

July 2022



Ingham County Bar Association

# BRIEFS

## Opioid Crisis

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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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# President's Message



Pam Amato,  
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We would like to warmly thank Charles A. Lawler for this last year as President of the ICBA - it has been a pleasure working with you and the President's messages in *Briefs* were always an inspiration.

We also want welcome ***Pam Amato as new President of ICBA.***

After getting her Juris Doctor, Cum Laude, from Michigan State University – Detroit College of Law, she was admitted to the bar in 2002. She has practiced both civil and criminal law, worked for the Michigan Department of the Treasury as an Emergency Financial Manager and now practices in the areas of property law, probate and domestic relations at Mallory, Lapka, Scott & Selin, PLLC. Partner Keldon Scott shared this wonderful quote with us:

*" Pam has a reputation for being tenacious/persistent. She has gone to the mat for so many clients and her friends. She stands up for those in need. Animals especially are near and dear to Pam's heart. Pam is a Board Member for the Capital Area Humane Society helping to care for animals in need. We are confident that she will extend that same advocacy and passion in her work for the Ingham County Bar Association. She puts her heart and soul into her representation and assignments. For example, when cities in Michigan were crying out for help organizationally and financially, with her background in hospitals and finance, she took on the role of emergency financial manager for a city in crisis. She did not give up – she took over. She successfully prepared and obtained approval of the city deficit elimination plan. She corrected city audit deficiencies and improved the budget preparation and financial record keeping.*

*Her clients experience, first-hand, Pam's organization and tenacity. She does not give up even in the face of bad facts, delayed dockets, or a client's inability to cover legal expenses. She cares. The Ingham County Bar Association has experienced her discipline and care over the last several years in the various positions she held. As president, the Ingham County Bar Association will experience more of the same.*"

# Ingham County Criminal Justice System Responds to the Opioid Crisis

By: Chris Martin, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney



Chris Martin  
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This issue of Briefs focuses on our criminal justice system's changing approach to low-level drug offenses. We begin with the perspective of experienced prosecutors making targeted interventions to prioritize treatment and recovery over traditional prosecution. The issue also highlights the opportunities provided by treatment

court programs in Ingham County and the shift to a harm reduction model for certain individuals post-sentencing. These philosophical shifts provide new opportunities for persons experiencing substance use disorder. If you have questions or would like to engage on these topics, please contact Chris Martin at [cmartin@ingham.org](mailto:cmartin@ingham.org).

## Opioid Stats

- Since 2011 – there has been a 299% increase in opioid deaths
- In 2017 there were 9,492,455 opioid prescriptions written, and per census of same year, the population of Michigan was 9.926 million
- In Ingham County, opioid overdose deaths in 2019 were 78, in 2020, 99. Fourth highest in state after Wayne with 700, Macomb with 269 and Genesee with 141
- In 2019, Ingham County was fifth in the state for opioid-related hospitalizations with 52
- In 2020, Ingham County was sixth in the state for opioid prescriptions written
- Deaths in Michigan from opioids – in 2019 there were 2,354, in 2020 there were 2,738, in 2021 (provisional data) there were 2,809
- Michigan non-fatal overdose emergency department visits – in 2019 there were 32,543, in 2020 there were 30,582 and in 2021 (provisional data) there were 30,920
- April was the highest month for both deaths and overdoses, with May second and July third for both

*All statistics listed are from <https://mi-suddr.com/opioids/> (and specific to Ingham County and/or Michigan)*

# Our Shift from “Drug Prosecution” to “Drug Response”

By: Carol Siemon, Ingham County Prosecuting Attorney



Carol Siemon  
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When I was first elected Ingham County Prosecutor, I spent significant time evaluating the ways our criminal justice system prosecuted drug crime and crime adjacent to substance use disorders. Addiction was (and still is) rampant in our community, and we all know the opioid crisis continues to reach new heights (or depths) in terms of lives negatively impacted.

Sadly, the Covid-19 pandemic has only raised the stakes on this issue. According to a recent *New York Times* feature, deaths from drug overdoses rose to record-breaking levels in 2020 and 2021. Americans suffered more than 108,000 overdose deaths in 2021 according to preliminary data from the CDC—a 15 percent increase in overdose deaths from 2020 to 2021. In addition to overdose, the realities of drug addiction and the illegal drug trade manifest themselves in the vast majority of cases that come through our office.

