beginning July 1, 2021. These seats are for a term of three years, expiring June 30, 2024. The ICBA is a dynamic association of attorneys which offers members an opportunity to participate in various continuing education seminars, community service projects, and networking events. Participation may be remotely for some of these events, given current pandemic limitations. These activities help Ingham County lawyers adapt to their demanding profession, encourage early involvement in the legal community and build camaraderie with fellow lawyers.

Minimum Responsibilities of Board Members:

- Attend bi-monthly board meetings (either in person or via conference call or Zoom)
- Participate in board discussions/votes by e-mail when necessary
- Actively participate on at least one standing committee

Annual Events (pandemic dependent or limited)

- Shrimp Dinner / Annual Meeting (May)
- Annual Dinner (November)
- Barrister's Night (March)
- Meet the Judges (January)
- Bench Bar Conference (Alternating Years)
Ask A Lawyer

Please note that all ICBA members in good standing are eligible to run for a position on the Board of Directors and vote in elections. Elections occur via electronic ballot to all members in good standing as of the date of the election. If you are interested in becoming a member of the ICBA Board of Directors, please submit your name, photo and brief with biographical statement to info@inghambar.org. If you are not currently an ICBA member, you must join ICBA before submitting your nomination.

The time commitment for the ICBA Board is at least 2-3 hours per month (including bi-monthly board meetings), and we ask that candidates are able to dedicate that time to ICBA. Time commitment will vary depending on committee assignments and events participation. However, the ICBA Board attendance policy mandates participation in the majority of regular board meetings. Additionally, candidates should be aware that the ICBA Board is a working board that organizes, staffs, publicizes, and fundraises for all of the ICBA events listed above. Board members generally are tasked with planning ICBA events, so candidates should be prepared to help run one or more events each year.



ICBA-YLS

Featured Young Lawyer:

Keshava Kirkland



Keshava Kirkland

k.kirkland3@yahoo.com

Keshava received her Bachelor of Science in Political Science and Pre-Law from Michigan State University in 2016. She went on to receive her Juris Doctor from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law in 2019, and was sworn into the State Bar of Michigan

December of 2019. She is currently a Claimant Advisor at MSU's Center for Survivors where she represents victims of relationship violence, sexual misconduct and stalking through MSU's formal grievance process. She previously worked with youths surviving sexual, domestic and other violent trauma. Prior to joining the Center for Survivors, Keshava worked in criminal defense,

representing and co-representing people in both misdemeanor and felony cases. In addition to her legal work, Keshava dedicates a significant amount of time to community work. She has spearheaded a number of community outreach initiatives, including a Street Law program at Renaissance High School in Detroit. She has also worked to increase minority presence in the legal community. Keshava hopes to use her influence to advocate for the socially disadvantaged and promote criminal justice reform. She hopes to continue educating people on the legal profession, and encouraging and supporting those that choose to pursue a legal education.

1.) Where do you work and what do you do there?

I am currently at MSU's Center for Survivors where I represent victims of relationship violence, sexual misconduct and stalking through MSU's formal grievance process.

2.) Where did you go to school?

I went to MSU for undergrad and the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law for law school.

3.) When were you admitted to practice in Michigan?

I was sworn in December 2, 2019 and received my bar card [in] January 2020.

4.) Why did you go into the legal field?

When I was about 9, I watched Legally

Blonde and thought "that would be a cool thing to do." That movie caused me to explore the legal profession more. I quickly learned that it was nothing like the movie but that didn't sway my interest. I found my purpose and placement within the legal profession after witnessing a friend get tased in school because the school officers were intimidated by his size and skin color. Shortly after that, I watched as a family member with an otherwise clean record, struggle to make a living after being released from a five month jail sentence. I had remained fascinated with the idea of justice, but these two incidents proved this thing we call a criminal justice system to be just the opposite. I decided to make it my life's mission to advocate for a more fair and effective system of justice.

5.) What advice do you have for those considering law school?

The two most important points of advice I have for someone considering law school is to learn good study habits and build valuable relationships. There isn't much that can prepare you for law school, but a disciplined study habit might be the most valuable tool you can carry into law school. As for the second piece of advice, a mentor once told me "your career moves at the pace of your relationships," and while in school that statement proved to be true in many ways. It's important to build professional

relationships, try different internships, shadow people doing things you want to do and seek out mentorship. Leave a mark wherever you go because every relationship you build can help push you a step closer to your goal.

6.) If you weren't a lawyer, what would you do?

A psychologist or a real estate agent

7.) Where did you grow up?

East Lansing, MI

8.) Who is your biggest role model and why?

I'd have to say my parents. They are both first generation college students and both went on to pursue a second degree. My mom received her masters and my dad his PhD, all while raising five children. They are both now flourishing in their careers and always reaching for the next project. When it comes to career choices, parenting, and just being a good person, I look up to them. My mom with her sweet spirit and compassion for people, and my dad with his critical thinking and initiative. They both allow purpose and passion to drive them and I couldn't ask for more genuine role models.

9.) What do you do in your free time?

I like to spend my free time with my 8-year-old son who keeps me active with everything from tennis and basketball to spelling contests and Beyblade battles. When I'm alone, I enjoy channeling my creativity by singing, writing, painting and ceramics.

