



May 2021

Ingham County Bar Association

# BRIEFS

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**Ingham County  
Prosecutor's Office**

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## Ingham County Prosecutor’s Office Values

We serve the people of Ingham County by working to prevent crime and disrupt cycles of trauma, violence, and poverty. We believe that all members of our community, including those who are marginalized, deserve to be safe. We recognize the inherent worth and dignity of all people.

We value the perspectives of others, even those with whom we disagree. We are professional and courteous in our private and public statements. We listen to and partner with members of our community. We are dedicated to building a resilient and equitable community, where all members have an equal opportunity to thrive.

We are advocates for justice. We tell the truth. We recognize that we have great power and great responsibility. We are respectful, patient, and empathetic to all members of our community, including survivors of crime, defendants, and their families. We listen to and empower survivors. We recognize that no one is defined by a crime that they committed or suffered. We strive for professional excellence and embrace new ideas, best practices, legal advancements, and technology to serve and improve our community. We seek a fair, proportionate, and restorative outcome for all individuals involved in the justice system.

We are steadfast guardians of the rights of every participant in the justice system. We evaluate each case on its merits to promote justice being administered fairly and without bias or favoritism. We exercise independent judgment in the pursuit of justice. We hold ourselves to the highest standard of integrity in our personal and professional conduct. We are open and forthright with each other and our community.

Carol A. Siemon, County Prosecutor  
[https://pa.ingham.org/courts\\_and\\_sheriff/prosecuting\\_attorney/](https://pa.ingham.org/courts_and_sheriff/prosecuting_attorney/)



## ICBA Logo and Letterhead Policy

The ICBA has adopted a policy regarding the use of the ICBA logo and letterhead. If you are currently using or are planning to use the ICBA logo, we ask that you become familiar with and abide by the revised policy. You can read the full policy [here](#).

# 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

P.O. Box 66  
Grand Ledge, MI 48837  
[www.inghambar.org](http://www.inghambar.org)

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Charles Lawler

### **Annual Meeting:**

Charles Lawler

### **Ask A Lawyer:**

Ray Harris/Brandon Schumacher/Emily Jefferson

### **Awards:**

Jessica Zimbleman/Alex Rusek

### **Barristers:**

Mark DeLuca

### **BRIEFS:**

Angela Wall, Editor; Mary Bowen, Board Liaison

### **List Serve:** Staff

### **Meet the Judges:**

Steve Sinas/Emily Jefferson

### **Education:**

Chris Wickman, James Dalton

### **Membership:**

Lindsay Dangi /Steve Sinas

### **Monthly Deliberations:**

Alex Rusek

### **Judicial Deliberations/Panels:**

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### **Judicial Review:**

Charlie Lawler/Alex Rusek

### **Nominating Committee:**

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### **Shrimp Dinner:**

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Madelyne Lawry  
517-627-3938

# President's Message



Sandra Lake,  
ICBA President  
slake480@gmail.com

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

The ICBA Sponsors and Members have been our lifeblood this year. Given that we have not been able to host any in-person events, our Sponsors, as well as you the Members, deserve special recognition for keeping the ICBA afloat. The Board is grateful that you have chosen to stay committed to the ICBA during a time when it would be easy to back away. So to our 688 Members, as well as the following Sponsors, I say thank you:

Abood Law Firm  
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Willingham & Cote PC

Despite COVID restrictions, we have been able to continue to offer our educational and social opportunities via Zoom. Our *Keeping the Bench and Bar Together in 2021* series has been a huge success. Upcoming conversations with the bench include:

- Hon. James Jamo, April 26 at 5:30 p.m.
- Hon. Clinton Canady III, May 10 at 5:30 p.m.
- Hon. Rosemarie Aquilina, May 24 at 5:30 p.m.
- Hon. Wanda Stokes, June 14 at 5:30 p.m.

We will also host our annual meeting virtually on May 12, 2021.

Our meeting will be from 5:30 p.m. to 5:45 p.m., followed by a cocktail/mocktail demonstration by the ICBA's very own Board member, Chris Wickman.

You can register for these events, which are free of charge to Members, through the links in the ICBA email updates or by visiting our Facebook page.

Lastly, I would like to share my appreciation for all of the Members who volunteer their time to head our practice area sections and the Young Lawyers Section. These sections provide truly valuable benefits to our members. Thank you for all of your efforts.

Take care and best wishes, Sandra Lake



# Being A Prosecutor

By Angela DelVero



[adelvero@ingham.org](mailto:adelvero@ingham.org)

When I'm asked what I like about being a prosecutor, it is always kind of a difficult question to answer, because being a prosecutor was literally the only career I ever wanted to have, probably from about the time I was ten years old. I never actually pictured myself having any other job. Despite having this feeling of a sort of inevitability when I started at the Livingston County Prosecutor's Office, throughout my years as an Assistant Prosecutor, I have really come to comprehend more fully what it is about being a prosecutor that I, perhaps in my younger years, just sort of "felt" instinctually.

We had what one could characterize as a family tradition of public service. The idea that this service would be in the form of being a prosecutor wasn't entirely a surprise, given that both my Dad and one of my uncles were prosecutors, and our dinner conversations and extended family get-togethers were full of stories about interesting, sad or exciting cases. However, my Dad and uncle weren't the only two people in my family that were employed in the public sector. I had multiple relatives who were public school teachers and my Mom was a student assistance program coordinator

for a public school district for my entire childhood and teenage years.

It was this overall family attitude of working in a field that helps the community in which you live and the people in that community that pointed me in the right direction. It was the sense of fulfillment from the hard work required of this type of job that kept me going in that direction. I didn't really know about jobs that were any different growing up and as my career extended, I realized that despite how difficult and time-consuming these types of jobs can be, to me, they are also the most rewarding.

What I love about being a prosecutor is that you really do have the ability, in a very direct and observable way, to engage in actions that do actually have an impact on the community and public safety. The hundreds of decisions that we make in any given day, whether they be relating to reviewing evidence, advising or training law enforcement, charging cases, litigating cases or speaking with victims and witnesses, should, if done right, protect the public and help at-risk populations; both victims and defendants alike. Prosecutors have the power to not only protect victims and the community at large, but we also have the ability to engage in policy and decision making that can reduce recidivism, thereby addressing the needs of individuals who commit crimes as well.

In my career, I have been fortunate enough to be able to achieve the above objectives in many ways that have made me proud and humbled to serve two different communities. I have handled serious cases and received lengthy

prison sentences on cases where they were deserved. I have held the hands of victims and cried with them, when a jury verdict just didn't go the way we had hoped. I have been yelled at by a victim who felt I was ruining her life by prosecuting her assailant, and then years later, approached by that same woman and told that I actually saved her life and it just took her years to realize it. Now, I am working to keep safe the most vulnerable of victims, in a specialized unit prosecuting crimes against children. I have even had the privilege of transitioning to training law enforcement and other prosecutors, which is very rewarding, because it is important to recognize that if you want people to make good decisions, you have to give them the training to make them. Lastly, perhaps some of my most satisfying work as a prosecutor has been my time assigned to specialty courts, such as drug treatment and mental health courts, where, working on a collaborative, multi-disciplinary team, I was able to observe meaningful life-changing work being done by people, who were dedicated to leaving behind their lives as defendants and transitioning into productive, law-abiding citizens.