My priority has always been responding to the opioid crisis

and other drug-related issues in Ingham County with a responsive and forward-looking approach. Philosophically, I believe the “War on Drugs” thinking that dominated the early part of my legal career was an incomplete and often misguided approach to the people impacted by substance use disorder. We learned throughout the 1980s and 1990s that we cannot just incarcerate ourselves out of the drug problems our communities face. We need to do more. To that end, my office has adopted a two-part response to drug crime in our community:

First, we need accountability for drug dealers, persons who engage in violence related to the drug trade, and those who use the drug trade to exploit others. Our partners in local law enforcement have been instrumental in seeking out dangerous drug dealers and getting illegal controlled substances and contraband off the streets. These efforts have led to multiple successful drug prosecutions in our state and federal courts. While these types of investigations and prosecutions present many challenges, our office, and the court system, have the infrastructure in place to process these types of cases to reach the outcomes justice requires.

The second part of our approach—adopting a public health response to substance use disorder—has proven

to be a greater challenge. We have learned in many cases that drug addiction is an illness requiring treatment, and not necessarily a criminal pathology. It follows that providing resources for treatment and recovery is more productive for individuals and families struggling with substance use disorders than incarceration or long-term involvement with the criminal justice system. Accordingly, we have adapted our office policies related to low-level drug possession and drug use offenses to connect drug users with treatment and resources. We have already seen these proactive measures ending the cycles of addiction, exploitation, and relapse that are devastating to individuals and families in our community—and are often at the foundation of the illegal drug trade.

Here is a short list of interventions we have prioritized during the last five years to move toward our goal of adopting public health-related measures beyond the traditional criminal justice system to respond to the opioid crisis:

- Designation of a full-time “Drug Response” Prosecutor in the Ingham County Prosecutor’s Office
- Increased involvement with Ingham County Treatment Court Programs
- Expanded eligibility for pre-charge diversion programs for “user” amounts of controlled substances



- Partnerships with community organizations, including Lifeboat Recovery Services, Ingham Opioid Abuse Prevention Initiative, Families Against Narcotics, and many others
- Participation in the Building Bridges Medication Assisted Treatment Program

- Participation in the first-ever Ingham County Overdose Fatality Review Team
- Serving on the Working Group for the Institute for Innovation in Prosecution’s (IIP) Prosecution and Public Health Publication

Obviously, we have much more work to do to accomplish our goals, but a focus on healthy individuals and healthy communities will be an important element of our response to drug crime moving forward. I encourage attorneys and others in the community to reach out to my office if you would like to learn more about the important work we are doing in response to the opioid epidemic.

## Opioid Stats

The opioid-use disorder is defined as opioid use and the repeated occurrence within 12 months of two or more of eleven problems. The problems include opioid withdrawal with stopping opioid use, giving up essential life events for opioid use, and excessive time using opioids. The individual also has significant impairment or distress as a result of opioid use. Six or more items on the diagnostic criteria indicate a severe condition.

The signs and symptoms of opioid use disorder include drug-seeking behavior, legal or social ramifications due to opioid use, and multiple opioid prescriptions from different clinicians. Furthermore, various medical complications from the use of opioids, opioid cravings, increased opioid usage over time, and symptoms of opioid withdrawal with stopping opioids.

A list of the eleven problems is given below:

- Continued use despite worsening physical or psychological health
- Continued use leading to social and interpersonal consequences
- Decreased social or recreational activities
- Difficulty fulfilling professional duties at school or work
- Excessive time to obtain opioids, or recover from taking them
- More taken than intended
- The individual has cravings
- The individual is unable to decrease the amount used
- Tolerance
- Using despite it being physically dangerous settings
- Withdrawal

Copied from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK553166/> (definition of opioid-use disorder)

# The Drug Response Prosecutor: Defining a New Role

By: Chris Martin, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney



Chris Martin  
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The Ingham County Prosecutor's Office has had a designated Drug Unit for as long as anyone in this office can remember. Up until the last few years, the prosecutors' role in the Drug Unit was straightforward—work with police to break up drug rings and prosecute narcotics traffickers in our area. The police playbook was familiar too—arrest drug users (the “small fish”) and gain their cooperation to work up the food chain to higher-level traffickers (the “big fish”). Obviously, there was more nuance than this, but that was the basic idea.

The prosecutor had an active role in this system. The prosecutor charged the small fish in hopes of securing their cooperation against the big fish. In the best-case scenario, the small fish provided information that opened doors to prosecute the big fish, and in return the small fish received favorable plea bargains. But there are more small fish than big fish, and many who are charged are not in a position to cooperate. Couple this approach with the “War on Drugs,” and the result was that prosecutors spent significant time and resources pursuing

prolonged criminal cases against low-level drug users.

