

Ingham County Bar Association

BRIEFS



May 2023

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Chief Judges

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**SAVE
THE
DATE**

June 6, 2023
Social Deliberations at Hooked

November 8, 2023
ICBA Annual Dinner



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About ICBA

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



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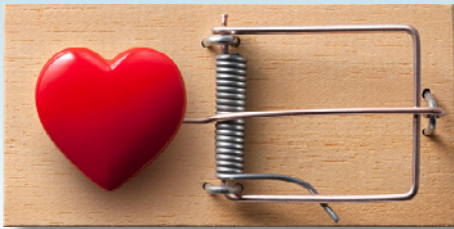
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President's Message



\$133,400,000.00



Pam Amato, ICBA President
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You might be wondering how the heart on a mousetrap and that huge dollar amount relate to my President's Message. Did I win the lottery and have my heart broken? Is this a commentary on Valentine's Day? Unfortunately, I did not win the lottery otherwise I would be writing this message from some place other than my office and it is not a commentary on how much people spend on Valentine's Day. My message, however, is about love and money.

I received a phone call recently from someone I care about deeply. He said he was dating this amazing woman and he found the love of his life; his soulmate. I was so happy for him. He told me they met online a few weeks ago, she was beautiful, they had so much in common and they had many wonderful conversations. He said I will send you a picture. I was very surprised when I saw the picture on my phone. As thoughtfully as I could, I said, "I think she used a very nice filter." That statement was not well received after all this was the love of his life. Some of you already know what I suspected and anticipate where this story is going. I apologized, said she was lovely and offered I am not very tech savvy so I must be mistaken.

We hung up shortly after, said goodbye and I love you. I showed the picture to friends and co-workers over the next few days and each agreed the photo was not genuine.

We talked a few days later and he announced he and this woman had talked about marriage. They talked about how many children they were going to have and even had names picked out. He told me she was very wealthy, accomplished and had many philanthropic interests. She owned her own cosmetic line and the face cream sold for \$25,000 per jar. She was going to send me some of her products because after all I was very important to her as well. Oh wait, it gets better and worse. I asked if they had met yet and he said no, because she was in California overseeing the building of a hospital devoted to critically ill children. You have the love part now for the rest of the story....

He told me she made her fortune investing in cryptocurrency. In one day, she made \$250,000. Yes, that is what he said! He asked me if rather than taking him and his brother on a trip we had planned when he graduated college would I send him the money instead.

He did not mention an amount but I knew was significantly more than the trip would cost. I said the trip was very important to me. Besides, he needed to graduate first.

Over the next week he sent me text messages showing me copies of cryptocurrency accounts with vast sums and charts about how much money this woman was making for him, and others and I needed to get on board. When we talked, he became irritated because I would not invest with her. He asked why I didn't trust him and why I didn't want to invest with them. He said he needed me to invest now because she was becoming irritated with him and that was ruining their relationship. I was ruining his happiness. The more I tried to explain my reasoning the more annoyed he became with me. No matter what I said, he remained incredulous. I wanted to tell him he was the victim of a romantic scam, but I knew he would have completely disconnected from me at that point. He would not tell me how much he invested because I was becoming an outsider to him. My heart was breaking, and I knew he would not listen. Someone I loved was being scammed for money and he was going

to have his heart broken. I had no way to get to the person(s) who were tearing his life apart.

The next call from him was telling me I had to send him \$25,000 right now because the investors would not release his money AND hers until the commissions were paid. I suggested that since she had made so much money in one day, she could loan him the money, but I would not be sending any money. He was furious and said when he needed me the most I would not help, and he would not tolerate my unwillingness any longer. He wanted me to send him a list of everything I had paid for and done for him over his lifetime, and he was going to pay me back and be done with me. I am sure you see the irony as well.

I continued to send him text messages and emails telling him how much I cared and loved him. My calls went unanswered as did my messages until

one evening very late I received a text message, “It was all a lie.., why can’t I be happy..., she has blocked me..., I don’t deserve to live...”. I called him immediately and he answered sobbing.

That was several weeks ago, and I am helping him sort through the financial wreckage and we are talking every few days again. I set up counseling for him so he has a professional to talk with. We have also been in contact with the agencies that investigate these Internet and social media scams. Our relationship is back to what it was and I am so fortunate he sent that last message to me knowing I had not given up on him. I am amazed at how this happened over such a short amount of time. I still question whether I should have done anything differently.

When I tell people about what happened, I am surprised to hear how many others know friends, family members

and others who have been victimized by scams. Some people I talked with told me they had been contacted by scammers, but realized immediately what was happening. A quick search on-line shows how prevalent these scams are. I am reluctant to suggest these scammers are professionals, experts, sophisticated and knowledgeable because we typically reserve those words for compliments, but that is exactly what they are and why so many people crossing so many demographics become prey and are victimized.

If you are wondering what that amount relates to; the \$133,400,000.00 are the losses reported in 2022 from just romance scams and those are the people who had the courage to even come forward. I wonder what the actual emotional and financial tolls of these scams are?

Mandated Succession Planning

Rule 21: Practice Succession Planning

By April Alleman, Succession Planning Program Counsel, State Bar of Michigan

New requirements for Michigan private practice attorneys effective September 1, 2023. Read the Supreme Court Order [here](#). Required information will be collected during license renewal beginning the 2023-2024 Bar Year. Although not required until September, starting this summer, attorneys will be able to nominate their designated interim attorney through the State Bar of Michigan's online Member Area.



April Alleman
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What is an interim administrator?

An interim administrator would take on certain duties on behalf of a private practice attorney if they become unable to practice law, temporarily or permanently. Interim administrators would take on duties, such as securing privileged documents, notifying clients, returning funds and files, and notifying courts on pending matters. Designated interim administrators have no official duties unless the private practice attorney becomes unable to practice law, and the designated attorney begins serving as interim administrator.

An interim administrator must be an active Michigan attorney in good standing or a law firm with at least

one active Michigan attorney in good standing (other than the attorney nominating the firm as the interim administrator).

Instead of designating an interim administrator, private practice attorneys can participate in the State Bar of Michigan's Interim Administrator Program. For an annual fee of \$60, the State Bar of Michigan will match an interim administrator to the participating attorney if an interim administrator is needed.

Contact Info:

Email: IAP@michbar.org
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www.michbar.org/Rule21



Judge Donald Allen

55th District Court

By Chris Martin
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Judge Donald Allen’s presence seems ubiquitous in two places: 55th District Court, and the local athletic club where Judge Allen spends many of his evenings after work. I often run into Judge Allen at the gym (although he is in a much higher strata of physical fitness than I). Judge Allen takes physical fitness seriously, but he is quick to point out that regular exercise helps him manage stress and keeps him mentally sharp beyond the obvious physical benefits.