Yes, the job is hard, and often being the voice of negative consequences doesn't always make you popular. And sometimes, what you see that people are willing to do to each other is heartbreaking. But, with all the lows that can come from this type of work, the highs are often that much more meaningful. And even after all these years, ten year old Angela still wouldn't have it any other way. 😊

# Diversity

By Amanda O'Boyle



[Amanda.O'Boyle@lansingmi.gov](mailto:Amanda.O'Boyle@lansingmi.gov)

Diversity is a term that is often thrown around in the workplace to connote the impression of acceptance and inclusion, but rarely is it seen in practice. Even rarer is it seen in a law practice. It is well known that women, particularly women of color, continue to have less representation in the practice of law despite increasing numbers in law school.<sup>1</sup> At 80% women and 20% people of color, attorneys Greg Venker, Amanda O'Boyle, Lisa Hagen, Mary Bowen, and Heather Sumner who comprise the prosecuting attorneys for the City of Lansing Office of the City Attorney demonstrate how diversity can and should work in a law practice. These attorneys come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences that contribute to the wealth of knowledge in the office. This young team of attorneys

seems almost contradictory given the average age of a lawyer is 47.5 years.<sup>2</sup> This group consistently uses a team approach to legal problems, overcoming the stereotype that wisdom is only possessed by those with more years. The team works through complex legal questions, discusses pros and cons, and does group research.

Diversity must include more than physical characteristics; it must include diversity of thought, which is created through different backgrounds, experience, and culture. This small group of accomplished attorneys came to the Office of the City Attorney from both the private and public sectors; prosecution and defense backgrounds; criminal and civil practice; and range in practice from four years to well over a decade. All of these attributes bring a unique perspective when addressing the needs of the City of Lansing. Municipal law is marked by its incredible plethora of practice areas. It is not uncommon to start your day with criminal prosecution, then move on to a civil hearing, then to act as legal advisor on zoning laws at a public meeting, then advise as to constitutional issues for police, and then review a lawsuit addressing MEPA,

FOIA, CITA or any other four-letter acronym . . . all in a single day. It is vital to the success of the office to have the ability to consult with your fellow prosecutors without facing judgment or criticism. Even in the era of COVID-19, our office stays in constant contact, even if only to listen to a gripe.

While there is certainly room to grow, and all should be conscious of complacency, the Lansing City Attorney prosecutors rebuke the statistics about what a law practice should look like and how it should act. These attorneys hail from nearby Flint, Chicago, or as far as Arizona, but it is clear that Lansing is a home away from home and a great place to work.

## Endnotes

1. Norwood, Kimberly Jade, Gender Bias as the Norm in the Legal Profession: It's Still a [White] Man's Game, 62 WAUJLP 25 (2020). Women make up approximately 37% of all lawyers in 2020 and people of color comprised just 5% of all lawyers in 2020. American Bar Association, ABA Profile of the Legal Profession 2020, <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/news/2020/07/potlp2020.pdf>.
2. American Bar Association, ABA Profile of the Legal Profession 2020, <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/news/2020/07/potlp2020.pdf>.

# City of Lansing Prosecutors Are Working to Clean Up the Streets, Literally

By Heather Sumner



[heather.sumner@lansingmi.gov](mailto:heather.sumner@lansingmi.gov)

The Office of the City Attorney (OCA) is responsible for prosecuting all City Ordinance violations, including traffic and code violations. Meaning, City docket days run the gamut from minor civil infractions, such as speeding, to more serious crimes, such as Assault & Battery, Discharging a Weapon, or Driving while Intoxicated. It might also mean that they are dealing with a property, or building, that has run afoul of local law.

Enforcement of property and building code violations is one of the more unique challenges that City prosecutors face. There are a number of situations where the only way to bring the property, or building, up to code is by seeking court-ordered compliance. For instance, the trash and debris is behind a fence. The goal with Court-ordered compliance tickets is not to simply seek a fine, but to actually bring the property, or building, into compliance with local law. This practice has successfully made both neighborhoods and commercial corridors a cleaner and safer place.

At the time of pretrial, Prosecutors typically work towards a stipulated order wherein the defendant agrees to remedy the issue before a specific date, or face fines and the cost of a third-party remediation. Of course, each situation requires its own considerations. Where

an agreement cannot be reached, or in cases where the defendant does not appear, a hearing is generally needed.

At the hearing, Prosecutors have the opportunity to show the Judge photos of the offending property and to elicit testimony from the Code Enforcement officer(s). If the City meets its burden, the District Court will order compliance. Compliance may include removal of tires, mattresses, junk, and disabled vehicles, all at the expense of the property owner. The City has been working to bring not only individual properties, but entire apartment complexes up to code using this process. In 2021 alone the City has successfully pursued court-ordered compliance for 18 properties. Hopefully, as a result of this process, the Capitol City will continue to experience cleaner, safer neighborhoods.



# ICBA Meet the Ingham County Prosecutor's Office



**Elizabeth Allen**  
[pa\\_allen@ingham.org](mailto:pa_allen@ingham.org)

## **What advice if any do you have for others in the practice?**

As was always told to me by Judge Draganchuk, remember that your job is to represent the People and it's the highest honor. You're the only one in the courtroom who gets to stand up and say "I represent the People of the State of Michigan."

## **What did you like about your area of the practice of law (including the types of cases that you prosecute)?**

Serving the community, and that includes victims and defendants. Our office works hard to achieve an outcome that provides justice for a victim, but also will help the defendant, either through services or specialty courts.

## **What is your typical day like?**

Court days (and preparing for them) are long and often take most of the day, but much of the day is also spent analyzing cases – from pre-charging to determine if we are going to charge a case, to reviewing cases assigned to me for plea offers or trial strategy, to preparing to sentencing hearings. There is also a lot of time spent in communication – with victims, defense attorneys, police officers, courts, fellow APAs, discussing cases, strategizing, and negotiating.

## **What are your favorite non-legal things (some call these "pastimes") to do?**

Working off the stress with a good run.



**Andrea M. Christensen-Brown**

Currently serves as a Senior Attorney in Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel's Criminal Trials and Appeals Division. She joined the Department of the Michigan Attorney General in 2008 and has solely focused on federal habeas litigation since 2009. Andrea litigates complex federal habeas matters in Michigan's federal district courts and the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. She has argued in the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals more than 30 times and has also appeared as co-counsel with former Michigan Solicitor General John J. Bursch in a habeas matter that was argued in the United States Supreme Court in April 2013, *Lancaster v. Burt*, 569 U.S. 351 (2013). The case resulted in a 9–0 opinion authored by former Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Andrea regularly participates as a lecturer in training involving federal habeas practice sponsored by the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan as well as the National Attorneys General Training and Research Institute (NAGTRI). She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan (2002, Political Science) and her law degree from Michigan State University College of Law (2007, JD).





**Teddy Eisenhut,**  
Ingham County Prosecutor's Office,  
Crimes Against Children Unit  
[teisenhut@ingham.org](mailto:teisenhut@ingham.org)

**What advice if any do you have for others in the practice?**

It is always worth taking the extra step. And then take another.

**What did you like about your area of the practice of law (including the types of cases that you prosecute)?**

I learn something new every day and usually from unexpected places. Being an attorney, especially a prosecutor, is probably one of the most intellectually stimulating and exciting jobs you can have. However, working primarily with children, many of whom have experienced trauma, is in a way the most rewarding. Their resilience is inspiring and makes me grateful.

**What is your typical day like?**

One of the best and maybe most challenging parts about this job is that no day ever looks the same. I'm not sure there is ever a typical day in criminal practice.

**What are your favorite non-legal things (some call these "pastimes") to do?**

I love the outdoors and most activities that you can do in them. Pre-pandemic, this involved visiting new, faraway places. This spring I had planned to backpack the Kerry Way, but things are looking a little more local now. Luckily, we live in a state that presents plenty of opportunities to get outside.