Sadly, in this system, many offenders were likely to end up incarcerated when they needed something more than time behind bars. Prosecutor Siemon wanted to change this paradigm, and she started by changing the job description and responsibilities for the assistant prosecutors assigned to drug cases.

That's where I fit in. I have been Ingham County's lead drug response prosecutor since October 2019. My role was somewhat undefined when I began, but in the time since I have worked closely with Prosecutor Siemon and the leadership of the Ingham County Prosecutor's Office to craft a three-part job description for prosecutors serving in our drug unit: 1) traditional drug prosecution; 2) securing resources and alternative dispositions for low-level offenders; and 3) building partnerships within our community to meaningfully address addiction and the opioid crisis.

## 1. Traditional Drug Prosecution

Ingham County has its share of sophisticated and/or violent drug traffickers, who need to be held accountable for their offenses. We also have specialized law enforcement drug teams investigating high-level narcotics trafficking. I work closely with the Michigan State Police Tri-County Metro Narcotics Taskforce and Lansing Police Department's Special Operations Division to pursue complex narcotics trafficking cases in court.

## 2. Resources and Alternative Dispositions for Low-Level Offenders

From a prosecution perspective, the largest difference in our “drug response” approach is the way we handle low-level drug offenders. Rather than maximizing our leverage as prosecutors in these cases, we increasingly offer “off ramps” to help people who use drugs secure treatment outside of the traditional criminal justice system. We expanded the eligibility criteria for our diversion program to make more low-level offenders eligible for pre-charge diversion. These programs allow them to avoid criminal courts entirely and keep certain offenses off their criminal record. Perhaps the most notable change in our diversion criteria is the expansion of the program to allow for people charged with cocaine use and cocaine possession to enter diversion if they are otherwise eligible. Beginning this summer, we are starting a pilot program to further expand the diversion program to include some low-level opioid possession and use offenses as well. In order to expand diversion, we are relying on partnerships with community-based treatment and recovery services to ensure that participants have the support they need to succeed (see below). We have also increased our involvement in Ingham County's treatment court programs to meet the needs of individuals who might not qualify for diversion.



### **3. Community Partnerships to Respond to the Opioid Crisis**

The drug response approach cannot be successful without community partnerships and accountability. For example, our pilot program to expand diversion opportunities to low-level cocaine and opioid offenders requires much more accountability and involvement than the standard bad check and retail fraud cases commonly associated with diversion programs. We also recognize that we, as attorneys, are not experts in addiction and recovery. To that end, our office has partnered with community groups including Lifeboat Recovery Services to ensure coaching, accountability, testing, support sessions, and in some cases in-patient treatment

for diversion program participants. In essence, we are not diverting people out of the criminal system without significant resources and accountability in place.

We have partnered with other community groups like the Ingham Opioid Abuse Prevention Initiative to ensure we are taking a comprehensive public health approach to opioid addiction, and not just viewing the issue from the prosecution perspective. We have worked with the Ingham County Health Department and the Ingham County Jail to pilot and implement the Building Bridges MAT program, one of the first jail-based medication assisted treatment programs in Michigan. The

program allows incarcerated individuals with substance use disorder to begin low-cost or no-cost medication assisted treatment from the time they are first incarcerated. Medication assisted treatment and early intervention have been shown to be the most effective treatment for opioid use disorder.

These new responses to drug offenses have some limits – and they are not for everyone. We are serious about offering a way out of the destructive opioid and addiction cycle for drug users and people who find themselves in criminal courts due to substance use disorder. In most cases, we have learned that these opportunities are much more valuable to our community than a conviction.

# The Role of Treatment Courts in Drug Response

By: Nicole Matusko, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Circuit Court Unit Chief

Traditional probation cannot always address the growing needs of those with severe substance use disorder. While drug testing and outpatient treatment can assist someone in achieving abstinence, alone this may be insufficient to set someone on the pathway towards a lifetime of recovery. In the past, when someone continued to commit crimes or was unsuccessful on probation, the answer was often a lengthy term of incarceration. This may protect our community from additional criminal activity while that person was locked up but is not a long-term solution to address the underlying concerns. Recognizing that some individuals need additional coordinated supervision, treatment courts have been developed all over the state. Ingham County currently has nine treatment-based courts and several other specialized courts that focus on giving individuals an opportunity at community-based supervision prior to incarceration.