Judge Allen is the Chief Judge of the 55th District Court. He was appointed to the bench by Governor Granholm after 17 years in the Attorney General’s Office, a term as Deputy Legal Counsel in the Governor’s office, and after serving as Director of the Michigan Office of Drug Control Policy. Judge Allen looks back fondly on all his experiences before becoming a judge, except that he does not like to be called the “Drug Czar.”

Judge Allen loves being a judge. He believes the position gives him an opportunity to “actually have an impact on peoples’ lives.” Judge Allen is engaged with all the proceedings that come before the court, but believes district courts have the greatest impact in criminal cases. Judge Allen provided several examples of parties in criminal matters who first came before the court with low expectations, but after a period of probation or participation in a treatment court, they left in a drastically improved situation. Judge Allen

believes low-level criminal charges can be a “blessing in disguise” that help individuals overcome addiction, mental health problems, or other serious issues in their lives. Judge Allen is engaged in the process of helping litigants find recovery and peace of mind, and he loves maintaining relationships with parties even after their case is closed.

Judge Allen discussed a few of the priorities for 55th District Court in the coming years. He is excited by the opportunities offered by the more modern facility in the Ingham County Justice Complex that the 55th District Court moved into earlier this year. Judge Allen has been particularly impressed by the modern technology of the new courthouse. Specifically, Judge Allen pointed out that the added technological capacity allows the court to use its time more efficiently, conduct hearings and conferences by video, and helps keep costs down for litigants. 55th District Court regularly streams certain hearings, which has “demystified” what happens in the courtroom and provided greater transparency for the community. Judge Allen is passionate about education, and hopes to use new technology to enhance the 55th District Court’s “Courts to School” program.

Beyond the physical building and technology of the 55th District Court, Judge Allen is part of the administrative team managing the court and developing a strategic vision for the future direction of the court. In recent years, 55th District

Court has prioritized Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training for staff, which Judge Allen believes is essential due to the rapidly changing nature of our society and our communities. The court has also prioritized trauma-informed practices that identify potential trauma and the effects that trauma has on individuals appearing in the court system. Judge Allen recognizes the need to address trauma in court programming and as part of any successful outreach in the community. 55th District Court now employs a “trauma calendar” so everyone is aware of when a significant trauma anniversary is approaching, and what additional safeguards and measures need to be in place to help people navigate difficult dates successfully.

Judge Allen maintains a busy schedule when he is not in court. He has been appointed to two Michigan Supreme Court working groups: one concerned with wellness in the legal profession for lawyers and judges, and another to address building the workforce for the future of courts. Judge Allen is on the Board of Communities in School and the Mason Promise, which offers Mason students college opportunity by providing tuition to Lansing Community College. Judge Allen is also one of three founders of Okemos/Ingham County Families Against Narcotics, where he currently serves as president.



Judge Lisa McCormick

30th Circuit Court - Family Division

By Michael Nichols
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If you are up at about 5:30 am on a normal weekday and you want to see what Judge Lisa McCormick is doing, your best bet is to find a Peleton TM and look for her on the leaderboard, whether it is the treadmill or the bike. She is an amazing athlete.

I had the pleasure of speaking with Judge McCormick on a snowy Friday afternoon, and learned some fascinating things about her journey from her hometown in Philadelphia to the 30th Judicial Circuit Court, Family Division.

Judge McCormick says about her biking/running practice: “You need a release.” It is a critical step in her day that allows her to organize her thoughts and get ready for the day. Judge McCormick talked a lot about how it is important to have goals. Judge McCormick achieved the goal of riding in the physical “Peleton studio.” If you are not familiar with Peleton, the studio is where the trainer is located and you can either join virtually in real time or ride with a pre-taped studio session. It is a little mysterious and you are left wondering about the rock star status of the trainer or even some of the people who are riding or running/walking with the trainer. Judge McCormick made it seem a little like the moments before you get ready to try a case: “it’s a little overwhelming, but once you get in there and get going, it’s like any other spin class.” She rode with Dennis Morton.

Judge McCormick credits her sister, Randi, with getting her in to running. “It started with a 5k on Mackinac Island. My sister likes to challenge me,” said Judge McCormick.

I was really intrigued to hear about the journey that she took from public school in Northeast Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to college at the University of Pittsburgh, to Cooley Law School. She says, “my parents told me that I could choose any college as long as it was in Pennsylvania so I went about as far north as I could go.” However, we should make one thing perfectly clear, Lisa McCormick never switched allegiances from her beloved Philadelphia Eagles and other sports teams to the dreaded Steelers of Pittsburgh. “No real Philadelphia sports fan EVER switches allegiances, Mike,” she admonished me. Noted.

So, it’s the early 90’s, and a recently-minted college grad, Lisa McCormick, decided to go to law school in Lansing, Michigan at the Thomas M. Cooley Law School. She is going to completely uproot her life and literally go from almost the east coast to the deep Midwest. Shortly before she is supposed to leave for Lansing, she meets this guy, Joe. They get together for a first date, which turns into a second and she is a little surprised when Joe not only wants to see her again because she shares with him that she is off to Lansing for three years for law school, but he is thinking that he’s going to follow her, get a job

and that’s it. Joe has a young daughter and Judge McCormick adopts this young lady as her own (her attorney at the time was Shauna Dunnings, now Judge Dunnings). Joe and Judge McCormick’s daughter now lives in the community and works for a nearby school district.

Once Judge McCormick took the bar exam, she clerked for about a year for Judge Filice. She then joined the Ingham County Prosecutor’s Office. “I never thought this would be my career; I could never imagine staying there for 20 years.” Judge McCormick went from assignments at 54B to 55th District Court and Judge McCabe. It was there that the courtroom bug seemed to really bite. She says “You know, it is hard to have the burden of proof beyond a reasonable doubt. I started to enjoy it. I really started to enjoy it,” she says. She then went to assignments in Judge Collette’s court and then Judge Manderfield, followed by working in the drug unit and then child sexual conduct cases, then deputy chief assistant and then her final stop as Chief Assistant Prosecutor, which is where she met her friend and interim prosecutor, Governor Gretchen Whitmer.

Judge McCormick left the prosecutor’s office in January 2019, after Governor Whitmer named her the Children’s Ombudsmen. “It was important work. It is important to make sure that children in the system have an advocate to hold the agencies and foster families accountable

to do the right thing for them.” Then, literally 10 days before COVID-19 shut down the state, she was appointed to the 30th Judicial Circuit Court to fill the seat vacated by the Honorable Laura Baird’s retirement.

