

March 2022



Ingham County Bar Association

BRIEFS



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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.



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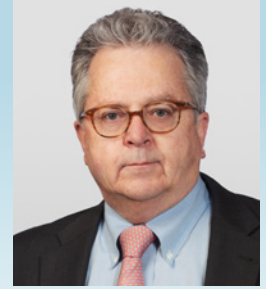
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President's Message



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Unfortunately, civility is hard to codify or legislate, but you know it when you see it. It's possible to disagree without being disagreeable. Sandra Day O'Connor

Politeness and civility are the best capital ever invested in business. P.T. Barnum

Civility

We seem to live in a world where many have forgotten the importance of civility in business, politics and the law. *Merriam Webster* defines civility as a: civilized conduct, especially courtesy and politeness, and b: a polite act or expression. Is this really that hard? Is this something that we, as advocates of the law, should try to practice daily? I would assert that we all should consciously try to be more civil in our daily practice and in our daily lives. We all can make the world a better place through daily conscious acts of civility. We can make the world a better place one act at a time.

Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner's Irvine, California office adopted a Code of Civility for its office. The Code is below in **bold** with my comments on each portion:

1. We greet and acknowledge each other.

- This is a simple act of kindness which requires little effort. Think of the many times that a simple hello and acknowledgement has brightened your day. It costs nothing to say hello and it might change the recipient's outlook on the day. Especially with the recent COVID

protocols, the opportunity to meet and greet each other will warm the souls of many.

2. We say please and thank you.

- Our parents and other influencers in our lives have taught us this simple act of kindness. Think of how many times someone has said thank you to you and what it has meant to you. The use of please and thank you drives us to continue to help others and serve society. I would suggest we consider taking this one step further and say, "You're welcome." Positive social interaction is good for our mental wellbeing.

3. We treat each other equally and with respect, no matter the conditions.

- This one might require some more effort. Take a step back and be respectful. The individual we are interacting with deserves this type of treatment. Furthermore, if the conditions are difficult, a respectful ethical approach to the individual has a greater chance of moving the interaction to a positive result. We can control how we interact with others.

4. We acknowledge the impact of our behavior on others.

- This is one that I have personally struggled with for years. My wife, Karen, has helped me become more aware of my body language and behaviors' impact on others. Watch the visual cues you are getting. It is easy to see if your behavior has had a negative impact on someone and take the time to correct it. Take a moment and ask yourself, how is the message I am delivering going to be taken? There is more than one way to accomplish your goals. First, consider your actions and how to prevent them from being taken in a negative way.

5. We welcome feedback from each other.

- This is important to understand how our actions are being perceived by others. Ask your coworkers how they interpret what you discussed. Encourage your coworkers to share their feedback with you. Feedback from individuals in your inner circle will help you achieve your goals. Those who love and respect you will help you achieve your goals and point out situations where your actions weren't received as intended. We all need to constantly

strive to be a better person today than we were yesterday.

6. We are approachable.

- “The door is always open” is part of Clark Hill’s DNA. The key is do you really mean it. We, as part of the legal profession, have been given or earned great opportunities. With opportunity comes obligations. As I have stated many times, I believe those in our profession have an obligation to help others. You never know when you are going to have the chance to make a difference in someone’s life. Leave that door open and welcome the opportunity to help others.

7. We are direct, sensitive and honest.

- Honest, open and empathic conversations will garner the best results. I enjoy conversations with my partners, Ron King, Matt Smith and Michael Pattwell because they always tell me what they think and are completely honest. They tell me when I might be off-base, whether in my professional or personal life, and challenge me to reflect. I appreciate and welcome these conversations. These conversations are good for all of us.

8. We acknowledge the contributions of others.

- Good leaders continually praise others. Generals don’t win wars, those in the trenches do. I know that my legal career would have never been as successful as it has been without my long-time assistant Kinneitha Thomas. Without her I would not have become a member, had the number of clients I have or become member-in-charge of Clark Hill’s Lansing office. Furthermore, we should acknowledge others because it is simply the right thing to do.

9. We respect other’s time commitments.

- We, as attorneys, should easily understand this one. That said, everybody’s time is valuable. When opening discussions or starting telephone conversations, maybe our first comment should be, “Is this a good time?” Everybody’s time is important to them, let’s all try to keep that in mind when going through our busy days.

10. We address incivility.

- This one might be the most difficult but might be as important as any

of the above to develop the culture we want in our offices and work environment. We should take the opportunities that we encounter to lead by example and inspire others to treat one another with respect, kindness, dignity and civility. At times, the individuals who we choose to address regarding incivility probably aren’t even aware of how their actions are being perceived. Let’s all try to be more assertive with regard to situations we encounter where incivility persists.

Thank you for taking the time to read this article. I truly believe that all of us in the legal field are uniquely situated to lead our country to a better place. All the division and the pandemic have led some to judge and lash out against others. Let’s all try to make a conscious decision to be more civil in how we treat everyone in our life. Let’s all try to make the world a better place one interaction at a time. It is a pleasure to have had the opportunity to work in the legal environment. It has changed my life and I hope that I am able to make the world a better place for others. As Nike says, “Let’s just do it.”

Employment Law and Mental Health Issues

By Christine Caswell, Caswell Law PLLC



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The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) both address psychological issues as well as other disability issues in employment:

To be protected by the ADA, one must have a disability or have a relationship or association with an individual with a disability. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or *mental* impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. The ADA does not specifically name all of the impairments that are covered.¹ (emphasis added)

And in the ADAAA, Sec. 2(a)(2), states:

[I]n enacting the ADA, Congress recognized that physical and mental disabilities in no way diminish a

person's right to fully participate in all aspects of society, but that people with physical or mental disabilities are frequently precluded from doing so because of prejudice, antiquated attitudes, or the failure to remove societal and institutional barriers;²

The ADAAA was enacted because Congress saw that the courts were narrowly defining "reasonable accommodations" and what constituted a "disability" under the ADA, overcoming the Act's intent. Their findings were that the requested accommodations would constitute "undue hardship" on the employer.³

When there is a need for accommodation, "the ADA does not require an employee to put a request for reasonable accommodation in writing, but under the Michigan Persons with Disabilities Act of 1975, a written request for reasonable accommodation must meet the requirements of MCL 37.1210(18) and (19), which requires the employee to request the accommodations within 182 days of knowing they need an accommodation if the employer has posted the required notices," explained Chris Davis, the supervising attorney over the Intake, Information, and Referral Department at Disability Rights Michigan. "I always tell my clients to put their requests in writing."⁴

According to Davis, when it comes to accommodating employees with mental health issues, an employer is required to engage in an "interactive process."