10.) Do you have any pets? If so, tell us about them.

I have two tiger cats, Tia and Tamera, who are the sweetest, most cuddly kittens.

Selling Real Property as a Conservator

By Christine Caswell, Caswell Law PLLC
Chair, Elder Law & Disability Rights Section



Christine Caswell
christine@caswellpllc.com

Last summer, another attorney requested I help his friend/client with the sale of real property. He had gotten her appointed as the guardian and conservator for her husband, but when she wanted to sell their home and buy another, that was not his field of expertise, so he turned the case over to me. Unfortunately, the wife had already accepted an offer on their existing property and had an offer accepted on a new property before I came in. She and her realtor were in for a rude surprise when I explained how long the process normally took, let alone during a pandemic. Under the existing contracts, the client could have lost both her buyer and seller.

I serve as a professional fiduciary and have sold many properties. As a conservator, I specifically put in the buy/sell agreement that any sale is contingent on court approval, so the parties understand it is going to be anywhere from four to eight weeks before the case is even heard. Also, I've had buyers want to change the terms after the

paperwork has been filed with the court and notice has been given, and I have to explain that will delay the process even more. Negotiations need to end once the paperwork is filed.

In this case, because she was the spouse, the conservator did have personal knowledge for the seller's disclosure statement. But often, we are representing a third party or are serving as the fiduciary ourselves. In that case, the fiduciary needs to note that there is no personal knowledge as to the state of the property on the seller's disclosure statement. As a safety measure, I have the estate purchase a one-year home warranty for the buyers. It costs a lot less than a lawsuit.

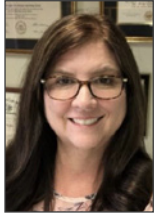
I've learned that a lot of realtors do not understand how conservatorships work. If you come in before the property is listed, not only should the court order be put in the contract, but the process should be thoroughly explained to the realtor who can then explain this to buyer's agent. The buyer needs to understand the timeline. I now work with a specific agent who has learned the process, but, as in this case, many realtors are not familiar with it.

Because it was a tight housing market last summer, the client did not lose her buyer, but she did have to pay about \$3,000 in additional fees to keep the seller on the other home from canceling the contract. With a knowledgeable lawyer, situations like this can be avoided.

ICBA BRIEFS July 2020-June 2021

Committee appoints Associate Editors for the new fiscal year

January



Deadline: December 15th
Theme: State Appellate
Defenders Offices
Associate Editors:
Tina Olson
Phone: 517.334.6069
Email: tolson@sado.org

July



Deadline: June 15th
Theme: Power Couples
Associate Editors:
Dakota Larson
Phone: 623.210.2232
Email: dakota.a.larson@gmail.com

September



Deadline: August 15th
Theme: County Judicial Clerks
Associate Editor:
Larisa Zubac
Phone: 517.483.6500
Email: lzubac@ingham.org



Jessica Zimbleman
Email: jzimbleman@sado.org



Fred Baker
Phone: 517.318.6190
Email: fmbjrpllc@outlook.com

May



Deadline: April 15th
Theme: Prosecutors
Associate Editor:
Mike Nichols
Phone: 517.432.9000
Fax: 517.203-4448
Email: mnichols@nicholslaw.net

Annual Meeting and Shrimp Dinner Alternative Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

5:30 – 5:45 – Annual Meeting

5:45 – 6:30 – Cocktail/Mocktail Demonstration

While the in-person Shrimp Dinner may be cancelled this year, join us for the first ever ICBA Shrimp Cocktail Event. What is this, you ask? Well, our very own Chris Wickman—who has the secret talent of also having been a licensed bartender—will lead us in making a new, delicious Cocktail (and Mocktail) on Zoom. We will provide a list of ingredients ahead of time if you want to make it live with Chris. Then, after a few minutes of business, we'll have a casual social hour where we can see each other in breakout rooms and participate in other alternative entertainment! After a full year of stuffy Zoom meetings and events, join us for a casual and fun ICBA event from the (cool) comfort of your own home! Hawaiian shirt optional!



Criminal Defense Law Section *"Now You See It"*

**On Friday, March 12, 2021, the
Ingham County Bar Association
Criminal Defense Law Section
presents “Now You See It. In April -
You Don’t.”**

Starting April 11, 2021, the expungement law in Michigan will be greatly expanded allowing for far more expungements than have been traditionally allowed under Michigan Law, but with complicated restrictions. This new law has a huge benefit for current and former clients and is a great practice area to supplement a strong criminal defense practice. Presenting on

this important topic will be Mr. Dustyn Coontz. Mr. Coontz is the founder of Coontz Law based in Lansing, Michigan practicing exclusively criminal defense on the trial and appellate level ranging from low-level misdemeanors to capital felonies.

The presentation will begin promptly at 12:00PM and will be held via Zoom. It will last approximately one hour. Please RSVP via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tfuqqD0jE91jqf3kFTyg9pgPLpv8G7kT>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing

information about joining the meeting. The event is provided free of charge. You do not need to be a member of the ICBA to attend though we hope you'll consider joining. Attendees are eligible for one hour of MIDC credit for attendance at this presentation.