Judge McCormick does not want people to look past her service as the Children’s Ombudsmen. When Judge McCormick talked about her time in the Whitmer administration as the Children’s Ombudsmen. She said it was pretty cool.

Judge McCormick also founded “Small Talk” – which is a children’s advocacy center for children who were or may have been victimized by assault. This was very important for then-Chief Assistant-APA McCormick.

The conversation turned to some other “personal-life” topics.

In 1985, she watched the LiveAid Concert at Veteran’s Stadium in Philadelphia. She says “of course, we all thought that this would be just one of many concerts and they would do this again ... I had no concept of what a big event this was.” This is the same event at which Freddie Mercury famously-strutted across the stage in a white sleeveless tank top in one of the great performances of the post-modern era. A young Lisa McCormick saw Queen’s performance because it was streamed into Veteran’s Stadium from Wembly Stadium in London.

The best book she ever read: “The Silent Patient.” I asked her “why?” It is just a really good book, she says. I asked her what the book is about: “The Silent Patient” – she says.

Judge McCormick also knits. She is currently knitting a blanket for someone’s granddaughter – a secret. She also is close to her older sister, and her husband and her two kids.

As to her service on the bench and what she enjoys on this “side” of the courtroom, Judge McCormick says “it’s different not being an advocate, to stay out of it as best that I can.” Judge McCormick really enjoys her drug court service and watching families come "full-service."



Judge Molly Hennessey-Greenwalt

54B District Court

By Chris Martin
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If *Dos Equis* hired judges as spokespersons, Judge Molly Hennessey-Greenwalt would be a strong contender for “The Most Interesting Judge in the World.” Indeed, Judge Greenwalt brings interesting and diverse experiences into her position as Chief Judge of the 54B District Court.

Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt began her career working in the publishing industry for Harper Collins in New York City after graduating from college. Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt enjoyed her time in the publishing industry. She worked on a pop culture-focused team that published everything from an autobiography of Jay Leno to a book of original poetry by the folk/pop singer Jewel. After a few years in New York, Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt moved home to her native Minnesota where she taught high school English and pursued a Ph.D. in literature at the University of Minnesota. Thereafter, Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt’s academic focus shifted to law, and she eventually enrolled in law school at the University of Minnesota. After her first year of law school, Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt’s husband accepted a position as a professor at Michigan State University, so Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt and her young family moved to East Lansing, where she enrolled at the Michigan State University College of Law.

Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt’s legal career before becoming a judge

allowed her to explore the depths and complexities of diverse bodies of law. She clerked at the Michigan Supreme Court, worked at a private law firm, served as a trial prosecutor and appellate prosecutor in the Ingham County Prosecutor’s Office, and most recently returned to the Michigan Supreme Court to work as a Supreme Court Commissioner. Commissioners conduct substantial legal research and provide legal analyses to the Justices on a variety of legal topics and issues before the Supreme Court.

Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt was appointed to the 54B District Court by Governor Whitmer in 2021 and became the Chief Judge of the 54B District Court after the retirement of Judge Richard Ball in 2022. Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt’s priorities for the 54B District Court in the coming years primarily involve building public trust and finding new ways to engage and serve the community at large. Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt describes her team at the 54B District Court as “competent and committed judges and staff” who want to do what is best for the community. Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt pointed out that many government institutions, from the federal level down to the local level are experiencing turnover and some erosion of the public trust. Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt and the 54B District Court hope to counter that trend by engaging with citizens in a practical, thoughtful, and deliberate manner.

To that end, the 54B District Court has been actively involved in multiple driver’s license restoration clinics, where court staff and judges work alongside representatives of Secretary of State and community groups to assist citizens in removing license suspensions and restoring access to driver’s licenses. Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt knows from her experience in the Ingham County Prosecutor’s Office that license suspensions can be costly for individuals and can prevent individuals from accessing the workforce. The 54B District Court has also been actively involved in expungement clinics with many of the same goals. Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt expressed enthusiasm about an upcoming Law Day event that will open up the courthouse to the entire East Lansing community and provide educational programming and panel discussions about the important work of the 54B District Court.

When Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt is not in court, you can find her in the bleachers at local sporting events cheering on her three children, who compete in just about every sport imaginable, including baseball, football, soccer, and basketball. Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt likes to stay active and loves yoga. But not just run-of-the-mill evening yoga classes. Judge Hennessey-Greenwalt regularly participates in multi-day yoga retreats with internationally known instructors, as one might expect of “the Most Interesting Judge in the World.”



Judge Shauna Dunnings

30th Circuit Court - Probate Court

By Christine Caswell, , Caswell Law PLLC, Lansing
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COVID and Other Probate Changes

The Hon. Shauna Dunnings became an Ingham County probate judge in January 2019. In March of 2020, the pandemic hit. Not what she was expecting.

“As probate judges, part of our caseload is guardianships and conservatorships for legally incapacitated individuals,” she said. “At the height of covid, the hospitals were full, and major medical decisions needed to be made. To be put on a ventilator, the person had to be placed in a medically induced coma. If they didn’t have a medical power of attorney, they needed a guardian. We had to restructure our dockets to make sure we were meeting the needs of the community and providing emergency petitions for guardianships. We had to be available and accessible.

“Also, a lot of people were suffering from mental health issues,” she continued. “The probate court also has the mental health docket that includes emergency petitions for people in crisis to be assessed, but they don’t always understand they need to be assessed. Professionals are engaging with people in crisis, but sometimes the individual says no, he or she doesn’t want an assessment, so we have to order one. We were restricting someone’s liberty, so Judge Garcia and I worked together to schedule a skeleton staff to respond to those needs for persons requiring treatment petitions. Those hearings are required to be in person. That’s one of the areas of practice, when I came on the

bench, that I didn’t expect to be so time consuming.”

Judge Dunnings became the chief Ingham County probate judge in January of 2022. She said previously Judge Garcia and Judge Economy shared that position. When Judge Economy retired, Judge Dunnings took his seat. “Judge Garcia has been on the bench for 22 years, so he asked if I wanted to be chief. It was an agreement that he was ready to step back, and I was ready to step up,” she said.

By that time, the courts had been through the worst of the pandemic. “We have been affected in good ways as well,” said Judge Dunnings. “It forced us to use zoom and consider alternative ways to provide access to the court. There are some proceedings that are appropriate and beneficial to self-represented litigants and attorneys, and there are some that are best in person. During the period of 2020 to 2022, we continued to get acclimated to the use of zoom. On the probate side, we have given a lot of consideration to the option and how can use it to the benefit of the population we serve.”