"Failure to engage in an interactive process could in itself be a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act," said Davis. "There should be a back and forth, coming up with an accommodation that can allow the employee to fulfill the essential functions of the job. Courts have generally said an employer can choose which accommodation would work better when they come up with multiple accommodations, such as more flexible work schedules to accommodate mental health issues or, if a person has an episode, to allow them extra time off to adjust medications, to work through that process. In recent years, under the amendments in 2008, things have gotten better, and the courts have taken the position that if the employer fails to engage in the interactive process, that employer can really be held liable. As long as the employee has put forward the request with documentation to back it up from a mental health professional, the employer has an obligation to engage in an interactive process. Some courts have said failure to hold that conversation, even if the accommodation was unreasonable, to ignore or not interact can really be harmful to the employer's position. Courts really look

at both parties to engage in that process to try to reach an accommodation. If the employer says I want no discussion, the court would look unfavorably at that.”⁵

In 2021, a *Syracuse Law Review* article by John Fortunato Tantillo looked at the issues of mental health accommodation under the ADA.⁶ Tantillo agreed that courts had been favoring employers under the “undue hardship” rules of the ADA when considering accommodations for those with mental health issues.⁷ Tantillo advocates that the “Undue Hardship” defense should be removed by Congress and replaced with the “Fundamentally Alter” standard which would consider the nature of the good, service, facility, privilege, advantage, or accommodation being offered. He says this is the standard presently used by public and private universities.⁸ Interestingly enough, Tantillo is specifically addressing accommodations by law schools in addressing the increase in mental health issues as students progress through law school.

He states that “law students suffer from depression, anxiety, and substance abuse at ‘unusually’ high rates. Research indicates that depression rates among law students is 8–9% prior to matriculation, 27% after one semester, 34% after two semesters, and 40% upon graduation.”⁹ These rates, according to Tantillo are higher than other fields, such as medical school. Nor, considering that the practice of law is very stressful, do these conditions subside after graduation. “[L]awyers are 3.6 times as likely to suffer from depression when compared to people in other jobs,” the article stated.¹⁰ This being said, Under the ADAAA, law firms may want to

be sensitive to providing reasonable accommodations and interactive discussions regarding mental health disabilities for their workers.

However, Davis noted that there is no requirement under the ADA to tell an employer about a disability. But, once the issue has been raised, Davis said, “Get documents from a medical professional saying, ‘I treat this individual for a disability that meets the terms of a disability under the law.’ This is when you try to get to reasonable accommodation or alleviating conditions that relate to the disability to perform the essential functions of the job.”¹¹

To file a complaint under the ADA, Title I, Davis noted plaintiffs in Michigan must file federally with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) within 300 days of the incident. “In Michigan, we have a co-investigation agreement with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, so you must file with the EEOC, get a right-to-sue letter, and file your lawsuit within 90 days. There is a three-year statute of limitations overall, so the investigation, process, and filing must be done in three years. If you miss the 300 days, you’re done at that point. You can’t directly file a federal lawsuit under Title I of the ADA, you must file an EEOC complaint first,” he said. “But you can still file a state claim for up to three years. You can file a complaint with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, but you don’t have to. Under the Michigan Persons with Disabilities Act, you can go directly into state court if you want.”

The legislative purpose of the ADA was to prevent discrimination against and

incorporate people with disabilities into the workforce. With the ADA was being so narrowly defined by the courts, it ultimately defeated the Act’s intended purpose, so Congress enacted the ADAAA with broader language. Now, as Tantillo article points out, there may still be room for legislative improvement, which would require even more openness on the part of employers.

Endnotes

- 1 Americans with Disabilities Act, “A Guide to Disability Rights Laws,” February 2020, as viewed at <https://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm>, on February 13, 2022
- 2 ADA Amendments Act of 2008, as viewed at <https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/ada-amendments-act-2008>, on February 13, 2022.
- 3 *Id.*
- 4 Zoom interview with Chris Davis, Supervising Attorney over the Intake, Information, and Referral Department at Disability Rights Michigan (January 13, 2022).
- 5 *Id.*
- 6 Tantillo, Joseph Fortunato, “An Invisible Truth: How Courts, Congress, & the ADA Have Failed to Support Reasonable Accommodations in the Workplace for People with Mental Illness,” 71 *Syracuse Law Review* 897 (2021), as viewed at https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4006540 on January 13, 2022.
- 7 *Id.*, at 919, citing *Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky, Inc. v. Williams*, 534 U.S. 184, 122 S. Ct. 681 (2002).
- 8 *Id.*, at 903.
- 9 *Id.*, at 909, citing *Lawyers & Depression*, Dave Nee Found., <http://www.daveneefoundation.org/scholarship/lawyers-and-depression/> (last visited May 22, 2021).
- 10 *Id.*, at 908, citing Dina Roth Port, *Lawyers Weigh in: Why is there a Depression Epidemic in the Profession?*, AM. BAR ASS’N J. (May 11, 2018, 7:00 AM).
- 11 Davis, *supra*.

Attorney Mental Health and Wellbeing—A Path Forward

By Tina Olson



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We can love our profession even as we acknowledge the struggles it carries with it.

Three watershed reports from 2014, 2016, and 2017 revealed what many knew but not all

were willing to face: the legal profession is a breeding ground for mental health issues ranging from depression and anxiety to serious suicidal thoughts. And in the intervening years to date, there has not been tremendous progress, though awareness has certainly increased.

In 2016, the American Bar Association Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs and the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation published a study regarding mental health and substance abuse among lawyers. It was a nationwide survey of almost 13,000 lawyers, and the results were grim. The study found that between 21 and 36% of lawyers qualified as problem drinkers, approximately 28% struggled with depression, 19% struggled with anxiety, and 23% with stress.

The picture for law students was just as troubling. The 2014 Survey on Law Student Well-Being, which encompassed law students in fifteen different law schools, revealed significant percentages

of students were dealing with mental health issues, alcohol and other substance issues. Three years later, in November of 2017, a Harvard Law School study found that out of 886 Harvard law students, 24% reported anxiety, and 25% reported depression. A shocking 20.5% were at a heightened risk of suicide, and a whopping 66% of students reported new mental health challenges and problems since entering law school.