**Ben Hall**  
[bhall@ingham.org](mailto:bhall@ingham.org)

I became a Marine in 2004 where I served as a military police officer and deployed once to Iraq. While on active duty, I earned my bachelor's degree in 2 years and completed most of my master's degree prior to getting out in 2009. After I got out of the Marine Corps, I worked for Children's Protective Services for a few years before going into law enforcement full time. Not too long after I finished my master's degree, I decided I would go to law school part time while I was still working full time at a police department in the Battle Creek area. While in law school, I interned at the House of Representatives Policy Office, the Governor's Legislative Affairs Office, and spent 12 months as a clerk for two judges on the 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals.

I have worked for the ICPO since August 2019 and it is my first job since graduating from MSU College of Law. Coming to ICPO was a natural transition after spending nearly 10 years in law enforcement. It's been interesting coming from the perspective of being a police officer and now doing some of the very same things that I (and many other officers) would complain about when I was on the road—the difference is I understand *why* it happens now. I'm currently assigned to the screening unit and occasionally get to field the calls from officers who are upset that I denied this charge, or requested more

investigation for that charge. When that happens, I just smile to myself because I remember doing the same thing in another life.

I recently moved to Bath Township and since I now live on a golf course, I suppose I need to learn how to do that. Anyone give lessons? When I'm not working, I officiate college basketball and high school football. I started taking flying lessons toward getting my private pilot's license. I also recently became a licensed real estate agent—as if I didn't have enough going on!

**Erin Housefield**  
[ehousefield@ingham.org](mailto:ehousefield@ingham.org)

**Where you practice and any particular area of the criminal law?**

I am currently assigned to the Honorable Kristen D. Simmons, 54A District Court

**What advice if any do you have for others in the practice?**

Find an area of practice that you enjoy, even if it means changing throughout your legal career. I left law school intending to practice something entirely different and stumbled into prosecution through a law clerk job. I found I absolutely love it even though I never planned for it. Also, consider finding a mentor (or two) and take advantage of every opportunity you can to shadow someone in your area or another.

**What is your typical day like?**

The thing about prosecution is there is no typical day. My docket is a combination of misdemeanors and felonies. My day may include appearing in court or preparing for a hearing. But it also includes screening cases for charges, speaking with witnesses and victims, reviewing search warrant affidavits, and reviewing statutes and keeping up with legal changes.



**Jennifer Lawton-Pace**  
[jlawton-pace@ingham.org](mailto:jlawton-pace@ingham.org)

**What advice if any do you have for others in the practice?**

The types of law one can practice are so varied; not everyone is suited for every area of practice. Find the area that interests you the most and focus on that.

**What did you like about your area of the practice of law (including the types of cases that you prosecute)?**

I love practicing criminal law in general. Domestic violence cases and ensuring victims' safety are especially important to me. I also love working with our Mental Health Court. Focusing on an individual's underlying issues is the key to reformation and reducing recidivism. I love seeing the progress an individual in that program can make.

**What is your typical day like?**

It depends on the day. Some days are spent with a full court docket (which is now held via zoom). Non-court days are spent prepping/reviewing pending cases, issuing new cases, drafting motions/briefs, and sending lots of emails.

**What are your favorite non-legal things (some call these "pastimes") to do?**

Spending time with family, spending time outdoors.



**Nicole Matusko,**  
**District Court Unit Chief**  
[pa\\_matusko@ingham.org](mailto:pa_matusko@ingham.org)

**What advice if any do you have for others in the practice?**

Prosecution is an exciting, ever-changing, career. It is hard work that requires more than just working the traditional government 8am - 5pm. Often we sacrifice sleep and free time to prepare cases for court and support victims. In the end, the sleepless nights and hard work have been worth it as there will forever be those cases and survivors that have changed my outlook on life and our community for the better.

**What did you like about your area of the practice of law (including the types of cases that you prosecute)?**

The variety of cases allows me to be balanced in my work. As the District Court Unit Chief, I am able to handle a variety of cases including sexual assaults, crimes against children, and gun violence. I am also currently the liaison to our many treatment courts. On any given week, I will prosecute someone who has sexually assaulted a minor child where I strive to hold the defendant accountable and give the child a voice against his/her abuser. That same week, I will prosecute someone that has been charged with a handful of theft offense that needs referrals for treatment and encouragement to take steps towards recovery. I enjoy the variety and the opportunity to support and better my community as a whole.

### What is your typical day like?

There is no “typical day” at a prosecutor’s office. The absolute only standard protocol around here is the need and desire for coffee in abundance. My current favorite is Blue Owl however I am looking forward to the return of the coffee cart that was always in front of 54A District Court.

### What are your favorite non-legal things (some call these “pastimes”) to do?

My favorite non-legal things to do including playing tag or having kitchen dance parties with my three small children, gardening, and relaxing on our deck. Prior to filling my time with family, when I had more free time, I used to enjoy a friendly line dance at the old Whiskey Barrel or volunteering with the youth of my church.



**Dennis J. Pheney, Jr.,**  
Assistant Attorney General  
[ehousefield@ingham.org](mailto:ehousefield@ingham.org)

Dennis J. Pheney, Jr. graduated from Albion College in 1989 and Wayne State University Law School in 1993. He began working as a prosecutor in the Alpena County Prosecutor’s Office as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney in 1994 and served in that capacity until 1997 when he joined the ranks as an APA in the Kalamazoo County Prosecutor’s Office. Mr. Pheney worked in Kalamazoo until 2008 when he was hired into the Criminal Division of the Michigan Department of Attorney General. In 2010, Mr. Pheney was transferred to the Health Care Fraud Division where he presently serves as a Senior Attorney Specialist.

Across his 27-years as a prosecutor, Mr. Pheney has handled violent felonies (including homicides), white-collar financial fraud, as well as cases involving the abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults. His work has also involved occasional appellate cases.



**Sarah Pulda**  
[spulda@ingham.org](mailto:spulda@ingham.org)

**Where you practice and any particular area of the criminal law:** Currently assigned to Adult CSC cases, though I do serve as the Unit Chief of the Child Abuse/CSC and Intimate Partner Violence Units. Other areas of Law practiced (or are continuing to practice for municipal lawyers): I have done a bit of everything in the office. I have served in the District Courts, Circuit Courts, Family Courts, as well as Tri-County Metro Narcotics.

### What advice if any do you have for others in the practice?

Always ask questions – we were all new attorneys at one time, and asking questions is a way to learn from others who have been in your shoes.

### What did you like about your area of the practice of law (including the types of cases that you prosecute)?

I have been in prosecution for the past 12 years, and not a day goes by that I don’t learn something new. I also really enjoy the people I work with on a daily basis – on the prosecution side and the defense side.

### What is your typical day like?

Busy – being a Unit Chief reminds me that I no longer work on only my cases, but must be available for consult on any cases associated within my units.

### What are your favorite non-legal things (some call these “pastimes”) to do?

I am a do-it-yourselfer. I always have a big project going at my house. It allows me to block out anything attorney-related and focus on just the project in front of me.

**Jessica Shah**  
[jshah@ingham.org](mailto:jshah@ingham.org)

**What advice if any do you have for others in the practice?**

Work can get stressful at times but don't let it consume you. It's important to find a work-life balance, otherwise you might burn out pretty quickly. Take mental health breaks. Talk to people. I'm fortunate enough to work in a supportive environment where everyone in the office is willing to talk, listen, answer questions, and give advice.

**What did you like about your area of the practice of law (including the types of cases that you prosecute)?**

I like the satisfaction of doing the right thing. Regardless of the type of case (complex, straightforward, misdemeanor, felony), the end goal is always the same – being just and doing what's fair for everyone involved.