But there are also drawbacks. “My personal perception is that not all participants respect courtroom decorum on zoom. Some of the self-represented litigants use that opportunity to be disrespectful. If we were in court, we would have a deputy help them get their composure, but we don’t have that on zoom.”

During the pandemic, the court also had “e-filing,” but, as the former probate register, Morgan Cole (now the Hon. Morgan Cole), explained what was really occurring was that the clerks would have to download the emailed documents, print them, and then scan them into the file, creating more work, so, until a better solution is found, there is no e-filing at this time.

“We are working toward e-filing, but we’re not there yet,” Judge Dunnings said. “We are working in conjunction with the circuit court. We don’t control that process. We are planning to be ready when our number is called by SCAO. SCAO has a chart with different counties and stages when those counties will be able to join. We are on the list with SCAO.”

Due to an urgent need, the court dockets were redistributed once Judge Canady retired, creating more family law judgeships. “With Judge Cole coming on the bench, we have restructured the family docket,” Judge Dunnings noted. “We also sit on the circuit court division by assignment for the family docket. The family filings related to covid were where parents don’t live together to resolve whether a child should get a vaccine. That was one we fielded pretty frequently. Should the child have visitations if someone tested positive for covid, should the child go back and forth?”

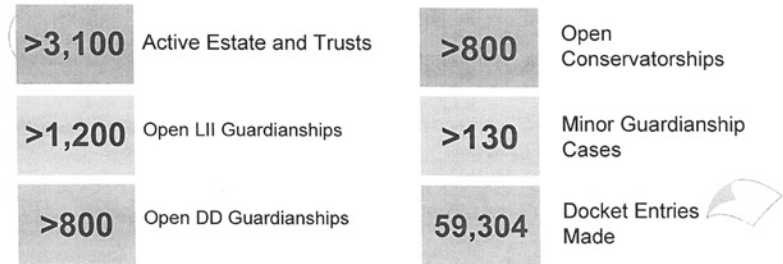
This change has also streamlined circuit court and probate court cases. “If Judge

Cole has a divorce or custody action, and the grandmother comes in for guardianship of a minor because the parent is no longer able to handle the child, we reassign the cases to each other where a domestic file is assigned to one judge. ‘Do you know this family?’ It is a one-judge family concept. It does help when you’ve been dealing with an issue. It helps that we all talk, we all get along. We can take care of all concerns in one forum.”

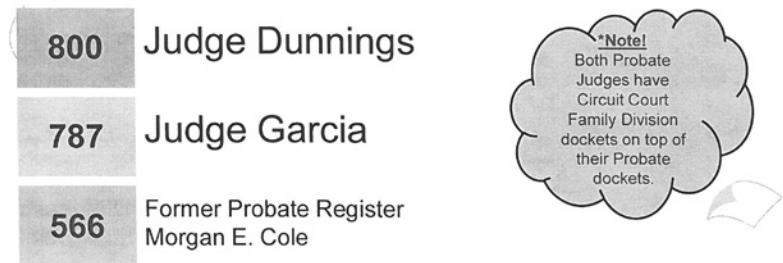
As to where attorneys could make a difference, Judge Dunnings said, “If I had an ask to the Bar, it would be to please consider our juvenile, delinquent, and child neglect and welfare docket. We have court-appointed attorneys on the juvenile and welfare dockets, but we don’t have people signing up. I realize it’s difficult, but there’s a really big need for attorneys to do that work. It’s the most purposeful work they could do. With good representation, they can help the family improve. It is the opportunity to positively change the life of a minor.”

As the worst of the pandemic winds down, Judge Dunnings has also been rewarded with seeing protected persons walk into court petitioning to either reduce or terminate their guardianships. “When they’re restored, they come in for a petition to terminate. I remind people, and attorneys as well, the goal is to restore this person to competence level if it’s possible. If someone is incapacitated, but getting better, there need to be petitions to modify or terminate. These people were near death, and now they walk into the courtroom. It’s just incredible.”

2022 “Ongoing” Case Statistics



2022 – Probate Hearings Held



2022 New Case Statistics



*Adult Guardianships include of “DD” Guardianships



Judge Stacia Buchanan

54A District Court

By Chris Martin
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Judge Stacia Buchanan was appointed to the 54A District Court in September of 2017, and is now the longest-tenured Judge at the 54A District Court. She has presided as the Chief Judge of the 54A District Court since January of 2022.

When making small talk with Judge Buchanan about her role as Chief Judge, she pointed me to MCR 8.110 before providing her perspective on the role. As any attorney who has practiced before Judge Buchanan knows, she is precise and seems to always know where the clearest legal authority is located.

After a discussion of the Court Rule, Judge Buchanan stated that she sees her role as Chief Judge as largely administrative. The Chief Judge has significant influence over hiring and personnel decisions at their court, as well as budgeting and programming responsibilities. Judge Buchanan is quick to point out that all the judges on the court collaborate on these topics, and that the day-to-day responsibilities of running the court are delegated to the Court Administrator. Judge Buchanan acts as a spokesperson for the 54A District Court at times, and works with her colleagues at the 54A District Court and throughout the 30th Circuit to meet the needs of our courts and our community.

Judge Buchanan discussed the priorities of the 54A District Court for the coming years. She is excited that the Court is preparing to offer e-filing for the first time. The 54A has spent significant time and resources partnering with the Supreme Court to migrate to an e-file system. Although the transition to e-file has already begun, the Bar and the public should expect a formal launch in the coming months. The Court plans to start with e-filing for small claims and general civil matters, but expects to expand into other areas as quickly as possible. Judge Buchanan believes that e-filing will improve efficiency at the court, reduce costs and time commitment for litigants, and utilize technology in a productive way.

To the same end, the 54A has purchased a lobby kiosk for conducting routine court business, making payments, and interacting with court staff through virtual appointments. The lobby kiosk will reduce traffic around the sixth floor courtrooms and streamline the work of court staff. The location of the 54A District Court in downtown Lansing within the aging City Hall building presents a number of challenges, which Judge Buchanan hopes will be addressed by the new justice complex.

Perhaps the largest undertaking in the coming years will be transitioning to the new City of Lansing justice complex, which is currently in the planning stages. Lansing voters recently approved a millage for a modern police, courts, and fire complex. Judge Buchanan expects that a new courts building that will house the 54A District Court will be constructed in the next two and a half to three years. She is excited by the possibilities of a new court facility and intends to remain active in the planning process. Specifically, the new facility will incorporate national safety standards for courts buildings, and will provide a more versatile, modern space than the current sixth floor configuration.