Someone with a severe substance use disorder will likely face obstacles to recovery such as homelessness, other medical conditions including untreated mental illness, untreated past trauma, unemployment, and may appear to be stuck in a cycle of criminal behavior.

The treatment team approach brings together clinicians, community advocates, prosecutors, defense attorneys, peer recovery coaches, judges and probation agents to increase communication to allow the team to address these obstacles while supporting an individual's progress towards sustainable recovery. A team approach also allows the criminal justice system to quickly and appropriately address non-compliance with court orders or pre-relapse warning signs. By working together, the treatment team can treat the whole person, remove obstacles that may prevent sustainable recovery, and ultimately reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

The programs rely heavily on referrals. Referrals can come from our office, the defense bar, or anyone in the community that believes an individual would benefit from intensive coordinated programming while on probation. Under current law, individuals that are deemed to be a "violent offender" cannot be accepted into a treatment court. A violent offender is defined by statute as "an individual who is currently charged with, or has been convicted of, an offense involving the death of, or a serious bodily injury to, any individual, whether or not

any of these circumstances are an element of the offense, or with criminal sexual conduct in any degree." Once someone is deemed legally eligible for the program they also must be clinically evaluated and accept a plea agreement into the program. While not all individuals will qualify for a plea agreement into a specialty court, when someone is eligible, our office is committed to exploring these programs as a viable option to hold offenders accountable while providing intensive supervision and treatment.

While I am hopeful that someday individuals with severe substance use disorder will be able to find treatment outside the criminal justice system, the growing trend of utilizing treatment courts for those individuals that do find themselves charged with a crime is rewarding. As a prosecutor, there are times you can get lost in the file and forget that without treatment, it can be hard for someone to get back on track. At a treatment court graduation, as one hears how the program has given a participant their family, their job, their children, and their life back, the case becomes no longer a file but a changed life.

# Harm Reduction in the Courts and Criminal Justice System

By: Da'Neese Wells, Chief Probation Officer and Specialty Courts Coordinator, 55<sup>th</sup> District Court



Da'Neese Wells  
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Years ago, 55<sup>th</sup> District Court probation staff and judges attended a training session on Recovery Oriented Systems of Care. As we absorbed the encouragement to “treat the whole person,” we recognized our own sentencing and probation supervision approach. For the probation officers, it was an opportunity to better understand how we could expand the approach in our department. For our judges, who already had experience with ROSC-philosophy, it was heartening to see their approach validated. Prior to his appointment to the bench in 2008, 55<sup>th</sup> District Court Chief Judge Donald L. Allen, Jr. served as the Director of Michigan’s Office of Drug Control Policy, a division of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (known at that time as the Michigan Department of Community Health).

The MDHHS and federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) have long

embraced ROSC-philosophy. The Michigan Office of Recovery Oriented Systems of Care website documents their commitment as follows:

“Michigan’s recovery-oriented system of care supports an individual’s journey toward recovery and wellness by creating and sustaining networks of formal and informal services and supports. The opportunities established through collaboration, partnership and a broad array of services promote life enhancing recovery and wellness for individuals, families and communities.”

Harm reduction, by SAMHSA’s definition, “is an approach that emphasizes engaging directly with people who use drugs to prevent overdose and infectious disease transmission, improve the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of those served, and offer low-threshold options for accessing substance use disorder treatment and other health care services.” It is a concept that fits perfectly into ROSC-philosophy, is also endorsed by the Michigan DHHHS, and is fully supported by many courts.

There are many paths to recovery, it exists on a continuum, and is individually defined for each person we meet. Some courts erroneously view harm reduction as a “slippery slope,” consider harm reduction efforts like Medication Assisted Treatment to be

“crutch” or believe miraculous and instantaneous sobriety is achievable at the stroke of the pen on the court order requiring it.

We recognize that:

- For many people, immediate sobriety is not only impossible but also dangerous. We work to identify those people as early as possible and link them to medically monitored/assisted detoxification, followed by treatment.
- Some will continue using low-risk substances as they discontinue use of high-risk narcotics. Courts must carefully calibrate their responses to continued use of low-risk substances, avoiding incarceration when there is no danger to the defendant or public.
- Medication Assisted Treatment is a valuable recovery option, even though many other courts refuse to allow MAT-patients into their programs.