**What is your typical day like?**

Not all days are alike. That's one of the things I like about this career. When I'm in the office, I could be reviewing warrant requests, meeting with victims or witnesses (virtually now), preparing for court, or researching and writing. When I'm in court, I could be taking testimony, arguing motions, or negotiating pleas.

**What are your favorite non-legal things (some call these “pastimes”) to do?**

Pre-COVID, I enjoyed getting together with friends and family and going out to eat. These days it's mostly watching TV and trying to go for walks when the weather is nice.



**Melanie L. Smith**  
[msmith3@ingham.org](mailto:msmith3@ingham.org)

**Where you practice and any particular area of the criminal law:**

Criminal law – specifically crimes against children and neglect/abuse cases. Previously 54A District Court and 30th Circuit Juvenile Division.

**What advice if any do you have for others in the practice?**

After a little less than four years in this area, I have already experienced the phenomena of burn out. I would encourage all lawyers, regardless of area/specialty, to practice self-care and have a safe person to check-in with often. COVID, with all of its very negative aspects, did allow me the chance to re-engage in a couple of hobbies that I had let go of between the demands law school and practice, which has decreased stress and anxiety. I have also become more aware of the concept of “secondary trauma” and what it looks like; I would highly recommend folks learn more about how it can affect their lives, and strategies to prevent against that.

**What did you like about your area of the practice of law (including the types of cases that you prosecute)?**

I love the ability to connect with people from my community who are in need of support. Very rarely do we get the opportunity in criminal law to bring the victim back to the “same” position

as they were in previously, but we do get to listen to their story, validate their experience, and try to bring closure to a really hard part of their life. We also can connect them with incredible resources like CARE, EVE, Small Talk, Lansing Women's Center, Firecracker, etc. who can fill spaces that we cannot as the Prosecutor's Office. Experiencing the resiliency and ability of people, especially children, to forgive brings renewed hope to very difficult cases and subject matter.

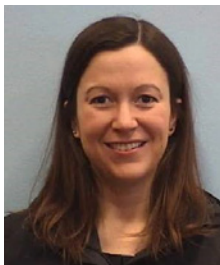
**What is your typical day like?**

I think like most professionals in 2021, a huge portion of my day is spent reading and responding to emails. Most days I spend at least an hour or two screening warrant requests for possible charging. This includes watching forensic interview recordings, reading police and other reports, and often times requesting supplemental discovery. Depending on which assignment an APA is in, typical days would also include being on the record for some or all of it, though now days it is usually Zoom from home. For example, as a District Court or Family Court APA, I would be on the record 3-4 days a week, 4-6 hours a day. Now, being assigned to felony crimes against children, I would usually only be in court 1-2 days a week, 2-3 hours at a time. There is a lot more work behind the scenes on these cases than a misdemeanor District Court docket, for example.

**What are your favorite non-legal things (some call these “pastimes”) to do?**

I love to garden; I am starting about 15 varieties of flowers and vegetables from seeds this year. I also love to read and try to rotate in professional and personal topics of interest. I'm currently reading “Interviewing Children” by Dr. Poole and “Dear Daughter” by Elizabeth Little.





**Kristen Stinedurf**

Kristen Stinedurf is the First Assistant Attorney General in the Financial Crimes Division of the Michigan Department of the Attorney General. Kristen prosecutes complex white-collar crimes, including those involving elder financial exploitation, insurance fraud, and tax fraud. Kristen is an active member of the Michigan Elder Abuse Task force. She currently chairs the Multicultural Inclusion Subcommittee and the Financial Exploitation Prevention Act Implementation Subcommittee of the Task Force, and previously traveled with the Attorney General to several listening and speaking tour stops. Before coming to the Department of Attorney General, Kristen served as an assistant prosecuting attorney in Ionia County for 8 years. Kristen graduated from Michigan State University College of Law.

# Unconscious Bias in Jurors Are We Doing Enough?

By Marisa Vinsky



**Marisa Vinsky**  
[marisa@cndefenders.com](mailto:marisa@cndefenders.com)

One of the most fundamental rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution is the due process of law.<sup>1</sup> This encompasses the basic requirement of having a fair trial in front of a fair tribunal.<sup>2</sup> With this requirement comes a longstanding history of procedural safeguards in order to ensure the fairest trial a person can possibly have, specifically when it comes to juries. The important case of *Batson v Kentucky*<sup>3</sup> is just one example of the strides made by courts to uphold due process.

Even when jury selection falls in accordance with these safeguards, bias still permeates the criminal justice system, whether it is actual or implied. While it certainly should be addressed during voir dire, many individuals are reluctant to express their true feelings and admit actual bias. Where circumstances raise questions as to a juror's impartiality, "little stock need be placed in jurors' claims" that they will not be prejudiced.<sup>4</sup> Jurors are not necessarily fully conscious of *what* will affect their attitude and *how* things will affect their attitude towards the accused.<sup>5</sup>

Further, there has been a significant amount of research done on unconscious bias. Studies on implicit social cognition show that the mental processes that affect social judgments can operate without conscious awareness or conscious control.<sup>6</sup> Implicit bias testing measures, such as the Implicit Association Test, predict certain types of behavior—like anti-Black and intergroup discrimination—substantially better than explicit bias measures.<sup>7</sup> Not only do jurors have implicit biases towards defendants, but this also spreads to the evaluation of witnesses and evidence.<sup>8</sup> This implicit bias can cause jurors to misremember facts in racially biased ways, affect whether there really is a presumption of innocence, and even affect how the jury perceives an expert witness who is a person of color.<sup>9</sup> Psychologists believe that a conscious effort to be unbiased may reduce a person's implicit bias.<sup>10</sup>

Unconscious bias is a concept that many people acknowledge but do not necessarily know how to address. A 2020 study revealed that a majority of judges do not notify jurors about implicit bias due to their own lack of awareness or understanding, but now believe it is important to alert jurors to this issue.<sup>11</sup> Federal courts are on the forefront of openly talking to and teaching jurors about this. Established in 2017, a committee of judges and attorneys for the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington created an instructional video to present to jurors "with the intent of highlighting and combating the problems presented by unconscious bias."<sup>12</sup> This 11-minute



video is shown in *every* case. Along with the video, the committee modified several Model Ninth Circuit Criminal Jury Instructions to include language on unconscious bias for the court to present to the jury throughout the course of the trial. Following in Washington's footsteps, the United States District Court for the Northern District of California now plays a video that includes a section on unconscious bias to potential jurors before the jury selection process.<sup>13</sup>

Compare that with what is happening in Michigan. The Committee on Model Criminal Jury Instructions amended Michigan Criminal Jury Instruction 2.26 to state the following:

It is important for you to keep an open mind and not make a decision about anything in the case until you go to the jury room to decide the case.

You must not let bias, prejudice, or public opinion influence your decision. Each of us may have biases or perceptions about other people based on stereotypes. We may be aware of some of our biases, though we do not express them. We may not be fully aware of some of our other biases. Take the time you need to test what might be automatic or instinctive

judgments and to reflect carefully about the evidence. I caution you again to avoid reaching conclusions that may have been unintentionally influenced by stereotypes. You must reach your own conclusions about this case individually, but you should do so only after listening to and considering the opinions of the other jurors, who may have different backgrounds and perspectives from yours.<sup>14</sup>

This became effective on June 1, 2020. While it does not outright call the issue unconscious bias, it attempts to address these concerns. The Sixth Circuit Pattern Criminal Jury Instructions, which are used by the federal courts in Michigan, do not have *any* jury instructions on unconscious bias.<sup>15</sup>

But is a jury instruction enough? Michigan is moving in the right direction by addressing the very persistent issue of unconscious bias. However, allowing jurors to watch a short video prepared specifically to discuss this hidden problem—one that is often easier to ignore—will further promote fairness in our trials. It provides a solution to combat an issue that is essential to tackle, but difficult to discuss. The hope is that eventually all courts will have a consistent standard when it comes

to allowing the viewing of this type of video. In the meantime, as attorneys, we need to consider whether we are doing our clients a disservice by not advocating for a video on unconscious bias to be played for the jury. In courts where a jury instruction does not even exist, we should be asking for a specific jury instruction on unconscious bias. What is not seen or heard may be the difference between a one-word verdict and a two-word verdict.