The pandemic has not helped matters. In the first quarter of 2021, one survey found that one in two lawyers reported burnout, there was a decline in job satisfaction, and in lawyer well-being.

What makes being a lawyer so challenging?

Both civil and criminal practice expose lawyers to long hours. The most recent Bloomberg Law Attorney Workloads and Hours Survey reflects an average of fifty-three billable hours per week for those surveyed. And of course, not all hours are billable. Excessive hours lead to ongoing issues with work-life balance, which causes and exacerbates mental health, substance abuse, and physical health issues.

Many types of legal practice expose attorneys to secondary/vicarious trauma on an ongoing basis. According to the Department of Justice, “Vicarious trauma is an occupational challenge

for people working and volunteering in the fields of victim services, law enforcement, emergency medical services, fire services, and other allied professions, due to their continuous exposure to victims of trauma and violence. This work-related trauma exposure can occur from such experiences as listening to individual clients recount their victimization; looking at videos of exploited children; reviewing case files; hearing about or responding to the aftermath of violence and other traumatic events day after day; and responding to mass violence incidents that have resulted in numerous injuries and deaths.”

Regarding criminal defense, one article noted “A survey done in the early 2000’s by Pace University found that in comparing criminal defense attorneys with mental health providers and social service workers (who also work with traumatized populations), the criminal defense attorneys experienced more symptoms of [secondary traumatic stress] than the others.” And symptoms of secondary trauma can include “clipped emotional bandwidth, short-temperedness with family, disturbed sleep, withdrawal, exhaustion, anxiety, and helplessness.”

Deputy Director of the State Appellate Defender Office Marilena David trains on issues of attorney well-being. She notes, “Public defenders in particular

need to set realistic expectations for themselves and about what they can accomplish each day. The problem is not that there are not enough hours in the day. The problem is that there will always be more work, and we can only do so much with the time and resources we have. Once we accept that, we can begin to protect and care for the most important resource of all—ourselves.”

The path forward.

Progress has occurred in de-stigmatizing those seeking help and recognizing the support needs of attorneys. Individual and structural solutions exist to alleviate mental health and substance abuse issues and enhance attorney well-being. As one article suggests, “Work-life balance is a perennial challenge in law, but one that many firms have been increasingly willing to tackle. Increased flexibility with work-from-home and nontraditional hour structures offer the promise of helping attorneys get their work done on a schedule that meshes better with their home life. Biglaw’s slow creep toward results-oriented billing structures — and away from measuring associate output purely by billable hours and dollars collected — could also help relieve some of that stress from attorneys young and old.”

As recognized by the National Association for Public Defense in its “Ten Principles for Creating

Sustainability in Public Defense,” “A healthy workplace is one in which all organizational members collaborate to continually improve processes to protect and promote member well-being and organizational success. All seek alignment of organizational and member goals and needs so that they can grow and thrive together.” The recognition by firms, agencies, and organizations of their role in promoting and supporting attorney well-being is key to reversing the negative impact of stressful law practices.

On an individual basis, lawyers need to take proactive steps to protect their mental health and well-being. All Michigan attorneys should be aware of readily available resources from the American Bar Association, the State Bar and more. A sampling of these resources is listed below. In particular, the State Bar’s Lawyers & Judges Assistance Program provides resources, referrals, and support for lawyers, law students, judges, and family members. And help is also as close as our smart phones, with countless well-being apps as well as online therapy services.

David of the State Appellate Defender Office further reflected, “Public defenders in particular need to care for themselves before they can properly care for their clients or anyone else. The time is now for attorneys to prioritize

themselves over production. Our work is incredibly important, but it is also never-ending. In order to do the best for each of our clients, we have to do the best for ourselves first. Sit down. Go to bed early. Ask for an extension. Say no.” Wise advice for all lawyers.

Information and resources for lawyers:

https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/task_force_report/

Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers & Legal Employers, American Bar Association, p. 8. (2018). Located at: https://lawyerwellbeing.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/ToolkitFull_Final_July-30-2018.pdf .

<https://www.michbar.org/generalinfo/ljap/home>

<https://lawyerwellbeing.net/lawyer-well-being-week/>

Websites and apps for well-being:

Insight Timer

Headspace

Exhale

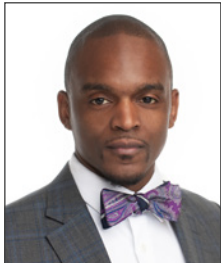
Drinkaware

Calm

Talkspace.com

Mental Health Court

By Takura Nyamfukudza



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INTRODUCTION

It is beyond doubt that mental health and the criminal justice system are inextricably linked. Additionally, people with mental illness are overrepresented in our criminal justice system.

Deinstitutionalization, or the emptying of state mental hospitals in the mid-twentieth century, is often cited as the reason for the high number of mentally ill people in jails in prisons. Mental health courts – like the ones in Ingham County – allow for diversion into community-based treatment and have been shown to be effective at reducing recidivism and consequently improving community safety.

I recently met with Judge James S. Jamo and conferred with members of his team in an effort to understand how they breathe life into the 30th Circuit Mental Health Court's (MHC) mission. That mission is to improve community safety and implementation of mental health services by providing a coordinated response to individuals charged with non-violent felony offenses in Ingham County. It is a tall order. But it is one that Judge Jamo and his entire team embraces. The numbers speak for themselves; it is a mission that they succeed at.

Below is an explanation of what makes the specialty court so effective and

unique. I describe the personnel who make it work and what their roles are. Perhaps most importantly, I provide information that I believe will help any potential participant make an informed decision about whether to take the plunge.

There is something in here for number crunchers, too. After I share a standout success story, I touch on lessons learned by the treatment team. I finish up with a look at what lies in the future for the MHC.

WHO?

The Court Team

The team is comprised of jurists, Community Mental Health (CMH) professionals, probation agents, law enforcement personnel, defense counsel, and assistant prosecuting attorneys.

Judge Jamo conducts pleas, sentencing, and probation violations. His colleague, Judge Stacia Buchanan, conducts team meetings and review hearings. Judge Lisa McCormick recently started stepping in to cover proceedings when Judge Jamo had a recurring scheduling conflict. Judge McCormick was assigned to the specialty court back when she was the Chief Deputy Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Ingham County.

Janice Dooley is the program director and she is responsible for supervising court staff.