In Mason, we have also implemented other Harm Reduction concepts. For example, we:

- Have had naloxone onsite in our court and staff trained to administer it in the event of an overdose since 2016.
- Participated in the planning and development of the Medication Assisted Treatment program for inmates at the Ingham County

Jail. This arose from the Court's collaboration with the Ingham County Health Department, Ingham County Jail, and Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties through the Institute of Intergovernmental Research "Planning Initiative to Build Bridges between Jail and Community-Based Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder", a project of the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), and Arnold Ventures in 2019.

- Began distributing Naloxone to any interested community member in

2021, with several postings around our building explaining that it will be provided with no questions or legal ramifications.

- I lead the Ingham Opioid Abuse Prevention Initiative's Harm Reduction subcommittee, which strives to increase local harm reduction resources and decrease stigma through specific and measurable efforts. For example, in 2022 we developed waterproof lanyards for at-risk populations that contain harm reduction and safe use resource materials but can also be used to protect/carry money, identification,

or other important documents. We developed posters communicating the same information for display in public restrooms and other frequent overdose sites and are currently developing a social media toolkit aimed at reducing the stigma that discourages many people from accessing healthcare and other Harm Reduction resources.

Incorporating Harm Reduction concepts in sentencing and probation supervision has been a complement to our efforts. It is one more tool we can use to help the people we serve.

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# Interview with a Friend

By: Angela Wall

I have a good friend who has struggled with addiction for roughly twenty-five years of her life. We've never talked this frankly before about the issue, and maybe I've let her down in that regard. If so, I do sincerely apologize. She was kind enough to let me interview her and share with me her struggle. Any direct reference to her, her family or medical personnel has been omitted. I hope this sheds a little light on the issue, and some of the multiple reasons for it. I thank her for her generosity, her time, and for being my friend.

## *What started it? How did it begin?*

After my first surgery in 2010, started receiving back injections, then was given fentanyl patches, when those didn't work, morphine. I wasn't sleeping, so was put on valium; I was receiving all three at the same time. That's when I first overdosed. Because I kept not feeling anything, I kept putting on another fentanyl patch, and another, so when I OD'ed, I had on five fentanyl patches, and I don't know how many pills I had taken. I ended up in the hospital, they wanted me to go to rehab, and I didn't want to go, so they cut me off of all meds. Shortly after that, I had to have a major surgery, for that, they put me on Norco's. Started me at five milligrams, and that wasn't working, so they raised it to (ultimately) ten milligrams, and I could take up to four a day. And that went on for years. After that (first surgery), I had almost one surgery a year; they would put me on Oxycontin or Oxycodone, so I've never been off prescription meds for over a decade except for a six-month period.

In preparation for an upcoming surgery, they have taken me off some, but I'm still on Percocet.

I did OD again, but I think then, I was just so unhappy and felt in so much pain. I made a mistake and called a friend to see if they had something stronger. It wasn't just physical pain, it was more emotional pain, and that was the first and last time I tried heroin, and I OD'ed. After that, I quit cold turkey. Then, a major surgery, and back on the drugs, but I've been good about how much I take, I haven't been taking the full amount and hoping, with this next surgery, that the pain will be gone, and I can be completely off meds.

*Did you think, or recognize that you have an addictive personality?* Oh yeah.

*Did the doctors?* I don't think so. I've been addicted to food, that was my first, then the pills, and gambling. Hopefully now, I think I am learning to control everything.

*If you hadn't had medicine available, would the pain have been too much to bear?* Yes, I have been at the point where I thought I could end it.

*Do you think any medical professionals contributed to the problem?* Yes, the person who put me on all three medications, I was told later, could have killed me. They gave me twenty-five milligram fentanyl patches, ten in a box, and received three boxes at a time. Now, I sign a contract with my primary caregiver, and it's doled out in specific doses. During (my upcoming) surgery, the hospital will take over, then

back to my primary. I want to be off completely though, they make me tired and mess with my head. There's a lot of stuff that can go through your head. Terrible, horrible things. I never want to go through that again. I even got fired from a doctor and a pain management clinic. I don't remember calling, and calling, and calling, but they had enough and fired me. **You'd think that's their job to help you through that.** Yes. I was also able to order online, so it was even easier to get pills (outside of prescriptions) if I wanted them.

*Do you think it's in your DNA?* Yes, there has been a lot of alcoholism and drug addiction in my family. My dad was an alcoholic, and maybe my mom. I had a great grandma that was a gambler and quite overweight, so maybe a food issue? She taught us (kids) to play poker. **So there's emotional ties too.** Yes, good memories.