#### Endnotes

1. US Const, amend V.
2. *In re Murchison*, 349 US 133, 136; 75 S Ct 623; 99 L Ed 942 (1955).
3. 476 US 79; 106 S Ct 1712; 90 L Ed 2d 69 (1986).
4. *Holbrook v Flynn*, 475 US 560, 570; 106 S Ct 1340; 89 L Ed 2d 525 (1986).
5. *Id.*
6. Jerry Kang, et al., *Implicit Bias in the Courtroom*, 59 UCLA L Rev 1124, 1129 (2012).
7. *Id.* at 1131.
8. Anna Roberts, *(Re)forming the Jury: Detection and Disinfection of Implicit Juror Bias*, 44 Conn L Rev 827, 836 (2012).
9. *Id.* at 837.
10. *Id.* at 835.
11. See Jacqueline M. Kirshenbaum and Monica K. Miller, *Judges' experiences with mitigating jurors' implicit biases*, *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law* (2020).
12. <https://www.wawd.uscourts.gov/jury/unconscious-bias>
13. <https://www.cand.uscourts.gov/attorneys/unconscious-bias-video-for-potential-jurors/>
14. M Crim JI 2.26
15. <https://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/pattern-jury-instructions>



## ICBA-YLS

# Featured Young Lawyer:

*Courtney L. Ware*



**Courtney L. Ware**  
[cware@willinghamcote.com](mailto:cware@willinghamcote.com)

Courtney L. Ware is an associate attorney at Willingham & Cote', P.C., and was recently admitted to the Bar of the State of Michigan. She is a member of the firm's Insurance Law Group. Ms. Ware specializes in first party no-fault litigation and third-party auto claims. She drafts answers to discovery requests, motions, attends court hearings, takes depositions and handles all aspects of the litigation process. Prior to her time at Willingham & Cote', Ms. Ware was the Judicial Law Clerk to the Honorable Wanda M. Stokes of the 30<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court.

### **Where do you work and what do you do there?**

I work at Willingham & Cote', P.C., as an Associate Attorney on the insurance defense team.

### **Where did you go to school?**

I have a bachelor's degree in Legal Studies from Grand Valley State University. I went to law school at Michigan State University College of Law.

### **When were you admitted to practice in Michigan?**

I was admitted to practice law in Michigan in November of 2020.

### **Why did you go into the legal field?**

I decided to become a lawyer when I was 18 following a summer internship with Azin Arbab, an incredible attorney from Iran. She moved to the United States to attend law school and her dedication and passion for helping others was truly an inspiration.

### **What advice do you have for those considering law school?**

Take the plunge! Once you do, surround yourself with people that build you up and never stop networking. I am always amazed by how willing professionals in the legal field are to help aspiring lawyers and young lawyers to build a successful career!

### **If you weren't a lawyer, what would you do?**

If I wasn't a lawyer (and was better at science), I would love to be in the medical field. I have always been amazed by medicine and the human body.

### **Where did you grow up?**

I grew up in Okemos, Michigan.

### **Who is your biggest role model and why?**

My biggest role models are my parents. My mother has taught me the importance of having a strong work ethic and the value of pursuing a rewarding career to provide for myself, particularly as a woman. My father is also a very hard worker and the most well-rounded, supportive, and honest person I know. Most importantly, both treat everyone with respect and kindness without fail.

### **What do you do in your free time?**

I love to travel in my free time. Some of my favorite trips have included Costa Rica, Budapest, and Iceland.

### **Do you have any pets? If so, tell us about them.**

I have a Maltese named Spencer. Although he is nine years old, he looks and acts like a puppy. He loves to play fetch—and bark! I also have a cat named Bailey. She meows incessantly and definitely knows that she runs the house.



ICBA SECTION NEWS

## ICBA-YLS

# Featured Young Lawyer:

*Adam Pfeiffer*



**Adam Pfeiffer**

[apfeiffer@ingham.org](mailto:apfeiffer@ingham.org)

**M**y name is Adam Pfeiffer, I am 27 years old, and within two years of practicing law I am handling specialized felony work for Ingham County. During law school I worked for prosecutors, public defenders, and even the Michigan Attorney General's Office. I am married to my lovely social worker wife Lexi, who has been a constant source of support throughout my entire legal career.

### **Where do you work and what do you do there?**

I work for the Ingham County Prosecutor's Office, prosecuting high-lethality domestic violence felonies.

### **Where did you go to school?**

I went to Michigan State University for my Criminal Justice Degree, and Thomas M. Cooley Law School for my JD.

### **When were you admitted to practice in Michigan?**

I was admitted to practice in Michigan in 2019.

### **Why did you go into the legal field?**

I have always had a mind built to handle precedent and statutes; I've known I was going to be a lawyer since I was six. My goal has always been to do good with those talents. As a public servant, I can accomplish that goal every day I go to work. Or, more recently, Zoom in to work.

### **What advice do you have for those considering law school?**

Make sure you this is truly the path for you. Then commit to it fully, work as hard as you possibly can without running yourself down.

### **If you weren't a lawyer, what would you do?**

I have no idea. Probably teach math and science.

### **Where did you grow up?**

I grew up in Shelby Township, MI.

### **Who is your biggest role model and why?**

My biggest role model is probably Earl Warren or Ruth Bader Ginsburg, as cliché as it sounds for a lawyer to look up to a Supreme Court Justice. It's because of their commitment to the law and to do what they felt was right and just under the law; win, lose, or draw.

### **What do you do in your free time?**

I read legal news, spend time with my wife and pets, and try my *very* best not to catch COVID.

### **Do you have any pets? If so, tell us about them.**

We have three cats: Spock, Jackson, and Ollie. Ollie is *my* cat, and, sat in my lap every night that I was studying for the bar or practicing my opening statements. If he had a single brain cell to his name, he probably could have picked up enough to be a decent lawyer. Sadly, he is the dumbest animal on the planet. But I couldn't ask for a better legal study-buddy.

## EDUCATIONAL EVENT YLS

# "Lunch & Learn" Series – Honorable Shauna Dunnings

By Aylysh Gallagher



[agallagher@ingham.org](mailto:agallagher@ingham.org)

On March 24, 2021, Ingham County Bar Association's Young Lawyers Section hosted our first "Lunch & Learn Series" educational event. We had a great showing of over 50 attorneys tuning in and learning from Honorable Shauna Dunnings.

YLS is extremely grateful to the Judge Dunnings who volunteered her time to discuss Probate Law and give us her "Top Ten Tips" for attorneys. There is no doubt that the stellar turnout for the

event was a direct reflection of how valuable the discussion was thanks to the Honorable Shauna Dunnings. YLS sincerely appreciates the continued support from the Bench and we know that we could not provide meaningful educational events without your support.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our first Lunch & Learn and we hope to "see you" for our next events in April and May.

We are excited to announce our next two "Lunch & Learn" events coming up:

- On **April 28, 2021, from noon-1pm, Administrative Law Judge Carmen Fahie** will explain her role as an ALJ, and discuss the intersection and differences of administrative, circuit, and district court cases. The event will take place via zoom and the Meeting ID is 523 147 3146 (no password necessary, just click "join" and enter the meeting ID).