In her capacity as program coordinator, Shelby Ensign is responsible for many

tasks. Those include, but are most certainly not limited to, receiving and tracking referrals, coordinating MHC services, screening potential participants, producing program brochures, as well as negotiating contracts with treatment providers.

Similarly, Emma Kelly oversees the development of and compliance with court case plan. Maintaining MHC files and assisting in maintaining the data needed for grant reports, weekly compliance, phase transition, drugs and alcohol testing, and treatment attendance are just a few of the attendant tasks.

Debra Willard is the Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties (CMHA-CEI) Supervisor. Ms. Willard's co-worker, Inger Lanese, is the current therapist.

Boyd Meyers and Jessica Farr and the probation agents who are assigned to the MHC.

Not surprisingly, the Ingham County Sheriff's Office has a seat at the treatment team table.

Finally, but certainly not least, Nattalie Macomber and Nicole Matusko represent the Ingham County Prosecutor's Office.

Who Can Make a Referral?

I learned that a referral may come from defense counsel, family members, or any other source. Judge Jamo emphasized that family supports are a big part of what the team has come to come "pro-social" contacts.

WHAT?

Eligibility Clinical

Judge Jamo explained that MHC participants are people who have been diagnosed with a “severe and persistent mental illness.” Such mental illness can include a serious emotional disturbance or developmental disability as defined by MCL 33.1100a(25) as well as MCL 300.1100(2) and (3). Notably, the mental health illness or functional impairment must necessitate intensive clinical services.

Legal

MCL 600.1090 contains the violent offender prohibition. Judge Jamo explained that the statute says the team may not accept someone who is “high level assaultive” and causes injury. However, there is some gray area in there. The team has learned not to just look at the crime class.

Additionally, they also do a deep dive to see if a potential participant needs help and whether that person would benefit from the program.

Judge Jamo noted that police forces are being trained on dealing with individuals who struggle with mental illness. He cited Washtenaw County as one jurisdiction that is really good at deescalating because they maintain a list of people who have gone through the mental health system. Officers trained in crisis prevention now get sent when emergency services receive calls involving people on that list.

Other Potential Hurdles?

Insurance coverage – or lack thereof – is not a factor in determining who will be admitted. Not meeting admission

criteria of the local CMH does not preclude a prospective participant from being considered for admission into the MHC.

Rules of Engagement

Every participant must plead guilty to a non-violent felony offense. Further, they must sign an agreement to participate and releases of information that authorize members of the treatment team to access clinical information. The releases also allow the treatment team to discuss the information in order to establish and monitor compliance with treatment and probation plans.

Legal Services

Participants have access to a pool of court appointed attorneys. To that end, the MHC partners with the Public Defender’s Office which has several litigators who are specially trained in legal issues related to mental health. These litigators help improve participants’ awareness of legal processes, the attendant rights, and court procedures.

Regular Probation v Specialty Court

Unlike regular probation, MHC uses written assignments to enhance learning. The quick knowledge modules, progress reports, and recovery stories that are commonplace in MHC are rarely used in regular probation. Moreover, the team approach this is central to the effectiveness of MHC is not utilized for people who are going through regular probation. Also absent from non-specialty court probationary terms are the additional supports like funding for housing, bus passes, and drug testing. Finally, specialty court offers a minimum of four contacts each month. Whereas regular probationers typically get one or two contacts each month.

Phase Structure

Phase 1

To begin, weekly review hearing attendance and reporting to the probation agent is required. Compliance with drug and alcohol testing is also mandatory. This is where the assessment and establishment of a “person-centered” treatment plan occur. Employment and educational goals are usually considered at this stage. This phase lasts a minimum of 12 weeks.

Phase 2

Review hearing attendance and reporting to the probation agent decreases to a bi-weekly basis. Making appointments, communicating with court staff, development of a personal wellness plan, and engaging in community service or enrolling in educational courses are some of the ways in which participants show compliance with their treatment and probation plans. 90 days of abstinence from drugs and alcohol are another requirement for this phase which lasts a minimum of four months.

Phase 3

Here, review hearing attendance and reporting to the probation agent drop to a monthly basis. Continued compliance with probation, treatment, and personal plans are compulsory. Sobriety from drugs and alcohol are critical. As are completion of the participant’s recovery story and demonstration of significant progress towards vocation or educational goals. Maintenance of steady housing is the final facet.

Participants become eligible for graduation after 90 days in this phase if the following requirements are met:

- i. Fines, costs, and assessments have been paid or waived;
- ii. The participant had been substance-free for 90 days before graduation; and
- iii. The participant has been in a stable housing environment for 90 days prior to graduation.

Review Hearings

Team meetings and review hearings are held on Friday mornings. The judge, MHC Coordinator, MHC Case Coordinator Specialist, CMH representatives, MHC defense counsel, an assistant prosecuting attorney, adult probation officer, and a representative of the Ingham County Sheriff's Office are always in attendance. The collaborative nature of these meetings truly distinguishes MHC from regular probation.

Successes and challenges experienced by the participants are discussed. This meeting of the minds is when the team develops plans that will address any existing challenges and encourage participants' continuing success.

Judge Buchanan presides over the review hearings. She took on that role when Judge Jamo had to step away from the MHC for personal reasons. Each participant who is scheduled to attend the review hearing on a particular day has an informal conversation about how they have been doing since the last time they spoke with the judge.

While he did not say it explicitly, the tone of Judge Jamo's voice and the number of anecdotes he shared strongly suggested that this is his favorite MHC event. He also harkened back to how some people initially bristled at the

thought of having an assistant prosecutor as a member of the treatment court team. Those concerns have since dissipated and having a prosecutor on the team has now become part of the best practices that most MHCs have adopted.

Probation Violations

Sanctions can result in a probation violation hearing. The hearings are independent of the review hearings and Judge Jamo presides. He contrasted MHC violation hearings with regular probation violation hearings. Judge Jamo seized on the holistic approach that is adopted by defense counsel. It is only possible because both the defenders and prosecuting attorneys have heard all the discussions during team meetings. Hence, they can wear both the treatment and litigant hats.

Community Resources

1. Alcohol Drug Administrative Monitoring (ADAM)
MHC participants visit ADAM for substance abuse testing.
2. Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA)
CATA is the primary means of transportation for a majority of MHC participants.
3. CEI/CMH
The psychiatry, relapse, and recovery services provided by CMH are indispensable to the MHC's mission.
4. Northwest Initiative
Here, participants attend life skills workshops and GED classes. They also receive behavioral therapy. Day reporting, supervision, and employment assistance are also offered.