*Did it ever affect your job?* No, I tried to be really careful about that, but there were people who found out what I was prescribed, and would ask me for some, sometimes daily.

*Do you think it cost you anything?* Yes, definitely relationships, family and friends. Some liked me only as a drinking, party buddy and can't seem to support me quitting.

*Was there a moment where enough was enough?* Yes, I had a scare moment. A relative was having a special event, and I don't remember any of it. I lost literally two months of my life. I had come home from the hospital right before, but I



don't remember the event, or the next two months. At the event, I was telling people crazy things. People from out of town came and stayed with me for several days, and I don't remember them there at all. I was on morphine, and don't do well on it. Terrible hallucinations. I was in emotional pain, and thought if I took more, the pain would go away. I was found on the kitchen floor by a relative, if they hadn't found me, I would probably be dead. I traumatized someone I love very much and am still trying to earn back their trust.

***Is anything helping you quit?*** Gamblers anonymous is helping, it has a good crossover with drug addition, it's kind of altogether, they sort of use the same rules. And I can do it from home, through Zoom. If I had to go physically to a meeting, I wouldn't be in the same place I am now. And meditation, started that recently for pain management, and it's making a difference.

***After this next surgery, how will you kick the habit?*** I've already talked to my doctor, and we have a plan to taper me off. If I quit too fast, since I've been on them so long, we think there may be physical side effects.

***Before your surgeries, did you ever take drugs recreationally?*** Yes, mainly weed. But I lie, I did have a meth addiction in my twenties. I was very overweight, and it helped me with that, and I liked the resulting weight loss. Then my life crashed, I went to rehab and got clean until surgery around forty years of age.

***What advice would you give to someone who's struggling?*** Get help and go into rehab. It's that simple. A good support system, and the want go quit. I have goals now, traveling, things I want to do.

# ICBA

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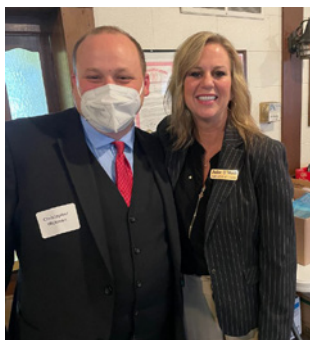
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 Cross Xamine Investigations  
 Cummins Woods  
 Dan Henry Distributing Co  
 Denise LaFave Smith PLLC  
 Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC  
 Foster Swift Collins & Smith PC  
 Fraser Trebilcock  
 Grewal Law PLLC  
 Hackney Odum & Dardas PLC  
 Lisa Babcock for 54B District Court Judge  
 McGinty Hitch Person & Anderson PC  
 Melvin S. McWilliams PC  
 Morgan Elizabeth Cole's Campaign for 30<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court  
 Murphy & Spagnuolo PC  
 Nolan Thomsen & Villas PC  
 Sinas Dramis Law Firm  
 Speaker Law Firm PLLC  
 The Law Office of Reid Felsing  
 White Law PLLC  
 Willingham & Coté PC



Photo credit: Madelyne Lawry



# More *Shrimp Dinner* Fun!







ICBA SECTION NEWS

## ICBA-YLS

# The Paper Chase 5k was the *Highlight of the Year*

By: Marisa Vinsky



**Marisa Vinsky**  
marisa@cndefenders.com

of this popular event after two long years off due to Covid-19.

The Ingham County Bar Association's Young Lawyers Section hosted its 7<sup>th</sup> annual Paper Chase 5k on June 12, 2022. This year's theme was neon colors to highlight the return

The weather was absolutely beautiful, and everyone enjoyed mingling with others in the fresh air. The top three men and the top three women with the fastest times all received medals. Coming in first for the men was **Brian Jackson**, coming in second was **River Fox**, and coming in third was **Matthew Scheel**. Coming in first for the women was **Danielle Lore**, coming in second was the **Honorable Stacia Buchanan**, and coming in third was **Morgan Nichols**. Foster Swift won a trophy for most team

participation and the Ingham County Public Defender's Office won a trophy for the best team race time.

We want to thank all of our generous sponsors this year. Thank you to our **Platinum Sponsors**: Abood Law Firm and Foster Swift; our **Gold Sponsors**: Alane Family Law, WMU-Cooley Law School, Grewal Law, Chartier & Nyamfukudza, Sinas Dramis, and Murphy & Spagnuolo; our **Silver Sponsor**: Speaker Law Firm; and our **Bronze Sponsors**: Honorable Shannon L.W. Schlegel, MCV Law, and Alexander S. Rusek, Esq. We could not have done this event without you all!