When Judge Buchanan is not thinking through the future of the 54A District Court, she stays active and enjoys spending time outdoors. Judge Buchanan enjoys training for and participating in 5K and 10K runs in the area. Judge Buchanan and her husband are avid campers, and they love exploring parks and natural areas throughout Michigan. When Judge Buchanan wants to get her mind off court business, she reads novels and fiction—usually about very different topics than those that come before the 54A District Court.



Judge Janice Cunningham

Eaton County Circuit Court

By Theodore Seitz
tseitz@dykema.com

Eaton County Circuit Court Chief Judge Janice Cunningham was fascinated with the law and knew that she wanted to become a lawyer from an early age. In ninth grade, Judge Cunningham wrote a paper about what she planned to do after high school – be a lawyer. Later, when she graduated from WMU-Cooley Law School, her mom gave her the ninth grade paper. I had the pleasure of speaking with Chief Judge Cunningham on her background, legal career and her time as a Judge.

Judge Cunningham grew up in Muskegon and attended Michigan State University. She spent the first part of her career as a business litigator and trial lawyer, with an emphasis on construction law, including representing groups throughout the United States on construction issues. This included the filing of an amicus brief in the U.S. Supreme Court on behalf representative of a group of women contractors, who believed they were being discriminated against. The experience, which included attending the Supreme Court argument, remains one of the highlights of her legal career. In fact, she has a copy of her Supreme Court amicus brief framed and hanging on the wall in her chambers.

In 1996, Judge Cunningham started her own law firm, along with Susan Mallory and Thomas Lapka, where Judge Cunningham served as the Managing Partner. At the same time, she transitioned to a family law practice,

which she found challenging and gratifying because you are “helping people out at what could one of the worst times in their life.” Eventually, she devoted much of her time acting as a Mediator. For over 20 years, Judge Cunningham has also enjoyed teaching family law as an adjunct professor at WMU-Cooley. She aims to give her law students both an academic and practical view of the law. Her enthusiasm and teaching excellence has garnered her teaching awards.

For many years, Judge Cunningham served as a Delta Township Board Trustee, which also prepared her for her role as Chief Judge working with budgets and other public administration issues.

In 2012, Judge Cunningham was first elected to the Eaton County Circuit Court bench. She was the first woman circuit court judge in Eaton County. Later, she was appointed the Chief Judge. Currently, she also serves on the Board of the Michigan Judges Association. Judge Cunningham has also applied her skills to specialty courts or problem-solving courts in Eaton County. This work is in addition to her hours on the bench and serves to address societal problems like mental illness, substance abuse and the human repercussions of war. Judge Cunningham also works closely with the Eaton County Court Administrative Office, along with other County Officials

and the County Commissioners. She typically devotes 5 or more hours a week to her duties as Chief Judge, which is a position subject to appointment by the Michigan Supreme Court every 2 years.

As far as her personal life, for many years, Judge Cunningham was a competitive tennis player and she continues to be an avid fitness enthusiast. Long ago, her husband encouraged her to try golf, which she enjoys and plays on a regular basis when time allows. She also likes to spend time at her cottage paddleboarding. But what she most enjoys is spending time with her husband, who she met at Michigan State, and her children and grandchildren.

While she is excited about continuing to serve the people of Eaton County for years to come, she knows that eventually her time on the bench will end. She really enjoys being a judge and doing so with no ego; knowing that she gives the people of Eaton County her best, as her predecessors have done and her successors will do. Judge Cunningham has long enjoyed Bar Association activities and views them as a truly valuable to the professional. She also says helping to prepare the next generation of lawyers is at the top of her list of professional accomplishments. As Judge Cunningham expressed in a profile of her in the WMU-Cooley Alumni publication, “[i]f I’ve helped any young lawyer to be prepared, to be

Judge Janice Cunningham continued

professional, to live by the ethics and the oath that they swore, to enjoy being a lawyer, practicing law and helping people, if there is just one person who said I did that, that's a legacy to me." It was a joy to be able to interview Judge Cunningham and she truly is an asset to the legal profession; just as she foretold back in ninth grade.



Judge Joyce Draganchuk Ingham County Circuit Court

By Theodore Seitz
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I sat down with Ingham County Circuit Court Chief Judge Draganchuk in her chambers to discuss her background and her time as Chief Judge. By the end of our conversation, my admiration for Judge Draganchuk grew even more from what I learned about her journey from being a law firm “runner,” legal assistant, Court of Appeals law clerk, prosecutor and points in between.

Judge Draganchuk has a fascinating journey into the law, which starts at Dearborn Fordson High School. She began her journey when she worked at a Detroit area law firm through a work-study program in high school. She was a “runner” filing documents in various courts in downtown Detroit, delivering documents, and helping with other errands. She loved it and kept working at the law firm through high school. When she graduated, she began working as a legal assistant at various Detroit area law firms, as they merged, or morphed into different attorney groups over the years.

Judge Draganchuk enjoyed working as a legal assistant and did not even think about becoming a lawyer until a lawyer at the law firm she was working at stopped her in the firm's library and encouraged her to go to college and then law school. She took out student loans and became a full-time student at Wayne State. While in school, she worked as a typist for law firms in the evening and on the weekends; listening

to dictation and typing up briefs, letters, etc.; to earn extra money. After taking a philosophy course as an undergrad, Judge Draganchuk further cemented her interest in becoming a lawyer. She was influenced to think of a profession as an ethical choice, by her professor.

Judge Draganchuk entered Wayne State Law School, where she excelled (including, winning an award for her writing). Upon graduation from law school, Judge Draganchuk decided to pack up her things and move to Lansing, (where she had never been and knew no one), to take a position with the Michigan Court of Appeals and legendary Chief Judge Robert Danhoff.

She then joined the Ingham County Prosecutor's office. Judge Draganchuk enjoyed her years as a prosecutor, much of her early career spent working with Ingham County Prosecutor Don Martin, who hired her and served as a mentor. Judge Draganchuk enjoyed trying cases and worked hard preparing her cases; she “triple prepared” cases for trial. Eventually, she became the Chief Assistant Prosecutor. It was always an “honor for her to represent the People of the State of Michigan.”