5. Charter House Club House
At the Club House, MHC participants can avail themselves to day programming that offers transitional employment programs, tutoring, exercise opportunities, meals, and arts and crafts to name a few.
6. Prevention and Training Services (PATS)
PATS provides relapse treatment, outpatient substance abuse testing, anger management classes, and performs economic crime assessments. Intensive outpatient mental health treatment is also available there. PATS is well known for the Batterers Intervention Program.
7. Transitional and Residential Programs
MHC participants who need housing have many options. The ultimate selection depends on a number of factors including the individual's specific needs and availability of beds. Following are the places available for them to choose from. Pinnacle, RISE, Second Chance, Safe Harbor, Endeavor House, Holden House, House of Commons, KPEP, TriCAP, KPEP Bear River, and Odyssey House.

WHY?

Very early in our conversation it became readily apparent that the MHC is near and dear to Judge Jamo's heart. I asked why.

The seed was planted while Judge Jamo was first campaigning for his current seat. He was knocking doors with his now-late wife. Mrs. Jamo interacted with a young man who appeared to

have some challenges. Nothing about the interaction bothered Mrs. Jamo, but the young man's father soon ran up and apologized to her because he thought her son's interaction with her could have been interpreted as inappropriate. Mrs. Jamo had not taken offense, though.

The father proceeded to ask then-candidate Jamo how he planned to deal with mentally ill people who go through the criminal justice system. Because his son had been through the system many times. "Would you be an advocate for mental health court?" asked the father. Needless to say, Judge Jamo kept his campaign promise.

Fast forward beyond the election, Judge Jamo soon encountered someone with mental health concerns. Judge Jamo thought it would be easy to marshal community resources. However, there were several hurdles that he did not anticipate. That was what motivated him to learn about the resources, what they are, and how they can be accessed.

Then-Judge Thomas P. Boyd met with Judge Jamo and gave Judge Jamo "great advice and insight." Judge Boyd had already begun the 55th District Court's MHC. These conversations happened when there was talk of having an umbrella court for Ingham County. That never materialized, though.

Initially, the 30th Circuit's program operated on a small planning grant in 2014. Ms. Ensign proudly shared that the specialty court became fully functional in 2015.

WHEN?

Plea to Sentencing

Judge Jamo's preference is to take the plea and do the sentencing whenever

possible. That way only one jurist has to learn all of the intricacies associated with a particular person's file. The stage between plea and sentencing is the most critical for some people. Stable housing, mental health or substance treatment, and physical health issues are often the immediate foci for the team.

By way of example, the Judge shared that incarceration can really set someone back if that person has mental health concerns. Keeping someone in jail for four to five weeks between plea and sentencing could contribute to someone backsliding quite a bit. In his experience, isolation certainly doesn't help. It is not unusual for someone from CMH to pick up a putative participant, help the person to complete the packet, and get it submitted. Bus passes are another example of tangible benefits of participating in the MHC. Some participants do find a family member who can step in to help with temporary housing.

It is not unusual, however, for a referral to happen after probation has already begun. Perhaps issues weren't recognized early on. It sometimes becomes apparent once the person begins to struggle on traditional probation.

BY THE NUMBERS

Following is a comparison of the 30th Circuit Mental Health data with data from other mental health courts in Michigan. These numbers are centered around fiscal year (FY) 2020.

1. Participants

Current

There are currently 19 participants. The number can rise or fall based on graduation or termination from

the program. 25 is the maximum number of people. The court usually hovers between 18 and 23 participants at any given time.

Historically

Ingham County boasted 10 successful graduations¹ resulted in a 46% success rate for FY 2020. In FY 2021, there were 4 graduates which equated to a 30% success rate.

Already, there has been 1 successful graduation this year and another 4 are fast approaching.

2. Recidivism

14% of participants in Michigan mental health courts got a new charge within 3 years. That number rose to 26% after 5 years. Judge Jamo's team is working on gathering the numbers for graduates who hail from Ingham County.

3. Employment Status

Michigan mental health courts saw a 40% drop in employment during the height of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Conversely, Ingham County's participants saw an approximate 18% drop in employment.

4. Education

Around the state, 9% of MHC participants improved their level of education by the time they graduated. None of Ingham County's graduates had any educational improvements at discharge. As such, helping participants achieve their educational goals will be a sharp focus for Judge Jamo's team during FY 2022.

5. Improved Mental Health and Medication Compliance

98% of MHC participants throughout Michigan reported improved mental health at the end of FY 2020. 81% reported medication compliance

during the same timeframe. In Ingham County, those numbers were 56.25% and an impressive 93.33% respectively. Indeed, a majority of our local participants reported improved mental health after working with Judge Jamo's team. And Ingham County was clearly ahead of the state's power curve when it came to medication compliance at discharge.

6. Improved Quality of Life

Half of the individuals who graduated from our MHC in FY 2020 reported an improved quality of life. An almost perfect 96% of participants throughout Michigan reported improved quality of life upon discharge.

SUCCESS

"You want to be successful in every case, but you simply cannot be," said Judge Jamo. That observation is supported by the foregoing data. Nevertheless, the treatment team was able to reach consensus about the participant who they felt was the biggest success story.

This gentleman entered the program in early 2018. He had issues with his mental health from early in his childhood and didn't receive the treatment he needed. This participant had a history of overdoses and several

hospitalizations. Upon admission to MHC, he connected with a therapist right away. He struggled mightily with addiction in the beginning.

Following placement in residential, then transitional housing, he was able to find his own housing. Shortly thereafter, he secured a job and was off to a strong start when he began Phase 2. He took a turn shortly after, though. He struggled with mental stability and sobriety over the next couple of years.

Fortunately, he survived an overdose. A true fighter, he eventually entered Phase 3 in 2021. To everyone's glee, he finished out strong. It took consistent and concerted effort to help that participant break the vicious cycle he had been experiencing much of his life.

Typically, participants can successfully complete the program in 18 months. His situation was different, though. He accepted help and never gave up on himself. The MHC team considers him a standout because of how far he came during his time in the program. In short, he proved that when things feel like they will never get better, they do!

LESSONS LEARNED

Judge Jamo talked about how due process was a foreign concept to CMH

providers in the beginning. "[Participant] hasn't shown up. Throw him in jail for 30 days," was a common retort. He remembered how they had to teach each other about their respective fields – law and mental health.