ICBA-YLS looks forward to hosting this event again next year, so get your running or walking shoes ready!









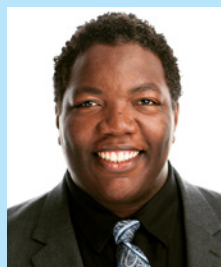
# ICBA

## Welcome new officers of the Davis Dunning Bar Association



**President:**

Ernschie Augustin  
ernsciea@gmail.com



**Vice President:**

Bobby Ficklin  
ficklinlaw@gmail.com



**Secretary:**

Janet McDuffey  
mcduffeylaw@aol.com



**Treasurer:**

Jackee Moss  
jmoss@nicholslaw.net

## *In Memory of* **George V. Warren**



George V. Warren, a long-time Lansing attorney and one of Cooley Law School's earliest professors, died April 22, 2022, at age 83. He earned his law degree from Georgetown (where he served on the law review) and held master's degrees from NYU and Wayne State University Law School. He had been a lead investigator of the Kent State massacre and an Assistant Attorney General before helping Cooley get started.

George Warren was one of Cooley's first four professors—along with John Fitzgerald, Don Reisig, and Don Ubell—who taught the first entering class in 1973. (<https://info.cooley.edu/blog/recognizing-key-role-of-adjunct-professors-to-law-students-learning>) In addition to teaching the first Torts class, he taught a popular Medicine and the Law course for many years on a part-time basis.

Here is a remembrance of **John Fitzgerald**: <https://info.cooley.edu/blog/a-life-of-service-in-the-law>

And here is **Don Reisig's** obituary: <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/laj/name/donald-reisig-obituary?id=16207322>



# *In Memory of* **Guy Sweet**



*A life dedicated to helping others through knowledge of the law and a passion to bring justice to the citizens of mid-Michigan.*

This summarizes the life of Guy Sweet, a dedicated volunteer at Resolution Services Center of Central Michigan (RSCCM) who passed away suddenly this month. Guy dedicated over thirty years of his career at the Ingham County Prosecutor's Office and was deeply respected by all that knew him. Since his retirement, Guy had graciously volunteered his time and talent to Resolution Services as a mediator. He will be missed.

With permission of Guy's family, a scholarship fund is being established at RSCCM in Guy's honor. The awareness and impact of conflict resolution mediation is growing in our communities. Recognizing the need for additional mediators, a designated charitable fund is being established to assist with the costs of a scholarship to attend a civil mediation training at RSCCM which is approved by the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO).

Peg MacDougall, Program Manager for Mediation at RSCCM shares, "Guy was a wonderful volunteer mediator who enjoyed helping parties resolve disputes. He exhibited skill and dedication to the mediation process and warmth and graciousness to the mediation participants. The staff enjoyed working with him." Additionally, Paula Zera, a RSCCM volunteer mediator, shares, "Guy was enthusiastic about mediation as an avenue for solving conflicts and the opportunity to continue contributing to the legal community".

Those who wish to make a contribution to the 'Guy Leonard Sweet Memorial Fund' may do so by mailing a check to: Resolution Services Center, 516 S. Creyts Road, Suite A, Lansing, MI 48917. Credit card donations can be made by calling RSCCM at 517.485.2274

<https://estesleadley.com/obituaries/guy-leonard-sweet/>

# Press Release

## Fraser Trebilcock Welcomes

### Garett Koger and Robert D. Burgee to the Firm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE June 6, 2022 and June 30, 2022



**Garett Koger**  
[gkoger@fraserlawfirm.com](mailto:gkoger@fraserlawfirm.com)



**Robert D. Burgee**  
[bburgee@fraserlawfirm.com](mailto:bburgee@fraserlawfirm.com)

#### About Fraser Trebilcock:

Fraser Trebilcock is one of Michigan's longest-established full-service law firms. 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).

## Fraser Trebilcock<sup>®</sup> LAWYERS

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One Woodward Ave.  
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Detroit, MI 48226  
(313) 237-7300

125 Ottawa Ave NW  
Suite 153  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 301-0800

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

**Lansing, MI** – Fraser Trebilcock is pleased to announce the hiring of attorney Garett Koger who will work primarily in the firm's Lansing office.

Garett joins Fraser Trebilcock as an associate attorney in the litigation practice group focusing on commercial litigation. With nearly five years of litigation experience, which include service as the Chief Assistant Prosecutor for Clinton County and as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Michigan, Garett has the knowledge to litigate clients' disputes in virtually all arenas, including through appeal.