- On **May 3, 2021, from noon-1pm, Honorable Stacia Buchanan** joins us to discuss how to avoid common mistakes attorneys have when applying the Michigan Rules of Evidence and Michigan Court Rules. Judge Buchanan will also give us tips on preparing clients for virtual court. The event will take place via zoom and the Meeting ID is 523 147 3146 (no password necessary, just click "join" and enter the meeting ID).

Please mark your calendars, join us, and spread the word. No RSVPs required. We hope to see you there.

For any questions or suggestions, regarding future YLS educational events, contact Aylysh Gallagher at [agallagher@ingham.org](mailto:agallagher@ingham.org).



Ingham County Bar Association Young Lawyers Section  
"Lunch & Learn Series"



**Judge Shauna Dunnings presents on Probate Law & Top Ten Tips for Attorneys**

March 24, 2021  
Noon - 1:00p.m.

Zoom ID: 986 2082 8122




Ingham County Bar Association Young Lawyers Section  
"Lunch & Learn Series"




**Administrative Law Judge Carmen Fahie explains role as ALJ, intersection and differences of administrative, circuit, and district court cases, and tips for attorneys**

April 28, 2021  
Noon - 1:00p.m.

Zoom ID: 523 147 3146



Ingham County Bar Association Young Lawyers Section  
"Lunch & Learn Series"



**Judge Stacia Buchanan Explains:**

- Preparing clients for virtual court
- How to avoid common mistakes using the Michigan Rules of Evidence and Michigan Court Rules

May 3, 2021  
Noon - 1:00p.m.

Zoom ID: 523 147 3146



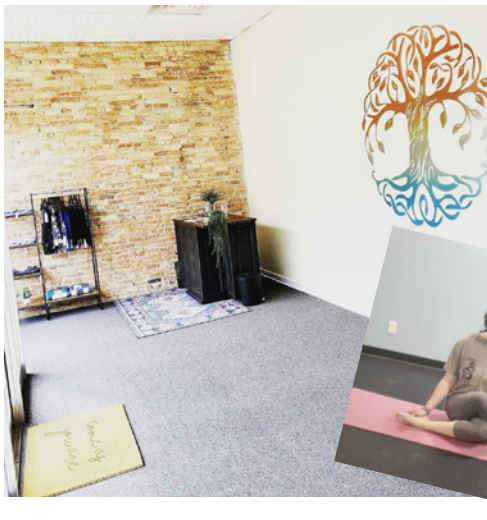
# Yoga for a Cause

By Aylysh Gallagher



[agallagher@ingham.org](mailto:agallagher@ingham.org)

On International Women's Day, March 8, 2021, the Ingham County Bar Association's Young Lawyers Section (ICBA-YLS) and the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, Mid-Michigan (WLAM) teamed up to raise money for a great cause. The event was a success raising over \$500 for the Women's Center of Greater Lansing. It was a memorable opportunity for local attorneys to relax and unwind after work together, while also supporting our community.



The Women's Center is a valuable resource in our community that provides services to women of all intersectionalities. The Women's Center supports women in a variety of ways including economically, socially, emotionally, and physically. For more information, including how to donate, please visit their website: <http://www.womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org/>. They are truly doing remarkable work within our community.

A big thank you to our incredible yoga instructor, Tara Brandman, who volunteered her time so that all of the money went directly to the Women's Center. Tara had the challenging task of getting a group of lawyers to collectively "unwind" and relax after a long day. Tara is currently working as a yoga

instructor for Salon 6 Yoga at 318 W Main St. Ionia, MI 48846. For more information or to sign up for a class you can contact Salon 6 Yoga at 616-522-9870. Additionally, Monday evenings, you can find Tara teaching classes closer to home in Holt, Michigan at Ardha Moon Yoga.

Yoga for a Cause allowed us to safely connect, raise money, and wind down. Thank you to everyone who made this event a success.





# SURVIVOR RESOURCES

## ADVOCACY SUPPORT COUNSELING/THERAPY



Women's Center of Greater Lansing  
517.372.9163  
[www.womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org](http://www.womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org)

Capital Area Response Effort (CARE)  
517.272.7436 (business line)

End Violent Encounters (EVE)  
517.372.5572 (crisis line)  
517.372.5976 (business line)  
[www.eveinc.org](http://www.eveinc.org)

MSU Safe Place  
517.355.1100  
<http://safeplace.msu.edu>

Ingham County Health Plan  
517.887.4465

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)  
517.887.9400  
<http://www.michigan.gov/dhs>

## CHILD CARE EXPENSES



City of East Lansing  
517.337.1731  
<http://www.cityofeastlansing.com>

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT



MSUFCU - loan program for victims of domestic violence

Michigan Crime Victims Compensation Fund  
1.877.251.7373  
[www.michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs)

## FOOD



Capital Area Community Services  
517.676.1065  
<http://www.cas-inc.org>

University Lutheran Church  
<http://ulcel.org>

Lansing Capital Area Salvation Army  
<https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/Lansing/cure-hunger/>

## HOUSING & UTILITIES

Housing SEARCH Assistance  
Volunteers of America  
Housing and Resource Agency (HARA)  
517.484.4414

MSU Safe Place  
517.355.1100  
<http://safeplace.msu.edu>

Christian Services Greater Lansing  
517.394.5411



Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)  
517.887.9400  
<http://www.michigan.gov/dhs>

## LEGAL SERVICES

Personal Protection Orders  
517.483.6545  
[www.eveinc.org](http://www.eveinc.org)

Crime Victim Notification Network  
1.800.770.7657  
[www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com)

Legal Referral Services  
1.800.968.0738

Legal Services of South Central Michigan  
888.783.8190  
[www.MichiganLegalAid.org](http://www.MichiganLegalAid.org)



## OTHER SERVICES

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program (SANE)  
Sparrow Hospital, Main Campus Emergency Room  
1215 E. Michigan Avenue, Lansing

MSU Sexual Assault Program  
517.372.6666 (crisis line)  
[www.endrape.msu.edu](http://www.endrape.msu.edu)

Chance at Childhood  
517.336.8088 ext. 8  
<http://chanceatchildhood.msu.edu>

Ele's Place  
517.482.1315  
[www.elesplace.org](http://www.elesplace.org)



## STATEWIDE/NATIONAL RESOURCES

Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence  
517.381.4663

Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network  
1.800.656.HOPE (4673)  
[www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)

National Domestic Violence Hotline  
1.800.799.SAFE (7233)  
800.787.3224 (TTY)  
[www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org)



*spread hope.*

\*This list is not exhaustive and provides examples of available services in our area.

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## RESOURCES FOR CHILD SURVIVORS

### ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

### SMALL TALK CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

(517)253-0728  
[www.smalltalkcac.org](http://www.smalltalkcac.org)



## FIRECRACKER FOUNDATION



(517) 742-7224  
<http://thefirecrackerfoundation.org/>

313 W. Kalamazoo Street,  
Lansing, Michigan 48933  
(517)483-6545  
[www.eveinc.org](http://www.eveinc.org)

### PPO OFFICE



Support and advocacy for victims experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and/or stalking.