Now that Judge McCormack is on the bench, she has inherited a treatment court in the family division. Doubtless, she borrows from all that she learned in helping to set up Ingham County's MHC during her tenure as the chief deputy.

Training for everyone has changed. Probation officers have unique experience now besides their general dockets. Teamwork definitely makes the dream work.

LOOKING AHEAD

The treatment team plans to keep in contact with graduates so that the ones who are willing and able to mentor current participants can serve in that capacity. They will also monitor new arrests and convictions to review data in the future. Post termination interviews will help them gather feedback.

Endnotes

- 1 Unsuccessful completion means a participant was generally non-compliant when terminated, got a new offense, or absconded from the program.

De-escalating and decriminalizing *Mental Health*

By Christine Caswell



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According to the *Washington Post*, 1,559 people with *known* mental health problems have been shot and killed by police in this country since 2015.¹ (emphasis added) According to the Treatment Advocacy Center, “people with mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement.”²

The *Michigan Advance* stated, “Nationwide, somewhere between 28% to 52% of people suffering from mental illness have been arrested at least once. Inmates suffering from mental illness spend a disproportionate amount of time in jail compared to those convicted of the same crimes. Mental illness impacts a quarter of Michigan’s prisoners, and their care comes with a hefty price tag. It was estimated in 2016 that \$95,000 a year was spent on a mentally ill prisoner, compared to only about \$6,000 spent on a non-incarcerated mentally ill person. For those incarcerated without mental illness, only \$35,000 was spent per prisoner per year.”³

Lansing psychiatrist Roy Meland, DO said he understands that “the police are in a stressful situation and the adrenaline is running, so they don’t really rely on de-escalation. They’re used to a show of force, which doesn’t help the situation when dealing with someone with mental health issues.”⁴ Recently, Dr. Meland had a client with a brain injury go out drinking with a friend and eventually the police were involved. The friend reported that the police ignored the client repeatedly telling the police he had a brain injury, and the client ended up “pretty physically injured.”⁵

“I support [crisis intervention training] programs for the police as much as possible,” he said.⁶

In 2021, the Michigan legislature enacted PA 162 and PA 163, amending The Mental Health Code, in a bipartisan effort to provide and fund more jail diversion services.

“Mental health is a big issue,” said Sen. Stephanie Chang (D-Detroit), who sponsored SB 637 which became PA 162. “We really need to make sure that when people have a mental health crisis, that the people who are responding are the ones who are going to be able to actually get that person help.”⁷

Sec. 207f. (1) Subject to appropriation to the jail diversion fund created under section 207c

[a behavioral health practitioner specifically trained in community crisis response], the department [of Mental Health] shall create a community crisis response grant program, in accordance with the recommendations of the [mental health diversion] council, using half of appropriated funds, to provide competitive grants to assist local units of government that apply according to the criteria outlined in this section. (2) The department shall distribute grants to local units of government in accordance with recommendations of the council for the purpose of establishing or expanding community-based mobile crisis intervention services. The department must give priority to grant applications that demonstrate a commitment to best practices as identified by the department in coordination with the council. (3) A grant application may be made by any applicable local unit of government and must be distributed to a local unit of government using a prospective payment methodology.

Michigan PA 162, Sec. 207f (2021)

Sen. Rick Outman (R-Six Lakes) sponsored SB 638, now PA 163, providing for grants “for local communities to create jail diversion programs allowing for those with mental illness who run into trouble with the law

to be sent to an inpatient mental health facility, instead of jail.”⁸

Sec. 207d. (1) Subject to appropriation to the jail diversion fund under section 207c, the department shall create a behavioral health jail diversion grant program, using half of appropriated funds, to provide competitive grants to assist local units of government that apply according to the criteria outlined in this section. (2) The department shall distribute grants to local units of government to establish or expand behavioral health jail diversion programs in coordination between community agencies and law enforcement agencies.

PA 163, Sec. 207d (2021).

According to Wayne State University, between the use of professional screening and reports from enforcement, “32% of those entering county jails were identified as having mental health concerns.” However, when used alone, professional screening identified 33% more rates of mental health issues than reports from enforcement alone.⁹

Marianne Huff, CEO of the Mental Health Association in Michigan, stated, “Jail diversion requires cooperation across a lot of different systems.... the criminal justice system, including law enforcement, the courts [and] judges. It requires mental health and behavioral health professionals, systems like community mental health, to collaborate.... City, county, local governments, they all need to cooperate together.”¹⁰

Detroit and Wayne County have already instituted a certified crisis intervention team at certain precincts which incorporate enforcement, dispatchers, mental health professionals, and families.¹¹

“This program is going to save lives.... It will help people that are in a crisis that don’t need to be put in the judicial or criminal justice system, but [being] taken to the hospital and getting the services they need,” said Detroit Police Chief James White. “We cannot arrest our way through mental illness.”¹²

Endnotes

1 “1,021 People Have Been Shot and Killed by Police in the Past Year,” Washington Post, last updated February 9, 2022, last viewed at

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/investigations/police-shootings-database/> on February 14, 2022.

- 2 “People with Untreated Mental Illness 16 Times More Likely to Be Killed By Law Enforcement,” Treatment Advocacy Center, <https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/key-issues/criminalization-of-mental-illness/2976-people-with-untreated-mental-illness-16-times-more-likely-to-be-killed-by-law-enforcement->, last viewed on February 16, 2022.
- 3 Julia Forrest, “Bipartisan bills boost crisis response and jail diversion programs for people with mental illness,” *Michigan Advance* (2021).
- 4 Zoom interview with Roy Meland, DO, LifeStance Health, on February 17, 2022.
- 5 *Id.*
- 6 *Id.*
- 7 *Supra*, Forrest.
- 8 *Id.*
- 9 Sheryl Dekubiak, Ph.D., “Mental Health Across the Criminal Legal Continuum: A Summary of Five Years of Research in Ten Counties,” Wayne State University School of Social Work Center for Behavioral Health and Justice (2019), p. 11.
- 10 *Supra*, Forrest.
- 11 Detroit-Wayne Crisis Intervention Team, <https://www.detroitwaynecit.org/>, last viewed February 18, 2022.
- 12 Detroit police expand mental health crisis response program, Fox 2 Detroit, <https://www.fox2detroit.com/news/detroit-police-expand-mental-health-crisis-response-program>, last viewed February 18, 2022.