Email Chris Wickman at cwickman@nicholslaw.net with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,
Mary Chartier, Takura Nyamfukudza,
and Christopher Wickman
ICBA-CDLS Co-Chairpersons

KEEPING THE BENCH/BAR TOGETHER 2021

Covid-19 has made these times difficult times for all. While we remain unable to offer our signature in-person event, ICBA is committed to servicing our members and fostering ongoing communications and rapport with bench and bar. To that end, ICBA is pushing forward with this new campaign. As part of this campaign, we are hosting special events on zoom for individual judges as a way for the judge catch up with ICBA members and allow the judge to share more about out what is going on in their court room. We are turning to the Ingham County Circuit and Probate Judges first to get these events off the ground. If they are successful for Ingham County Circuit and Probate Judges, we will reach out to other local judges for additional events. We are finalizing the final schedule for the Spring, but we are excited to kick-off this series of events:

Event Two: Monday, March 22, 5:30p.m.: Join Judges Richard Garcia and Shauna Dunnings and moderator Steve Sinas for a Q&A! <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/keeping-the-benchbar-together-2021-2-tickets-142528461465>

Event Three: Monday April 12,
5:30p.m.: Join Judge Draganchuk
and moderator Sandra Lake for
Q&A! <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/keeping-the-benchbar-together-2021-3-tickets-145142730815>

Event Four: Monday, April 26,
5:30p.m.: Join Judge James Jamo
and moderator Alexander Rusek for
Q&A! <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/keeping-the-benchbar-together-2021-4-tickets-145292286139>

Event Five: Monday, May 10,
5:30p.m.: Join Judge Clinton Canady
and moderator Lindsay Dangl for
Q&A! [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/
keeping-the-benchbar-together-2021-
5-tickets-145298619081](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/keeping-the-benchbar-together-2021-5-tickets-145298619081)

Event Six: Monday May 24,
5:30p.m.: Join Judge Rosemarie
Aqualina and moderator Pamela
Amato for Q&A! [https://www.
eventbrite.com/e/keeping-the-
benchbar-together-2021-6-
tickets-145303130575](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/keeping-the-benchbar-together-2021-6-tickets-145303130575)

Event Seven: Monday, June 14, 5:30p.m.: Join Judge Wanda Stokes and moderator Stephen Sinas for Q&A! <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/keeping-the-benchbar-together-2021-7-tickets-145304659147>

Press Release

Sinas Dramis Law Firm Welcomes Partners

Brian McKenna and Catherine Tucker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE January 26, 2021



Laura Zemaitis, Marketing Assistant,
517-394-7500, laurazemaitis@sinasdramis.com



Brian McKenna

brianmckenna@sinasdramis.com



Catherine Tucker

katie.tucker@sinasdramis.com

MICHIGAN – Sinas Dramis Law Firm welcomed two new partners, Brian A. McKenna and Catherine E. Tucker, in January of 2021. Both attorneys represent plaintiffs in personal injury cases throughout the state of Michigan. McKenna and Tucker join George T. Sinas, Michael E. Larkin, James F. Graves, Bryan J. Waldman, Stephen H. Sinas, and Thomas G. Sinas as firm shareholders.

McKenna has been with Sinas Dramis Law Firm since 2018 and opened the firm's fifth office in Saint Clair Shores, Michigan. He previously served as a shareholder and on the Board of Directors at Sachs Waldman in Southeast Michigan. He has enjoyed a successful career as a plaintiff's personal injury lawyer in Southeast Michigan, representing a wide variety of cases including wrongful death claims, auto accident claims, motorcycle accident claims, and more. McKenna has been included in Best Lawyers in America every year since 2013 and in Michigan Super Lawyers since 2008 in the field of plaintiff personal injury law.

Tucker has been with Sinas Dramis Law Firm since 2016, representing plaintiffs

in personal injury cases including auto accidents, wrongful death claims, and more. She also leads the firm's no-fault medical provider practice group, successfully pursuing claims and recovering hundreds of thousands of dollars on behalf of medical providers for unpaid treatment rendered to auto accident victims across the State. Tucker is a Board Member and President of the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, Mid-Michigan Chapter (WLAM) and a Past President of the Ingham County Bar Association, Young Lawyers Section. In 2019, Michigan Lawyers Weekly named her an "Up and Coming" lawyer and was named a "Top 40 Under 40" by the National Trial Lawyers.

Sinas Dramis Law Firm is headquartered in Lansing, Michigan, and has offices across the state in Grand Rapids, Saint Clair Shores, and Kalamazoo, as well as another location in Chicago, Illinois. The firm has advocated for Michigan's injured for 70 years with a strong commitment to the civil justice system and protecting the right of those who have been injured.

Press Release

Fraser Trebilcock Announces

2021 Board of Directors

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE January 19, 2021



Michael H. Perry
mperry@fraserlawfirm.com

Lansing, MI – The Shareholders of Fraser Trebilcock, one of Michigan’s long-established full-service law firms, have re-elected Michael H. Perry as President of the firm. This is Mr. Perry’s fourth consecutive year as President.