Eventually, several people encouraged Judge Draganchuk to run for Circuit Judge, which she did. She was first elected to the bench in 2004. After several years on the bench, Judge Draganchuk was appointed as the Business Court Judge, and began to

handle complex business matters, along with her criminal docket. Judge Draganchuk relishes her work on the Business Court and typically drafts her own opinions. She loves legal analysis and writing. She also enjoys interacting with lawyers on cases. She has “a love of lawyers and the law.” At the same time, she is mindful of the responsibility that lawyers have in the community to further the reputation of the legal profession.

As far as her personal life, Judge Draganchuk’s husband, John is a retired police detective, who she met while she was working in the Prosecutor’s Office. She enjoys travel, loves to

cook (but not clean), and has been an amateur genealogist for 25 years. In fact, Judge Draganchuk has researched and documented many lines of her family tree back through the 18th century or earlier in some cases. She traced her father’s line back to France in the 1600’s and traveled to their village in Alsace-Lorraine. She compiled all her research into a book entitled *Kraemer Families in Alsace, France: My 20-year Search for a French Army Soldier*. Her husband, ever the detective, has been instrumental in her genealogy searches.

As to her service on the bench and what she enjoys most: it is the ability to impact people’s lives. This includes

some of those she has sentenced, who have let her know that she ultimately allowed them to change, just by listening to them, showing empathy, and giving them opportunity; even if it through a prison sentence; to make themselves a better person and productive member of society.

After our conversation, I was even more convinced that the people within Ingham County and the Ingham County Bar are fortunate to have a person of such immense experience, empathy, and ability to serve as the Chief Judge of the Ingham County Circuit Court.

Words to Consider

Bringing Your Soul to Work: Part 5 – You Are Remarkable

By William Frank Diedrich



William Frank Diedrich
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On New York's lower east side you can purchase a flavorful, creative, deep-fried hot dog for seven or eight dollars at Crif Dogs.

This successful restaurant was established in 2001, but the owners wanted a new challenge. They thought they would open a bar, but there were about sixty bars within a four block radius. They knew that, for their bar to be successful, it had to be remarkable.

Remarkable is defined as being of note; something worthy of your attention. Crif Dogs already owned a liquor license, and they had purchased an old wooden phone booth. These two factors plus an available space next door sparked an opportunity to create something truly remarkable.

In 2007 the new bar opened. Customers entered Crif Dogs, proceeded to the phone booth in the back corner, and dialed "2" on the old rotary phone.

A voice answered asking: "Do you have a reservation?" If you answered "Yes." A secret door in the phone booth opened and allowed you to enter the bar. People walked into a classic speakeasy, only this one was legal. There was no sign out front, no marketing, no advertisements. There was no physical evidence anywhere that the bar actually existed.

"What was the name of the bar?" You might ask.

Please Don't Tell. That was the name. By 2010 *Please Don't Tell* was rated one of the ten top bars in the United States. It's unique decor (brick, wood, and stuffed animals); it's numerous original cocktail drinks, and it's no-longer-so-secret entryway kept people talking about it and revisiting. When you left the bar the waitperson gave you a black business card with the words: *Please Don't Tell*, and the phone number--in case you did want to tell.

Every vision begins with an idea. A vision manifests with the confidence and the passion to act on it. This is true, often because of your circumstances. Several years ago a friend of mine, Gina, parked her car to help a stranded motorist. Another driver sped around the parked car, hit her, and dragged her 200 feet. Gina was rushed to the hospital with multiple broken bones, burns, and

numerous abrasions. She lost both her legs, and she was not expected to live. Gina did survive, and she thrived. What vision did she hold that inspired her remarkable recovery? Gina had a nine year old daughter, twin four year old boys, and a husband. She wanted to be there for her family. Gina experienced multiple surgeries, skin grafts, and a lot of pain. She learned to use her prosthetic legs along with hand crutches. Two years ago I went for a walk with Gina and several others. Gina covered the mile-and-a-half hike, mostly unassisted. Gina now plays golf, keeps up with her growing children, and helps other amputees to adjust to their prosthetic limbs.

What is your vision? What are you here to do? What is your purpose in life? What is your calling? These are important questions to ask yourself. Wherever you are in life; in school, beginning your career, mid-career, ending your career, retired; there is something remarkable about you. There is something noteworthy. You have a purpose. If you aren't sure of what it is, ask. Ask the question, then become silent. Listen within. Make it a prayer, or a meditation, or a time of contemplation. Ask every day if needed until you receive an answer. You are called. What are you called to do?

You are called to be someone and to play a role. The role you play, whether entrepreneur, president, doctor, lawyer, teacher, caretaker, creator of art or music, raising a child, or whatever ignites your passion is important. You are here to create, grow, and to inspire others to play their roles. There is something remarkable within you; something remarkable about you. Whether or not your family, friends, or associates recognize or approve of it, consider letting yourself shine. It may be that you continue doing what you've been doing, but with enhanced enthusiasm, integrity, creativity, and sense of purpose. Being remarkable varies in scale. Whether your calling affects millions or only one or two people, it is important.

You will *do* remarkable things because you *are* remarkable. That is, you don't have to overcome a tragedy, build a company, or set a record to be remarkable. You can just be yourself; a person who possesses integrity, an open heart, and wisdom. With these qualities, and we all have the potential to hold and express these qualities, your presence alone is remarkable. You will automatically speak and act in remarkable ways because that is who you are. This quality of being will show up in your interactions with others and in the quality of your work product.

Are you remarkable in your work? Is money, by itself, enough reason to continue a career or a way of life that doesn't evoke your joy? Your soul, the essence of you, wants to express its passion, its desire to serve and create, its need to be and do something meaningful. If you're only working for the money you are probably in conflict. Inner conflict is when your external

speech and behavior fail to align with your true inner desires, your values, and/or your true calling.

The stress of inner conflict often leads to illness. If you are stressed every day then you are in *Fight or Flight*. Stress hormones such as adrenaline, norepinephrine, and cortisol trigger a cascade of physiological responses including an increase in body temperature, respiration rate, blood pressure, and of course, exhaustion. Continued *Fight or Flight* can lead to strokes, heart attacks, and a number of other diseases. One sure way to manage stress is to show up as authentically you. This resolves the inner conflict. Being the remarkable and authentic you, may create risk in terms of your current employment. At the same time, your value becomes more clear, and with a little confidence, you know that you can offer it elsewhere if needed. Remember you have a purpose, and you can either offer it where you are or somewhere else.

Once you discover and accept your own remarkability, you are more likely to see it in others. In order to see it you must look for it, believe that it is there, and call it out. Your opinion about another person is your vision for that person. If your opinion is negative, you are complicit in bringing out the worst in that person. If your opinion is positive, and you have a sense of the potential in another, then your positive vision helps to draw out the best in that person.