### STATEWIDE RESOURCES

## MICHIGAN 211

Free service connecting MI residents with resources within their communities  
Call 211 or (844) 875-9211.  
Text zip code to 898211  
[www.mi211.org](http://www.mi211.org)



**MICHIGAN STATEWIDE SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE**  
1-855-864-2374 (Voices4)

### NATIONAL RESOURCES

National Human Trafficking Resource Center  
1-888-373-7888  
Text 232739 (text "HELP" or "INFO")  
TTY 211  
<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

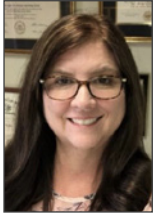
National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline  
1-866-331-9474  
TTY 1-866-331-8453  
Text 23222 (text "loveis")  
<http://www.loveisrespect.org>

\*This list is not exhaustive and provides examples of available services in our area.

# ICBA BRIEFS July 2020-June 2021

Committee appoints Associate Editors for the new fiscal year

## January



**Deadline:** December 15<sup>th</sup>  
**Theme:** State Appellate  
Defenders Offices  
**Associate Editors:**  
**Tina Olson**  
Phone: 517.334.6069  
Email: [tolson@sado.org](mailto:tolson@sado.org)

## July



**Deadline:** June 15<sup>th</sup>  
**Theme:** Power Couples  
**Associate Editors:**  
**Dakota Larson**  
Phone: 623.210.2232  
Email: [dakota.a.larson@gmail.com](mailto:dakota.a.larson@gmail.com)

## September



**Deadline:** August 15<sup>th</sup>  
**Theme:** County Judicial Clerks  
**Associate Editor:**  
**Larisa Zubac**  
Phone: 517.483.6500  
Email: [lzubac@ingham.org](mailto:lzubac@ingham.org)



**Jessica Zimbleman**  
Email: [jzimbleman@sado.org](mailto:jzimbleman@sado.org)



**Fred Baker**  
Phone: 517.318.6190  
Email: [fmbjrpllc@outlook.com](mailto:fmbjrpllc@outlook.com)

## May



**Deadline:** April 15<sup>th</sup>  
**Theme:** Prosecutors  
**Associate Editor:**  
**Mike Nichols**  
Phone: 517.432.9000  
Fax: 517.203-4448  
Email: [mnichols@nicholslaw.net](mailto:mnichols@nicholslaw.net)

# Press Release

## W. Alan Wilk Appointed Leader

### of Dykema's Government Policy & Practice Group

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



W. Alan Wilk

**Lansing – April 1, 2021** – Dykema, a leading national law firm, announced today that Lansing-based Member W. Alan Wilk has been appointed as Practice Group Leader of the firm's Government Policy & Practice Group. Wilk steps into this leadership position already serving as Leader of Dykema's Political Compliance Team and Co-Leader of the firm's Public Retirement Team.

In his practice, Wilk focuses on election, campaign finance and lobby law compliance matters. He also focuses on public retirement and health care projects, and for the last 25 years has developed vast experience drafting and implementing several innovative retirement programs for large public retirement systems.

Additionally, as a member of the firm's Nonprofit and Tax-Exempt Organizations practice, Wilk has incorporated hundreds of nonprofit entities, including charities, civic organizations, trade associations, and political groups. He regularly advises these organizations on a wide range of issues, including corporate, tax and regulatory matters. Wilk has coordinated and conducted internal investigations regarding potential civil and criminal activity for nonprofit and education clients.

Wilk has been involved in politics since 1984. Before passing the Michigan Bar, he served as campaign manager, co-campaign manager or

campaign volunteer for Gubernatorial, Congressional, State Senate, State Representative and various local races. He has served as counsel for Gubernatorial, Secretary of State and Attorney General political funds. Wilk currently represents political funds for several state elected officials and has been involved in several election litigation cases, as well as regulatory matters concerning political parties, PACs, candidates and numerous ballot question campaigns.

Wilk earned his J.D. from Boston College, and a B.A., *with honors*, from James Madison College at Michigan State University.

#### 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.

# DykEMA

Contact: Timothy Trunzo, Dykema, 313-568-5333, ttrunzo@dykema.com

# Press Release

## Dykema Selects Jarrod T. Smith

### to Lead Its Public Finance Practice Group

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Jarrod T. Smith

**Lansing – April 7, 2021** – Dykema, a leading national law firm, announced today that Lansing-based Member Jarrod Smith has been selected as Leader of the firm's Public Finance Practice Group.

Smith has more than 16 years of experience in public finance. In his practice, he serves as bond counsel to the State of Michigan, the Michigan Department of Treasury, the Michigan Department of Transportation, the State Building Authority, the Michigan Finance Authority, the Michigan Strategic Fund, and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, as well as various municipal clients including

the Detroit Downtown Development Authority and the City of Lansing. Smith also frequently serves as underwriter's or bank counsel to numerous national underwriting and financial institutions. Smith's experience includes some of the most complex public finance transactions in Michigan over the past several years—including the \$3 billion Unemployment Obligation Assessment Revenue Bonds transaction, and a \$288+ million transaction that funded the completion of a large county criminal justice complex, each of which received "Deals of the Year" recognition by *The Bond Buyer*.

Smith also provided counsel for various transactions involving the construction of Little Caesar's Arena, home to the Detroit Red Wings and Detroit Pistons. He also was a key player in the Michigan Finance Authority's refunding bond transaction to restructure and fix out the debt of the Detroit Public Schools and he assisted in the State's restructuring of its School Bond Qualification and Loan Fund program through the creation of a School Loan Revolving Fund program.

# Dykema

Contact: Timothy Trunzo, Dykema, 313-568-5333, ttrunzo@dykema.com

Prior to joining Dykema, Smith was an Assistant Attorney General with the Michigan Department of Attorney General for more than a decade. During that time, he acted as issuer's counsel to the State of Michigan and its various authorities for numerous transactions representing billions of dollars in public finance transactions.

Smith earned a J.D., *cum laude*, and a B.S. from Michigan State University.

Dykema's Public Finance Practice Group has served as bond counsel, underwriter's counsel, purchaser's counsel or issuer's counsel on more than 230 transactions with a par value in excess of \$18 billion over the last five years. 2020 was one of the highest years ever in terms of volume for the group.

#### 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

## Catherine Tucker Recognized as a Michigan Top Women Attorney



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



**Catherine Tucker**  
[katietucker@sinasdramis.com](mailto:katietucker@sinasdramis.com)

**LANSING, MICHIGAN** – Attorney Catherine (Katie) Tucker, Partner at Sinas Dramis Law Firm, was the only Lansing personal injury attorney named in the Michigan Super Lawyers' Top Women Attorneys 2021 edition. Tucker has been named a "Rising Star" by Super Lawyers since 2018 for her dedicated representation on behalf of plaintiffs in Michigan personal injury cases.

Tucker leads the firm's no-fault medical provider practice group, pursuing claims on behalf of medical providers for unpaid treatment rendered to injured auto accident victims in Michigan. She has successfully represented providers of physiatry, psychology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, recreational therapy, vocational therapy, attendant care, and comprehensive neurorehabilitation services in trial and appellate courts across the State. In addition, she represents individual

plaintiffs in personal injury cases including auto accidents, wrongful death, and dog bite claims.

Her legal advocacy extends beyond her practice at Sinas Dramis Law Firm. 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 she was named a "Top 40 Under 40" attorney by National Trial Lawyers.

Sinas Dramis Law Firm represents plaintiff's personal injury cases across the state of Michigan. Headquartered in Lansing, the firm has additional offices in Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, and Saint Clair Shores, Michigan, and an office in Chicago, Illinois.



# Press Release

## Mike Nichols Joins Task Force

and will Speak at National Seminar in July



**Michael Nichols**

*MNichols@nicholslaw.net*

Attorney Michael J. Nichols of East Lansing has been asked to serve on a Michigan State Police task force which is reviewing the status of the current breath alcohol test instrumentation. The data master DMT has been in place since 2013 at police agencies around the State. The current owner of the instrument, Intoximeters, Inc., was criticized a year ago when the vendors provided by Intoximeters were deficient in conducting calibration and accuracy checks.