Shareholder Mark E. Kellogg was re-elected to the Board of Directors, where he will serve as Vice President & Treasurer. Shareholder Brian T. Gallagher was elected to the Board of Directors, where he will serve as Secretary.

“I am honored to once again serve as President of Fraser Trebilcock. As we begin to welcome a new year, I am confident that we will continue our mission of providing excellent legal services to our clients,” said Michael H. Perry.



124 W. Allegan St. Suite 1000 Lansing, MI 48933 (517) 482-5800	One Woodward Ave. Suite 1550 Detroit, MI 48226 (313) 237-7300	125 Ottawa Ave NW Suite 153 Grand Rapids, MI 49503 (616) 301-0800
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Contact: Eriks Dumpis, (517) 377-0865, edumpis@fraserlawfirm.com

When it matters in Michigan, we are the trusted advisor for businesses and individuals facing legal and regulatory challenges, and our capabilities extend to wherever clients require counsel. The annual election of the Board of Directors allows Fraser Trebilcock to continue its tradition of exceptional client service, dedicated community involvement and professional excellence.

Since 1883, Fraser Trebilcock has been providing preeminent legal services and representation to small and large businesses, individuals, governmental entities, and associations. Through its association with SCG Legal, Fraser Trebilcock has access to a global network of independent law firms. More information is available at fraserlawfirm.com | scglegal.com.

Press Release

Fraser Trebilcock Welcomes

Attorneys Michael and Mary Levine to the Firm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE February 8, 2021



Michael Levine
mclevine@fraserlawfirm.com



Mary Levine
mplevine@fraserlawfirm.com

Lansing, MI – Fraser Trebilcock is pleased to announce the addition of experienced attorneys Michael C. and Mary P. Levine, formerly of Levine Law Group, to the firm's Lansing office.

A former attorney at Fraser Trebilcock, Michael practices in the areas of administrative law, government regulation, transportation law, affordable housing, health care law, and condemnation and eminent domain. He has served as counsel to several statewide professional and trade organizations. Michael is also a licensed real estate broker, and his previous professional experience includes time as a former Assistant Attorney General. He has served as a Hearing Officer for the Michigan Education Trust and the Michigan Department of Consumer and Securities Bureau. Outside of work, Michael has served on various boards in the Lansing community, and actively volunteers his time to multiple organizations.

Mary joins Fraser Trebilcock with over four decades of professional experience in state government and the real estate industry. During her career in state government, Mary worked at the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Michigan Department of Management and Budget, the Michigan State Police and the Michigan State



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Contact: Eriks Dumpis, (517) 377-0865, edumpis@fraserlawfirm.com

Housing Development Authority, serving as general counsel before entering private law practice. Mary's practice is primarily focused on affordable housing and community development. She also provides affordable housing and community development consulting services on a statewide basis. Mary was on the original board and President of School Age Child Care (SACC), the first before/after school care organization in East Lansing and was the former President and Secretary of the Greater Lansing Housing Coalition (GLHC). Mary is a licensed real estate broker and certified general real estate appraiser.

"Mike and Mary's multiple decades of experience in both the public and private sectors showcases the value brought to the firm. Leveraging their considerable talents, experience, and client base will help Fraser Trebilcock's expanding regional footprint grow," said Michael H. Perry, President of Fraser Trebilcock.

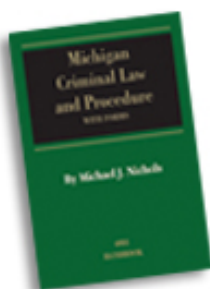
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Press Release

Mike Nichols has accepted an invitation to speak at the National College for DUI Defense (NCDD) summer session. The summer session is considered the premier conference for continuing legal education for attorneys practicing in DUI Defense. This year's session will be held virtually instead of at the campus of Harvard Law School, where it has been held nearly every year since 1995 except for 2020 and 2021. Mr. Nichols is a sustaining member of the NCDD, a member of the forensic science committee and a member of the NCDD faculty. He was accepted into the college in 2007. He is co-founder of The Nichols Law Firm in East Lansing.



COMMITTED TO RESULTS



Michael J. Nichols

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www.NicholsLawyers.com

Michigan OWI Handbook
"Mens Rea" Monthly Column



NHTSA Certified in Standardized Field Sobriety Testing/DUI Investigation
Associate Member, American Academy of Forensic Sciences
Chapter co-author DUI Mathematics, West Publishing
NHTSA Certified Drug Recognition Evaluation (DRE)
National College for DUI Defense
Member National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
Member Criminal Defense Attorneys of Michigan
Thomas M. Cooley Law School, DUI Law Practice Adjunct Law Professor



Press Release

Loomis Law Firm attorneys earn kudos

Seven attorneys from the Lansing law firm of Loomis Ewert, Parsley, Davis & Gotting have been recognized as Leading Real Estate-Related Lawyers in the Midwest Real Estate News (MREN) Best of the Best issue.