Of course, we have to deal with poor behavior and bad habits in others. Hold people accountable; establish clear boundaries; yet do this from a place of believing in them. If your teenager is smoking pot, vaping, failing in school,

and his/her room is a garbage heap, deal with those issues as needed. Get help. Yet, hold the vision for his/her remarkability. Don't impose your idea of success, but let go of judgment. Offer unconditional positive regard. You hold them accountable without losing sight of their greatness, of the remarkable soul they are.

This ability to see what is remarkable in another holds true with your employees, your manager, your clients, your colleagues, your spouse or partner and your friends. In other words, treat all people as if they have value, as if they are remarkable. Your confidence in your own remarkability, and your willingness to act on it, to be yourself, and your ability to see it in others will greatly increase your positive influence.

Your soul is your essence; who you are. You are not your job, your body, or any role assigned to you. You may have a job, play certain roles, and you do have a body. These are part of you, but you are the essence. At any time you can step back and see that what others say and do is not personal to you. It's personal to them. Your interpretation of what others say and do creates your experience of life. Opinions, judgments, and behaviors of others are about them. Criticism from others should be considered for its value, not taken personally. To listen to criticism and carefully consider its value, to apply whatever truth you find in that criticism only increases your remarkability. Praise from others should also be considered and applied rather than allowing it to feed your ego.

As a remarkable soul who is living your purpose you will find that you carry an inner joy, a sense of satisfaction, and a profound gratitude that is not

Words to Consider continued

diminished by whatever is going on in the world around you. Life happens; success, failure, sickness, death, victories, defeats; but you are secure in who you are. Sadness, anger, hurt, joy, pride, contentment are all part of life. Accept these feelings as they arise. Your acceptance of what you feel and who you are, and your willingness to be remarkable make you powerful. There

is a secret door to the inner you, to your soul. Enter it. Inside you is someone quite remarkable. The real you. Begin with a willingness to explore. Make it your intention to be remarkable. Commit yourself to being you. Through discovery and practice you will learn to listen to your inner voice with a sense of certainty. Over time you'll come to rely on the remarkable soul you are.

William Frank Diedrich is a speaker, executive coach, and the author of nine books. He works with organizations and individuals to develop emotional intelligence, leadership ability, and teamwork. You may learn more about his work at his website: <http://humanadulthood.com>.

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: April 11, 2023

For Further Information Contact:

NAME: Michael J. Dillon
TITLE: Court Administrator
TELEPHONE: 517-676-8426

55th District Court Celebrates Sobriety Court Graduation as Michigan Supreme Court Issues Annual Problem-Solving Court Annual Report

Mason, MI, April 11, 2023 – Chief Judge Donald L. Allen Jr. is pleased to announce the most recent graduation of the 55th District Court Sobriety Court. While the program remained operational throughout the pandemic, this is the first graduation ceremony to be held in the new Ingham County Justice Complex.

Judge Allen presides over the program. “Our Sobriety Court continues to be a win-win situation, proving rehabilitation effectively protects the community, saves significant taxpayer money, and returns citizens to productive lives,” Judge Allen stated. “We are very proud of our program, our participants, and of the community support we consistently receive. The long term success of Sobriety Court is based upon close supervision of probationers by an interdisciplinary team dedicated to the safety of our community.”

With this ceremony, the program marks **795 successful graduates** since becoming operational in 2004. According to research conducted by the Michigan Supreme Court, the 55th District Court Sobriety Court consistently outperforms similar programs in Michigan, with higher graduation and lower recidivism rates.

The graduation coincides with the release of the Michigan Supreme Court’s [FY 2022 Problem-Solving Courts Annual Report](#), tracking the progress and highlighting the success of 207 problem-solving courts (PSCs) across Michigan from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022. Ingham County is fortunate enough to have both a Sobriety Court and Mental Health Court, programs that support justice-involved individuals in our community by helping them overcome underlying issues such as substance abuse disorder and mental illness.

continued on page 21

“Problem-solving courts exemplify how we are working to increase public trust and confidence in the judiciary through collaboration and compassion—an overarching goal of our Michigan Judicial Council,” said Justice Kyra H. Bolden, the PSC liaison for the Supreme Court. “What struck me the most about this report is that these pages are not just filled with numbers and milestones; they are filled with hope and humanity.”

Key report findings:

- Michigan’s adult drug and sobriety programs grew from 98 programs in FY 2018 to 109 programs in FY 2022.
- Graduates of adult drug court programs were, on average, **more than 3 times less likely** to be convicted of a new offense within three years of admission to a program.
- Sobriety Court graduates who used an ignition interlock device were **nearly 5 times less likely** to be convicted of a new offense within three years of admission.
- **On average, Mental Health Court (MHC) graduates—adult and juvenile—were nearly 2 times less likely to commit another crime within three years of admission to a program.**
- **Unemployment among adult circuit MHC graduates dropped by 81 percent.**
- Average **99 percent improvement** in mental health and 95 percent quality of life improvement.

Problem-solving courts focus on providing treatment and intense supervision to participants as an alternative to incarceration. The Supreme Court, through its State Court Administrative Office, assists trial court judges in management of these courts by providing training, education, operational standards, monitoring, certification requirements, and funding.



Honorable, Cynthia Ward
and Greg Ward will serve as the Emcees.

129th ICBA Annual Dinner Wednesday, November 8, 2023

University Club of MSU
3435 Forest Road,
Lansing, MI 48909-5111

Reception - 6:00 p.m.

Dinner - 6:30 p.m.

Program - 7:00 p.m.

President's Special Recognition Award Recipients

To see previous award recipients

[CLICK HERE](#)



Ernschie Augustin

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augustin@augustinlawoffices.com

Ms. Augustin is passionate about serving clients in the following areas: Elder Law, Estate Planning, Estate & Trust Administration, Probate Litigation (includes conservatorships, guardianships, trust and fiduciary litigation), and Family Law.

Ms. Ernschie Augustin grew up in Southwest Florida and attended Michigan State University for her undergraduate, graduate, and law degree. Upon graduating from law school, she practiced law at an Elder Law, Probate & Estate Planning firm. Ms. Augustin continued her legal career in East Lansing, but she serves clients statewide.

In addition to her practice areas, Ms. Augustin made Michigan history as being the youngest Public Administrator to be appointed by the State Public Administrator – Attorney General's Office as Ingham County Public Administrator. County public administrators are appointed by the State Public Administrator to assist in the administration of the estates of deceased persons without wills and with no known heirs.