The Midsized Mansfield Rule:

Is this Opportunity Right for Our Firm?

By Amanda Dernovshek



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So, you've heard about the Mansfield Rule and are wondering whether it may be an opportunity for your firm. Likely, you have many questions such as: What is Diversity Lab? What firms can participate? What is required to be "certified"? What resources does Diversity Lab offer to assist with the certification? Is this something our firm should consider?

If you are interested in learning about a new program which helps firms to address the lack of diversity within the legal community, continue reading.

What is Diversity Lab?

Diversity Lab is an incubator for ideating, experimenting, and sharing creative ideas for boosting diversity and inclusion in the legal field. One of Diversity Lab's early programs was geared towards advancing women specifically - known as the 2016 Women in Law Hackathon. The Hackathon was a Shark Tank-style competition used to generate experimental methods for

boosting the advancement of women in the law. Following the success of the Hackathon, Diversity Lab began developing the Mansfield Rule program. The name "Mansfield Rule" comes from Arabella Mansfield, who was the first woman to practice law in the United States. The Mansfield Rule program is geared toward large law firms and provides a framework for understanding a firm's diversity among leadership, and is focused on all forms of diversity, not just advancing women. In 2020, Diversity Lab released its latest version of the Mansfield Rule: the [Midsized Mansfield Rule](#).

What firms can participate?

The Midsized Mansfield Rule is geared towards firms who have between 50 and 150 attorneys. In its initial year, over 40 law firms participated in the program. Since then, Diversity Lab continues to host new cohorts of law firms every 18 months. The most recently cohort began their work in the fall of 2021. To see a list of those currently participating, see this [press release](#).

What is required to be "certified"?

To become certified under the Midsized Mansfield Rule, each participating firm must attest that it considers 30% of historically underrepresented attorneys for leadership opportunities. Under the terms of the program, "historically underrepresented attorneys" include

women, attorneys of color, LGBTQ+ attorneys, and attorneys with disabilities.

Each certification cycle lasts for 18 months. During each cycle, each participating law firm is required to periodically certify that its firm meets certain requirements. Specifically, each firm must complete a series of disclosures to demonstrate that it meets at least 60% of the following criteria:

- A. The law firm considered a minimum of 30% underrepresented attorneys for:
 - (1) equity partner promotions,
 - (2) lateral party and mid/senior level associate openings,
 - (3) appointment to chairperson or managing partner role,
 - (4) executive committee and/or board of director positions;
 - (5) compensation committee positions;
 - (6) election of appointment to governance roles, and
 - (7) participation in client meetings or formal pitch opportunities.
- B. The law firm provides transparency about job responsibilities and governance procedures for the processes above.

When considering the applicable pool of attorneys for each position described above, the firms are permitted to consider lateral hires as well as promotions of attorneys already working in the firm. While implementing the recordkeeping required to certify is substantial, the benefits of participating in this certification program are significant.

What resources does Diversity Lab offer to assist with the certification?

Diversity Lab provides an ever-growing knowledge center of resources for participating law firms which includes monthly knowledge sharing calls to discuss best practices, access to a resources library with key research, and consultation from Diversity Lab throughout the certification cycle, among other benefits. The samples provided on the resources library include items such as surveys for gathering data on your employee population, proper procedures for administering such surveys, tools for

tracking who is “considered” for various opportunities, and guidance.

Is this something our firm should consider?

Yes, absolutely. While there is an expense related to this program, both monetary and in the time committed to tracking your firm’s data, participation in this program demonstrates a commitment to diversity within your firm and within the legal and local community. Along with the external benefits of this commitment, participation may increase employee morale because studies have shown that diversity in the workplace is beneficial for business in many ways including recruitment and retention of qualified employees and clients. Additionally, making efforts to increase diversity through a structured program that requires capital to participate shows the firm will “put its money where its mouth is” and that the firm is a leader for social change.

Nearly 120 firms sought certification under the original Mansfield Rule during the 2020 cycle. For firms that completed certification, Diversity Lab reports:

- 94% of firms said that after adopting the Mansfield Rule, their candidate pool for pitch teams was more diverse.
- 79% of participating firms reported that their lateral partner hiring pool was more diverse following adoption of the Mansfield Rule, and 76% said their equity partner promotions pool was more diverse.

If your firm has 150 or fewer attorneys and is seeking structured assistance to increase diversity within leadership and management, the Mid-sized Mansfield Rule certification program may be a great fit. While diversity efforts cannot be carried out overnight, participation in programs such as the Mansfield Rule is a step towards a better, more diverse, and more inclusive legal field.

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The ICBF would like to share the 2020-2021 grant recipients! These five organizations contribute greatly to our community and we are honored to help further their missions.

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To provide individualized support to sobriety court participants.



Firecracker Foundation

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The Ingham County Veterans' Treatment Court

The Ingham County Veterans Treatment Court (ICVTC) was established in March 2010. It integrates treatment and services with supervision of each veteran's probationary case, promoting sobriety, recovery and stability through a coordinated response. Veterans enter the justice system due to treatable conditions, including substance use disorders, mental health conditions (PTSD), and trauma (traumatic brain injury). 81% had a substance use disorder before incarceration, and 25% were identified as mentally ill.

The ICVTC offers solutions. As of 11/8/2021, the ICVTC has worked with 233 participants over 11 years. Its graduation rate of 81% exceeds national and state averages of approximately 73%. Participants are provided treatment, as needed, for substance abuse, mental health, physical health and behavioral health (including anger management and domestic violence).

Friends of Ingham County Veterans' Treatment Court, Inc. ("Friends") is a 501c3 corporation organized to provide ICVTC veterans needed emergency assistance. From the Court's inception, Friends has funds to pay veterans' emergency needs for shelter, and on a one time basis, to relieve immediate debt needs for indigent veterans (including

cell phones, housing, utilities, children's beds, short term power wheelchair rental, laundromat help, CATA and Spectran passes, clothes from thrift stores, dental, hearing aids and glasses, storage, fuel oil, and monitoring). The Friends pay for graduation certificate frames, graduation tokens and lunch on the day of Veterans Court, permitting Veterans, Mentors, Staff and representatives from support services to informally share experiences and build comradery. The Ingham County Bar Foundation's strong support has provided needed funds to meet these critical needs.