The seven, who were recommended by their peers, are:

Sara L. Cunningham,
Construction Law; Mineral &
Natural Resources; Real Estate Law:
Commercial

Paula K. Manis,
Mineral & Natural Resource Law;
Public Utilities Law: Gas/Water/
Electric; ADR Law: Commercial Real
Estate, Environmental & Construction

Michael G. Oliva,
Minerals & Natural Resources: Public
Utilities Law: Gas/Water/Electric

Michael H. Rhode,
Public Utilities Law: Gas/Water/
Electric; Real Estate Law:
Commercial; Real Estate Law: Finance

Kevin J. Roragen,
Land Use, Zoning & Condemnation
Law; Mineral & Natural Resource
Law; Public Finance Law; Public
Utilities Law: Gas/Water/Electric

Ted S. Rozeboom,
Land Use, Zoning & Condemnation
Law; Public Finance Law; Real Estate
Law: Finance &

Jeff Theuer,
Mineral & Natural Resource Law

LOOMIS
LOOMIS, EWERT, PARSLEY, DAVIS & GOTTING P.C.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
124 W. ALLEGAN ST., SUITE 700 | LANSING, MI 48933
T: 517-482-2400 | F: 517-853-8689 | mplascencia@loomislaw.com

Press Release

Loomis, Ewert, Parsley, Davis & Gotting P.C.

is pleased to announce its 2021 Officers and Executive Committee



Ted S. Rozeboom
tsrozeboom@loomislaw.com

The law firm of Loomis, Ewert, Parsley, Davis & Gotting P.C. is pleased to announce its 2021 Officers and Executive Committee: Ted S. Rozeboom was elected President of the Firm, Sara L. Cunningham was elected Vice President, James F. Anderton, V was elected Treasurer, Kevin J. Roragen was elected secretary.

LOOMIS
LOOMIS, EWERT, PARSLEY, DAVIS & GOTTING P.C.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
124 W. ALLEGAN ST., SUITE 700 | LANSING, MI 48933
T: 517-482-2400 | F: 517-853-8689 | mplascencia@loomislaw.com

Press Release

Dykema Elects

Leonard C. Wolfe New Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

Dykema

Contact: Timothy Trunzo, Dykema, 313-568-5333, ttrunzo@dykema.com
Laura Miller, Greentarget, 312-252-4104, lmiller@greentarget.com



Leonard C. Wolfe

Wolfe pledges continued emphasis on innovative solutions for clients struggling with COVID-19's fallout while reaffirming the firm's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion

Detroit – August 13, 2020 — Dykema, a leading national law firm, announced today that Len Wolfe will become chairman and chief executive officer for a three-year term commencing January 1, 2021. Wolfe succeeds Peter M. Kellett, who has served as chairman and chief executive officer since 2012. Although Wolfe will work from each of Dykema's 13 offices, he will move his principal office from Lansing, Michigan, to Chicago.

For more than 25 years, Wolfe has practiced government policy and regulatory law, helping clients implement significant public policy initiatives. He first joined Dykema as a summer associate before quickly ascending into leadership roles within

the firm. For the last six years, Wolfe has served as a twice-elected member of Dykema's Executive Board, acting as board Liaison to the firm's Diversity & Inclusion Committee for the past four years.

Prior to his board membership, Wolfe was Director of Dykema's Regulated Industries Department and Leader of the firm's Government Policy and Practice Group for nine years. His various leadership positions provided Wolfe with extensive knowledge of Dykema's business operations and the complex process of running the daily operations of a multi-office law firm with a national footprint.

"Len takes this position at an incredibly challenging moment—and he is more than up to the challenge," said Kellett. "His record as an outstanding lawyer and as an invaluable contributor to Dykema's success has more than prepared him to lead our continued efforts to provide innovative solutions for our clients, particularly as they now face legal problems unheard of in a pre-COVID-19 world.

"Based on his deep understanding of both the firm and the continuing challenges for the legal industry—notably regarding diversity, equity and inclusion—Len has a robust vision for Dykema going forward. I have no doubt that under his leadership, Dykema will continue its ascent as a leading law national firm and be well-positioned for a bright, promising future. I am proud

to support Len through this transition and eager to see him lead the firm in the coming years."

"I am truly honored and thankful that my fellow members have put their confidence in me to serve as chairman and CEO," said Wolfe. "Additionally, and on behalf of the entire firm, I would like to thank Peter for exceptional stewardship over the past nine years. Under his leadership, Dykema has grown its national footprint and deepened its core competencies while enhancing other practice and industry groups.

"As I take on my new role with the firm, I plan to continue emphasizing the firm's dedication to providing clients with exceptional service through our practice groups, industry groups and client service teams. In addition, I will reaffirm Dykema's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. This includes continuing our efforts to listen and engage all of our colleagues—particularly in light of the events of the past few months. This also includes working collaboratively to maintain the strong culture and collegial workplace we have built at Dykema."

Wolfe's practice has covered several areas of law, including education, gaming, state procurement, government restructuring and the creation and development of new local and state governmental bodies. He is known nationally for his work with charter schools and has been recognized by

The Best Lawyers in America® each year since 2007—including being named “Lawyer of the Year” in Lansing for Gaming Law in 2019.

Wolfe earned a J.D. from the Indiana University McKinney School of Law and a B.A. from the James Madison College at Michigan State University. Before joining Dykema, he worked in the Michigan Legislature, United States Senate and the Michigan Governor’s office.