Mr. Nichols, a sustaining of the National College for DUI Defense and a member of the NCDD faculty will also speak at the college's summer session, which is held annually at the campus of Harvard University. This year will be a virtual event. The topic will be preparing for Trial at the initial consultation. Nichols has been a member of the NCDD since 2007.

# Press Release

## Chartier & Nyamfukudza

### Exonerates Another Michigan Man

Chartier & Nyamfukudza has had another exoneration—its second in 6 months. Shawn Brown was convicted of manslaughter and child abuse with the government advancing a theory of abusive head trauma, formerly known as shaken baby syndrome.

The Michigan Innocence Clinic at the University of Michigan began representing Mr. Brown after his initial appeal affirmed his convictions. The Michigan Innocence Clinic presented significant medical evidence that contradicted the evidence presented by the government at trial.

After Mr. Brown served 9 years in prison, the case was remanded for a retrial, and Mary Chartier was contacted by the Innocence Clinic and asked to take on the case. Chartier explained, “We looked at the case, and we believed strongly in Mr. Brown’s innocence. The evidence used to convict him was fundamentally flawed and medically unsound. Mr. Brown was a loving father

wrongfully convicted of a horrendous crime. We were eager to take on his case and fight for him.”

The Chartier & Nyamfukudza team has years of experience defending cases that involve significant forensic science issues and began mounting a



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defense that would present the new medical evidence to the jury. After nearly two years of preparing for trial, the preparation proved successful when the prosecutor dismissed the case. Mr. Brown was finally vindicated, and he is now listed on the National Registry of Exonerations.



# Press Release

## New Lawyers at Nichols Law Firm



**Jackee A. Moss**  
[jmoss@nicholslaw.net](mailto:jmoss@nicholslaw.net)

The Nichols Law Firm, PLLC announces 2 lawyers have joined the firm. Jackee A. Moss joined the firm as an associate. His practice areas are Family Law and Criminal Law. Mr. Moss is a Battle Creek native, who attended both the University of Michigan and Michigan State University, from which he holds a Bachelors Degree. He obtained his J.D. in 2011.



**Eric Schroeder**  
[eschroeder@nicholslaw.net](mailto:eschroeder@nicholslaw.net)

Eric Schroeder holds a Masters in Public Administration, a JD and an LLM in Insurance law. His practice areas will also include Family Law and Criminal Law. He is a native of the Tecumseh area and graduated from Albion College. He and his wife, Erin have one son and live in the Okemos area.

# Press Release

## Fraser Trebilcock Welcomes

**Randy Tahvonen, Former Chief Judge of the 29<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**Randy Tahvonen**  
[rtahvonen@fraserlawfirm.com](mailto:rtahvonen@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](mailto: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](http://fraserlawfirm.com) | [scglegal.com](http://scglegal.com).

# Press Release

## Dickinson Wright Ranked in

### The Bond Buyer's Midwest Year-End Review

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE May 6, 2021



Media Contact: Kelly Durso, Public Relations Senior Manager,  
313-223-3085, [kdurso@dickinsonwright.com](mailto:kdurso@dickinsonwright.com)

**TROY, Mich.** – Dickinson Wright PLLC is pleased to announce that the firm has been ranked as the #1 Bond Counsel in Michigan and the #5 Bond Counsel in the Midwest in The Bond Buyer's Midwest Year-End Review.

Rankings are based on dollar volume of deals in 2020 and included issues maturing in 13 months or more. In issues with multiple book-runners, each firm is credited with its actual allocation and in issues with multiple co-advisers or co-counsel; the par amount of the issues is divided equally among the firms. The Midwest region includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. To see the full report, please click [here](#).

Below are Dickinson Wright's rankings in The Bond Buyer's Midwest Year-End Review:

Michigan  
#1 Bond Counsel with a deal volume of \$4,075,300,000.

Midwest  
#5 Bond Counsel with a deal volume of \$4,093,500,000.

As a nationally recognized bond counsel firm, Dickinson Wright has more than sixty years of experience serving as bond counsel in public finance transactions. Our lawyers are problem-solvers focused on the individual needs of each client and create legal solutions to satisfy those needs. We have experience within all facets of financing municipal projects and programs for states, cities, townships, villages, counties, building authorities, county road commissions, colleges and universities, and other public entities. We also have four decades of experience representing the State of Michigan and its various agencies and authorities in complex bond financings. To learn more about the firm's Public Finance practice, please click [here](#).

#### About Dickinson Wright PLLC

Dickinson Wright PLLC is a general practice business law firm with more than 475 attorneys among more than 40 practice areas and 16 industry groups. The firm has 19 offices, including six in Michigan (Detroit, Troy, Ann Arbor, Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Saginaw) and 12 other domestic offices in Austin and El Paso, Texas; Chicago, Illinois; Columbus, Ohio; Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.;

Lexington, Ky.; Nashville, Tenn.; Las Vegas and Reno, Nev.; Phoenix, Ariz.; Silicon Valley, Calif.; and Washington, D.C. The firm's Canadian office is located in Toronto

Dickinson Wright offers our clients a distinctive combination of superb client service, exceptional quality, value for fees, industry expertise, and business acumen. As one of the few law firms with ISO/IEC 27001:2013 certification and one of the only firms with ISO/IEC 27701:2019 certification, Dickinson Wright has built state-of-the-art, independently-verified risk management procedures, security controls and privacy processes for our commercial transactions. Dickinson Wright lawyers are known for delivering commercially-oriented advice on sophisticated transactions and have a remarkable record of wins in high-stakes litigation. Dickinson Wright lawyers are regularly cited for their expertise and experience by Chambers, Best Lawyers, Super Lawyers, and other leading independent law firm evaluating organizations.





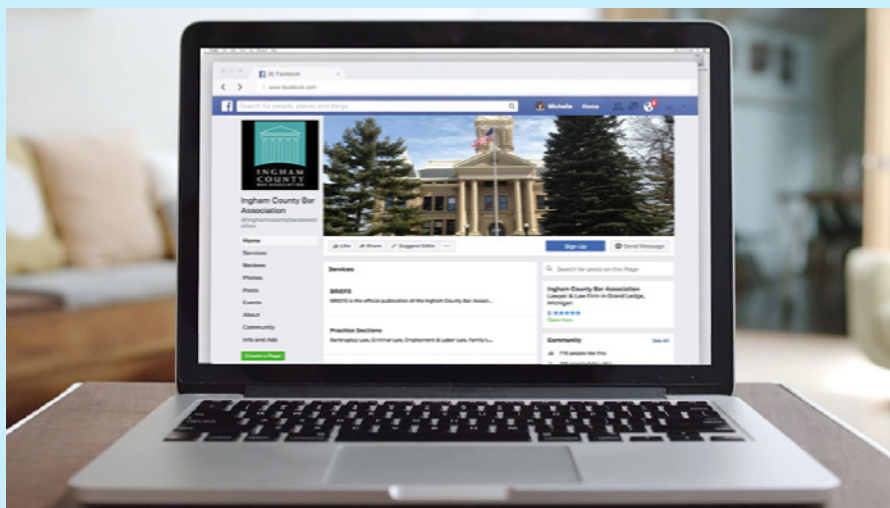
# ICBA Sponsorship Opportunities

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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

Past issues of BRIEFS can be found [here](#).

## BRIEFS Advertising Contract, Rates & Policies

*Thanks*

for reading

BRIEFS



Feedback? [briefs@inghambar.org](mailto:briefs@inghambar.org)

**Next issue:**

**July 2021 Power Couples**

**Happy Spring!**



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