The ICVTC has a Veteran Mentor program which pairs Veteran Participants with Veteran Mentors from the community. They provide guidance and a peer support to empower their fellow veterans to change their lives. Mentors assist Veterans with transportation, disability claims, contesting discharge status, and connecting with available services. Many mentors have been local attorneys who served in the military. Newer attorneys who served in the military are encouraged to volunteer as a Mentor. They make great mentors and find it rewarding service.

ICBA-YLS Horn of Plenty

The ICBA-YLS Executive Board would like to thank the area firms, attorneys, and support staff that donated to the 2021 Horn of Plenty! The ICBA-YLS delivered carloads of clothing, household supplies, and food to the Cristo Rey Community Center in Lansing this holiday season thanks to generous donations from:

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Press Release



Sally D. Babbitt
of Babbitt Legal
Group, PC
announces the
release of her book,
"When the Gloves
Come Off- Why
America's Families
Are Fighting in
Court." You can

find more information on the book
or order a copy at Bookbaby.com or
Amazon.com, in both softcover and
e-book formats.

Press Release

Jamie White, Lead Attorney in Nassar and Anderson Litigation, Speak to WMU Cooley Students



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LANSING, Mich. – On Wednesday, Feb. 16, WMU-Cooley Law School students had the opportunity to learn from lead attorney James White about the complex process that went into litigation against doctors Larry Nassar at Michigan State University and the late Robert Anderson, at the University of Michigan.

White, founding attorney of Okemos-based White Law PLLC, was a guest speaker in WMU-Cooley Professor Mark Dotson's Torts II class.

White spoke to the students about how the statute of limitations and immunity played a major role in both the Nassar and Anderson cases, and how he is pushing for state lawmakers to expand the statute of limitations for sexual abuse survivors.

"For me, one of the frustrating things about the statute of limitations is it doesn't go to the merits of the claim and it's simply just a shield of protection," White told the law students. "Its intentions are good because there is a level of equity and fairness that defendants deserve. But evidence disappears over time, and the idea is you can't hold someone responsible for something so far in the future. The problem with that argument, in my opinion, is that it doesn't address the ultimate issue, and that is the statute

of limitations only opens the door to the courtroom, it doesn't grant you the merits of the claim – so you still have to bring your evidence to court and you still have to bring your evidence to a jury and prove your claim."

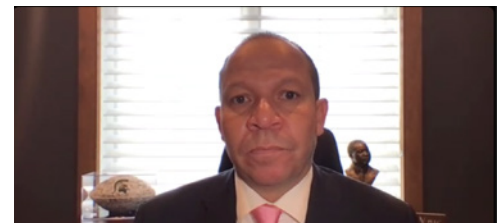
White, whose practice focuses on criminal sexual conduct cases associated with children, explained that he plans to work with legislators to introduce a bill that will broaden the statute of limitations and immunity in Michigan.

"We've had pushback for the last four years on this, which speaks to the volume of power of the insurance companies and the power of some of these agencies have," White said during the class. "It's a really important issue. It's one we're working on as we speak. I think you're going to see introduction of bills that address immunity, address notice of claim issue and address the statute of limitations in the relatively near future."

Additionally, White spoke with students about how the business of law is just as important as practicing law.

"Practicing law is easy; the business of law is hard," he said. "If there's ever been a time to understand the business of law, it's now because branding is everything and it's becoming more and more important, especially in the digital age and the day of social media. It's not

too early to start – start blogging, start podcasting, start working on imaging and your own personal brand. It takes time, but once you establish that, it's a great tool for the business of law."



Jamie White, founding attorney of Okemos-based White Law PLLC and lead attorney in the litigation cases against Larry Nassar at Michigan State University and the late Dr. Robert Anderson, the sports doctor at the University of Michigan, was a guest speaker for during Professor Mark Dotson's Torts II class on Wednesday, Feb. 16.



WMU-Cooley Law School Professor Mark Dotson asks Jamie White, founding attorney of Okemos-based White Law PLLC and lead attorney in the litigation cases against Larry Nassar at Michigan State University and the late Dr. Robert Anderson, the sports doctor at the University of Michigan, a question during his Torts II class on Wednesday, Feb. 16.

About WMU-Cooley Law School:

WMU-Cooley Law School was founded on a mission of equal access to a legal education and offers admission to a diverse group of qualified applicants across the country. Since the law school's founding in 1972, WMU-Cooley has provided a modern legal education to more than 20,000 graduates, teaching the practical skills necessary for a seamless transition from academia to the real world. WMU-Cooley enrolls classes year-round at its Michigan and Florida campuses. WMU-Cooley is an independent, non-profit law school, accredited by both the American Bar Association and the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.



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.



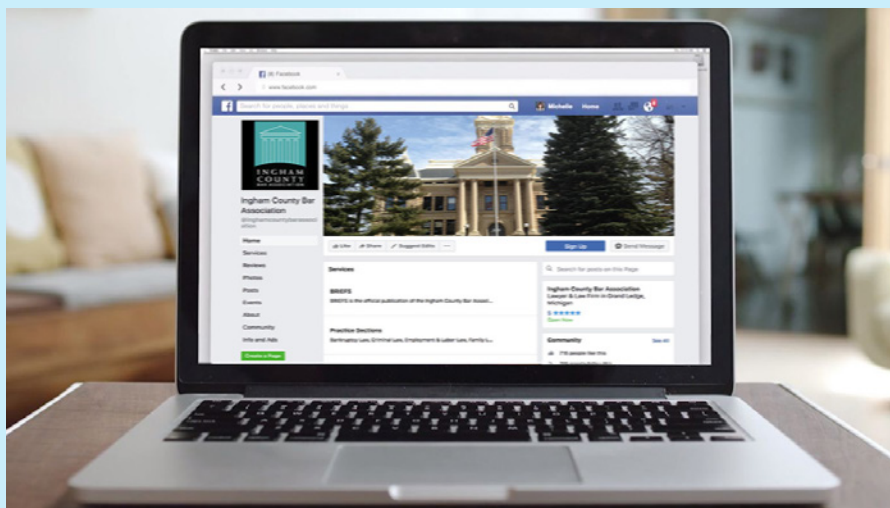
ICBA Sponsorship Opportunities

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



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:800-968-0738) 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

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

BRIEFS Advertising Contract, Rates & Policies



Thanks for reading

BRIEFS

Here Comes Spring!

Feedback?

briefs@inghambar.org

Next issue:

May 2022 dedicated to New Judges



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