About Dykema

Dykema serves business entities worldwide on a wide range of complex legal issues. Dykema lawyers and other professionals in 13 U.S. offices work in close partnership with clients – from start-ups to Fortune 100 companies – to deliver outstanding results, unparalleled service and exceptional value in every engagement.

Press Release

Sinas Dramis President and Partner

Bryan J. Waldman Earns ABOTA Membership



Bryan J. Waldman
mperry@fraserlawfirm.com

LANSING, MICHIGAN — Bryan J. Waldman, president and partner at Sinas Dramis Law Firm, has been accepted into the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA).

Members of this invitation-only group must have tried a minimum of 10 civil jury trials to conclusion, possess additional litigation experience, and exhibit the virtues of civility, integrity, and professionalism as outlined by the ABOTA. New members are voted in by the National Board, and more than 7,600 lawyers and judges are involved in ABOTA chapters in all 50 states.

“Bryan is a wonderful and honorable lawyer who will be an excellent addition to the ABOTA membership. He has served the Michigan legal community with distinction for many years and is a proven leader in the law,” says Mike Larkin, partner at Sinas Dramis Law Firm.

Waldman represents clients in various personal injury cases including auto accidents, motorcycle accidents, bicycle

and pedestrian collisions, and wrongful death claims, among others. He has been recognized by Best Lawyers since 2007 in the area of Plaintiff’s Personal Injury Litigation and has been selected by the publication as “Lawyer of the Year” (Lansing, Michigan) in 2015, 2017, and 2020. Additionally, Leading Lawyers and Super Lawyers have recognized Waldman’s practice.

Waldman is an active member of the legal community, holding multiple leadership roles within various legal organizations. He regularly appears on WLNS 6 “Legal Edge” to explain various legal topics to the public and answer common question about current legal issues.

Waldman earned his Juris Doctor degree from Wayne State Law School and an undergraduate degree from Michigan State University. He is an adjunct professor at Michigan State University College of Law where he teaches a course in Michigan’s Auto No-Fault Law.

Sinas Dramis Law Firm provides legal representation in personal injury law and has offices across the state of Michigan as well as an office in Chicago, Illinois. The firm has served the state of Michigan for 70 years and continues to provide legal representation to those who have been injured due to the negligence of another. Visit sinasdramis.com to find out more.



Laura Zemaitis, Marketing Assistant,
517-394-7500, laurazemaitis@sinasdramis.com

Press Release

Dykema Appoints Jason T. Hanselman as Managing Member of Its Lansing Office

Dykema

Contact: Timothy Trunzo, Dykema, 313-568-5333, ttrunzo@dykema.com
Laura Miller, Greentarget, 312-252-4104, lmiller@greentarget.com



Jason T. Hanselman

Lansing – March 3, 2021 — Dykema, a leading national law firm, today announced that Jason T. Hanselman has been appointed to serve as Managing Member of the firm’s Lansing office.

In his practice, Hanselman, a Lansing native, advises clients in highly-regulated fields, such as energy, elections, education, and health care. He regularly represents those clients in complex business matters, legislative drafting on multiple jurisdictions, litigation before state and federal courts, and regulatory proceedings before administrative boards and commissions. He serves as outside general counsel to several trade associations, electric cooperatives, non-profit corporations, and other businesses.

Outside of his legal practice, Hanselman is extremely active in professional organizations. He is a former President of the Ingham County Bar Foundation (2017-19), former President of the Ingham County Bar Association (2015-2016), and served as the Michigan Chapter Leader of the Republican National Lawyers Association from 2010 to 2020.

Having learned the importance of volunteering from his parents, who were active in the Lansing Jaycees and Grace United Methodist Church in Lansing’s Colonial Village, Hanselman, is also active in community and civic organizations. He currently serves as the publicly elected Vice President of the DeWitt Board of Education and was appointed by Governor Snyder to serve as Unarmed Combat Commissioner (formerly known as the Boxing Commission) to regulate boxing and mixed martial arts in Michigan.

Hanselman received a J.D., *cum laude*, from the University of Miami and a B.A., *with honors*, from Michigan State University. Before joining Dykema, he worked at the Michigan House of Representatives, the Michigan Supreme Court, and the Internal Revenue Service.

In 2019, *Michigan Lawyers Weekly* named him among its Leaders in

the Law. He has been recognized by *Michigan Super Lawyers* as a Rising Star, named a Michigan Leading Lawyer by the *Leading Lawyers Network*, and included in *The Best Lawyers in America* for Energy, Energy Regulatory, and Government Relations Practice.

Established in 1973, Dykema’s Lansing office shares the Binsfield Office Building with the Michigan Senate adjacent to Michigan’s Capitol and houses dozens of attorneys and government relations professionals. The firm’s state and federal government policy practices are coordinated from Lansing. Attorneys from the Lansing office are skilled in a broad range of matters including utility and insurance regulation, liquor and marijuana licensing matters, elections and public policy representation, municipal bond issues and lobbying activities.

About Dykema

Dykema serves business entities worldwide on a wide range of complex legal issues. Dykema lawyers and other professionals in 13 U.S. offices work in close partnership with clients – from start-ups to Fortune 100 companies – to deliver outstanding results, unparalleled service and exceptional value in every engagement.