Prior to Garett's career in the legal field, he served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2002 to 2007. Garett then went on to receive his undergraduate degree from The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina, and his Juris Doctorate from Michigan State College of Law in East Lansing.

"We are excited to have Garett join the firm and are confident that he will continue the mission of providing excellent legal services to our clients," said Michael H. Perry, President of Fraser Trebilcock.

**Lansing, MI** – Fraser Trebilcock is pleased to announce the hiring of attorney Robert D. Burgee who will work primarily in the firm's Lansing office.

Robert joins Fraser Trebilcock as an attorney with over a decade of experience counseling small business clients and entrepreneurs in matters ranging from startups, acquisitions, and support to more general practice of law, including civil matters, regulatory compliance, employee benefits, and human relations guidance.

Prior to joining the firm, Bob operated an independent general counsel practice advising business clients in their day-to-day operation, as well as drafting and negotiating contracts with their customers, suppliers, and employees. He also has legislative and policy experience from working with lawmakers and staff in the Michigan Legislature and trade association members.

"We are excited to have Robert join the firm and are confident that he will continue the mission of providing excellent legal services to our clients," said Michael H. Perry, President of Fraser Trebilcock.



## 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. 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 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month but will vary at times followed by The meetings/presentations will start at 9:15 and location – 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 fourth Tuesday of the month from noon to 1 p.m. Location TBD. Lunch is provided.

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

Upcoming Meetings:

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month (no meetings June, July, August) at Noon, Location – Zoom

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, virtual.

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

Upcoming Meetings:

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at Noon, Location – Zoom

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 second Wednesday of each month at 9 a.m. State Bar of Michigan, 306 Townsend St, Lansing, MI 48933.

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 Joann M. Schofield at 517-827-0045 or email [joann.schofield@tristartrust.com](mailto:joann.schofield@tristartrust.com).

## Real Estate Section

The Real Estate Section holds its meetings at noon on the fourth Thursday of each month. Location TBD. 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 (Quarterly – September, December, May) at Noon, Location: Zoom.

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 Norm Witte at [ncwitte@wittelaw.com](mailto:ncwitte@wittelaw.com).

## Local Legal Events

Social Deliberations – place of events is Hooked, 3142 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48912

August 25th, and Thursday, October 27th, all from 5pm-7pm

17th Annual Memorial Golf Classic and this link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/icbf-17th-annual-memorial-golf-classic-tickets-325181475547>





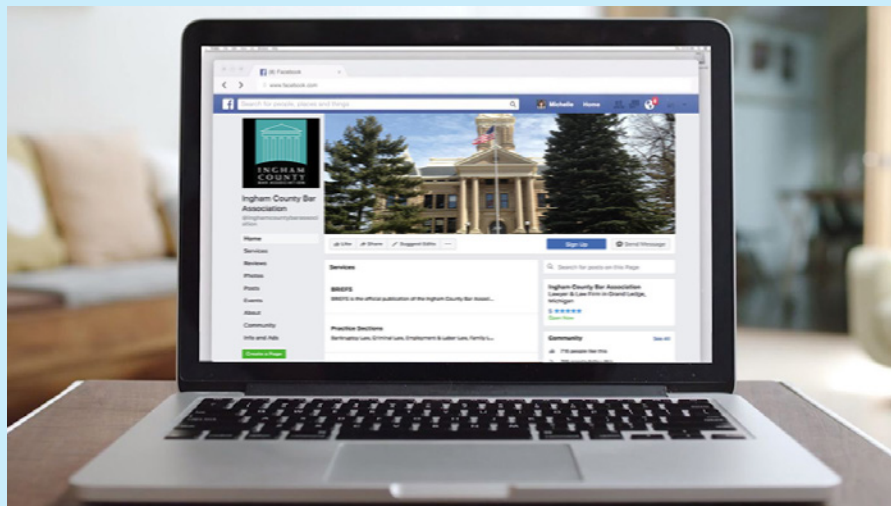
# ICBA Sponsorship Opportunities

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.



**2022-2023 Firm/Corporate Sponsorship Opportunities**  
**2022-2023 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](#)



# Thanks for reading BRIEFS



## Here Comes Summer!

Feedback?

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

**Next issue:**

**September 2022 dedicated to the ICBA Leaders**



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[linkedin.com/company/ingham-county-bar-association](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ingham-county-bar-association)