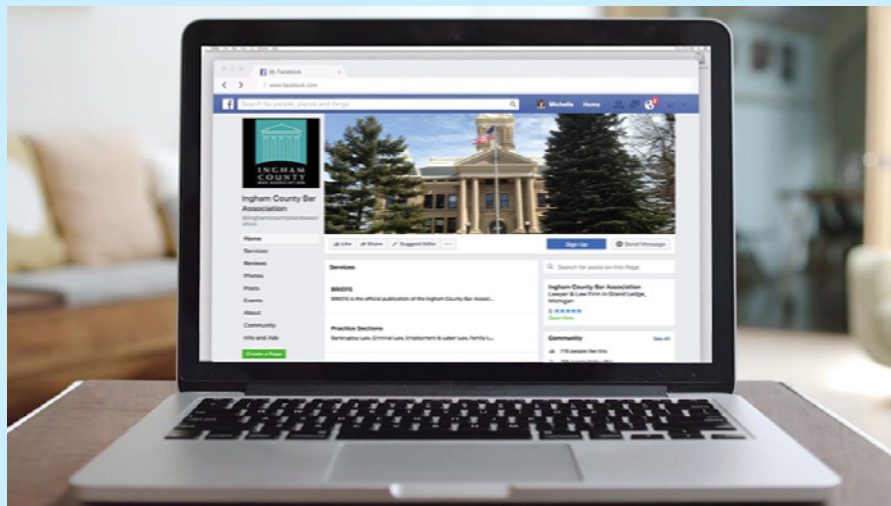
ICBA Sponsorship Opportunities

For more than 120 years, the Ingham County Bar Association has continued its tradition of service to the legal profession and the greater Lansing community. As part of its longstanding commitment to the profession, the ICBA hosts events throughout the year that are educational and entertaining, in addition to networking opportunities for members. These events are made possible by the generous support of ICBA members.

One way for members to support the ICBA is through its annual sponsorship packages. The ICBA now offers a program that focuses on the increasing importance of social media marketing.

Law firms have the opportunity for their Facebook posts to be “shared” on the ICBA’s Facebook page. This means a law firm’s Facebook content will be seen by a larger audience, including ICBA members and those with whom ICBA has a relationship, thereby giving the law firm a greater presence throughout the legal community.

For more information on ICBA sponsorship opportunities, click the links below.



2020-2021 Firm/Corporate Sponsorship Opportunities
2020-2021 Vendor Sponsorship Opportunities





Criminal Defense Law Section

The Criminal Defense Law Section is comprised of criminal defense attorneys who defend people accused of committing crimes. The Section is dedicated to sharing knowledge related to emerging and important topics specific to criminal defense. The Section is also committed to offering opportunities for attorneys to hone critical skills needed to defend those accused by the government.

If you are looking for a way to learn about the latest in forensics or practice your evidentiary knowledge, they you'll want to join this section. The Section meets at the State Bar of Michigan, 306

Townsend St., Rooms 1 and 2, in Lansing.

If you have suggestions for future topics, please contact Section Co-Chairs Mary Chartier, Takura Nyamfukudza or Christopher Wickman.

Upcoming Meetings: March 19th from 12:00 - 1:00pm via Zoom

There is no cost to attend meetings. Speakers and topics will be announced. To RSVP for the Criminal Defense Law Section meetings, email Chris Wickman at cwickman@nicholslaw.net.

Employment and Labor Law Section

The Employment and Labor Law Section holds its meetings from noon to 1 p.m. each month at WMU-Cooley Law School, 300 S. Capitol Ave., Room 911, in downtown Lansing.

Section Co-Chair is John Maise. Contact John if you have ideas for topics and speakers.

Stay tuned for an updated schedule of events.

Upcoming Meetings: TBA

If you have questions about Section meetings, please email John at jmaise@whiteschneider.com.

Family Law Section

The Family Law Section meets on the second Wednesday of the month from noon to 1 p.m. in Rooms 1 and 2 of the State Bar of Michigan Building, 306 Townsend St., in Lansing. Lunch is provided.

Section Co-Chairs are Brooke VanBuren-Hay, Jennipher Martinez and Erica Terranova.

Upcoming Meetings:

- TBA

If you have suggestions for meeting topics, want to sponsor a lunch or just have general questions, please email erica@baileyterranova.com.

Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section

The Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section offers free networking and educational events for legal staff in Ingham County. Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at the State Bar of Michigan Building, 306 Townsend St., in Lansing.

Section Co-Chairs are Elizabeth Cary, a Paralegal at Chartier & Nyamfukudza, PLC, and Heidi Pierce, a Paralegal at Fraser Trebilcock.

Upcoming Meetings:

- TBA

If you have questions or would like to learn more about the Section, contact Elizabeth at lizzy@cndefenders.com.



Probate and Trust Section

The Probate and Trust Section holds its meetings the third Tuesday of each month from noon to 1 p.m. at WMU-Cooley Law School, Room 911, 300 S. Capitol Ave. in Lansing.

Section Co-Chairs are Sally Babbitt and April Alleman. If you plan to attend a meeting, please RSVP to April Alleman at april@crenshawpeterson.com.

Upcoming Meetings:

- TBA

Join The Section's Facebook Page

The Probate and Trust Section has a group Facebook page: [ICBA Probate & Trust Law Section](#). The Section encourages members to join the group. As a way to streamline RSVPs and minimize emails, you can RSVP for the Section meetings via this Facebook page. (Please let us know if you are not on Facebook.)

Lunch Sponsors

The sponsored lunches have been a very popular replacement for the brown bag lunches of old. The Section would like to continue the sponsored lunches. If you are interested in sponsoring a ¼ (\$100), a ½ (\$200) or full (\$400) lunch, please call Sally Babbitt at 517-507-3306 or email sally@sallybabbittlaw.com.

Real Estate Section

The Real Estate Section holds its meetings at WMU-Cooley Law School, Room 911, 300 S. Capitol Ave. in downtown Lansing.

Section Co-Chairs are Bill Tomblin and Christopher Patterson.

Upcoming Meetings:

- TBA

Lunch is served at meetings. Upcoming speakers and topics will be announced. Member input is always appreciated. If you plan to attend a meeting, please RSVP to Bill Tomblin at Wdtomblaw@aol.com.

Bankruptcy Law Section

The Bankruptcy Law Section meets at noon on the fourth Thursday of each month at WMU-Cooley Law School, 300 S. Capitol Ave., Room 911, in downtown Lansing.

Upcoming Meetings:

- TBA

Please feel free to join the Bankruptcy Section for its monthly meetings. Contact Section Co-Chairs Patricia Scott or Norm Witte for details.

To RSVP for meetings, contact Patricia Scott at pscott@fosterswift.com.

ICBA Membership Scholarship Application

The Ingham County Bar Association may offer scholarships to prospective members who are experiencing a hardship and cannot pay the standard rates to be an active member of the bar.

Scholarship recipients remain anonymous. It is the discretion of the ICBA President to grant any scholarships. Scholarships can only be approved on an annual basis (i.e., the scholarship does not automatically renew year-to-year).

The scholarship application can be accessed [here](#).

Lawyer Referral Application

Please take note that the Ingham County Bar Association does not do Lawyer Referrals. If you need to use this service provided by the State Bar of Michigan, please call them at [\(800\) 968-0738](tel:8009680738) between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, to speak with a lawyer referral representative or you can use the links below.

- [Lawyer Referral and Information Service Registration Form](#)
- [LRIS Quick Reference Guide](#)
- [Become a Lawyer Referral Service Panel Member](#)



BRIEFS Author Guidelines & Policies

IN GENERAL

Publication Schedule

BRIEFS is published by the Ingham County Bar Association six times a year (September, November, January, February, April and July).

Copy Deadline

Content submissions are due the 15th of the month for the following month's issue (e.g., deadline is March 15th for the April issue). Late submissions are accepted at the discretion of the editor.

BRIEFS Committee Meetings

A minimum of four committee meetings are held each fiscal year. Additional meetings are held, as necessary. To be added to the mailing list for meeting notices, email the editor at briefs@inghambar.org.

Author and Article Pictures

The preferred picture format is full-color .jpg (JPEG) files, 72 dpi or better. For head shots, the resolution should be high enough to be viewed clearly when approximating a 2" x 3" photo online. Please do not send thumbnail photos, as they will not be published.

Article Length and Format

Article length varies, so the following is only a guideline. Articles may be edited to fit a specific amount of space.

Raising the Bar

announcements: 100-200 words

Local legal events notices: 100-150 words

Columns: 300-500 words

Articles: 700-1,000 words

Submit articles in a Word .doc/.docx

Article Ideas

Writing an article for BRIEFS is an excellent way to publicize your expertise, and we encourage your submissions. Please send ideas for articles or completed articles to the editor, at briefs@inghambar.org. Within 24 hours, you will receive an email confirmation that your article was received.

Opinion Articles

Opinion articles selected for publication will be printed with a disclaimer noting that the viewpoints are that of the author and not of the Ingham County Bar Association. BRIEFS reserves the right to reject, edit or modify content submitted for publication.

Author Information

Along with your article, please include your full name, e-mail address and a short biography (2-3 sentences). Please also send a photo of yourself, preferably in .jpg (JPEG) format and in color, if possible.

MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

News of career moves, presentations, honors, recognitions, etc. is published in the "Raising the Bar" section. We accept and publish announcements only for ICBA members.

BRIEFS does not accept or publish announcements based on peer recognition and review sites, such as Super Lawyers, Best Lawyers, Best Law Firms, etc.

BRIEFS does publish honors and awards given by legal publications such as Michigan Lawyers Weekly (i.e., Leaders in the Law) under the following conditions:

1. BRIEFS will only publish such announcements for ICBA members.
2. Announcements will appear only in Raising the Bar and are limited to 50-75 words.
3. Announcements must comply with any applicable copyright/trademark requirements of the publication.
4. ICBA takes no responsibility for the published announcement.

ADVERTISING

Details on display and classified advertising can be found [here](#).

ARCHIVED ISSUES

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BRIEFS Advertising Contract, Rates & Policies

Thanks for reading **BRIEFS**



Feedback? briefs@inghambar.org

Next issue:
May 2021 featuring our
Prosecutors

Happy Spring!



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