Alexander S. Rusek

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Alexander Rusek is a rare trial lawyer under 40 who has tried numerous complex cases in the business world and the criminal law arena. His trial experience shapes how he advises and strategizes with clients in litigation and those facing potential litigation.

Most of Mr. Rusek's work falls into three primary, often overlapping, areas: civil litigation, criminal cases, and administrative, regulatory, and investigative matters, including headline cases.

Jury trials and bench trials are a steady part of Mr. Rusek's practice. He has tried breaches of contract and complex business dispute cases, civil rights cases, and criminal cases. His criminal cases have ranged from drunk driving offenses to first-degree premeditated murder and other life-offenses.

High Profile Litigation: Handling the press and pressure are skills Mr. Rusek has honed in high profile mass action and class action cases. He represented over 100 survivors of

sexual assault in nationally recognized cases and a defendant in the Flint Water Crisis civil and criminal litigation.

Administrative & Regulatory Matters & Investigations: Individuals face some of the most challenging times in their lives when they find themselves involved in overlapping civil, administrative, and criminal matters. Mr. Rusek guides people through these difficult situations; including state and federal regulatory investigations into business and other practices that may result in both civil litigation and criminal prosecutions. Mr. Rusek also represents healthcare and other licensed professionals in disciplinary and similar administrative proceedings, often while they are also facing criminal charges. These licensed professionals include doctors, pharmacists, dentists, nurses, counselors, attorneys, residential builders, barbers, etc.

Technology in Litigation: Mr. Rusek is a proponent of using the latest resources to help his clients. He leverages his tech background to better understand tech subject matter disputes and to conduct eDiscovery efficiently and effectively. As litigation surrounding technology, eDiscovery, data privacy, and data protection heats up, Mr. Rusek is available to assist clients.

In his time outside of work, Mr. Rusek enjoys being an active leader in the State Bar and Ingham County Bar, mentoring undergraduate and law students, and actively supporting The Army of Survivors, Inc., a non-profit formed by survivors of sexual abuse, the mission of which is to spread awareness and combat sexual abuse in sports.

Megan Cochrane

New Co-Chair for Paralegal/Legal Assistant



Megan Cochrane
mcochrane@loomislaw.com

Megan is a paralegal at Loomis, Ewert, Parsley, Davis & Gotting, P.C. She specializes in assisting attorneys in alternative dispute resolution, including, but not limited to matters involving medical malpractice/wrongful death, no-fault, probate matters, and employment discrimination. Megan also assists attorneys in the areas of estate planning, business planning, oil and gas law, and real estate matters.

Currently, Megan is a chairperson for the Ingham County Bar Association Paralegal Section, a member of the American Bar Association Paralegal Section, and a member of the Junior League of Lansing.

Megan lives in the Greater Lansing area with her family. She enjoys reading, being outdoors, and spending time at her family's cottage in northern Michigan.

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ICBA Shrimp Dinner

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View photos from the event

https://www.inghambar.org/inghambar_gallery/2023-shrimp-dinner/



The Ingham County Bar Foundation

Grant Recipients

The ICBF would like to share the 2022-2023 grant recipients! These four organizations contribute greatly to our community and we are honored to help further their missions.



WAI-IAM, Inc

Seeks to empower those struggling with addiction to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives.



Firecracker Foundation

To address gender-based violence in public schools through its Title IX community advocacy program.



Mid-Michigan Treatment Courts Foundation

To promote, through financial support and citizen awareness, the benefits of a successful, corrective, interdisciplinary treatment program.

ICVTC

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Ingham County Veterans Treatment Court

To assist veterans from all branches of the military who have found themselves involved in the criminal justice system.

Click [here](#) for more information on being a Fellow!

A person can become a Foundation member for \$25 per year.
To become a member, or to make a donation to the Foundation, click [here](#)!

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The Ingham County Bar Foundation's

2023 EVENTS

JUNE 28TH

**Judges'
Retirement Dinner
at Eagle Eye**

**Golf Outing
at Hawk Hollow**

AUG. 3RD

NOV. 8TH

**Fellows Reception
at University Club**

**WE HOPE
TO SEE
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JUDGES RETIREMENT BANQUET



Honoring Retired Trial & Appellate Court Judges

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Julie Reincke, Judge of the 56A District Court

Amy Ronayne Krause, Judge of the MI COA

Andrea Larkin, Judge of the 54B District Court

Clinton Canady, Judge of the 30th Judicial Circuit Court

Laura Baird, Judge of the 30th Judicial Circuit Court

Stephen Markman, Justice of the MI SCT

Richard Ball, Judge of the 54B District Court

Bridget McCormack, Justice of the MI SCT

Janelle Lawless, Judge of the 30th Judicial Circuit Court

Randy Tahvonen, Judge of the 29th Judicial Circuit Court

Hugh Clarke, Jr., Judge of the 54A District Court

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 **JUNE 28, 2023**

 **5:00PM** - Reception 5:00, Dinner 6:30, Program 7:00, End 9:00

Keynote Speaker:

CHIEF JUSTICE ELIZABETH T. CLEMENT

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June 22, 2023

Ask a Lawyer!

Join us for an event designed to create connections between the people of our community and experienced lawyers!

Capital Area District Library

401 S Capitol Ave
Lansing, MI 48933

Join us!

Thursday, October 12, 2023

5:00pm - 7:00pm

Registration is not required

The attorneys and legal professionals at Chartier & Nyamfukudza, P.L.C. have helped exonerate five individuals who are now on the National Registry of Exonerations. We remain committed to helping those who have been wrongfully convicted. Please feel free to visit the National Registry of Exonerations website to learn about these stories and more!

www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration



2295 Sower Boulevard
Okemos, MI 48864
P: 517.885.3305
F: 517.885.3363



CHARTIER | NYAMFUKUDZA | P.L.C.

CRIMINAL DEFENSE LITIGATION

www.cndefenders.com

125 Ottawa Avenue NW Suite 265
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
P: 616.888.6800
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lbaumer@ourcommunity.org
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BRIEFS Author Guidelines & Policies

IN GENERAL

Publication Schedule

BRIEFS is published by the Ingham County Bar Association six times a year.

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](#) 



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 Marisa Vinsky, Takura Nyamfukudza or Christopher Wickman.

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

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 fourth Tuesday of the month from noon to 1 p.m. Location TBD. Lunch is provided.

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

Upcoming Meetings:

2nd 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.

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 Megan Cochrane, a Paralegal at Loomis Law.

Upcoming Meetings:

3rd 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.



Probate and Trust Section

Ernsie Augustin and Joann M. Schofield are the Co-Chairs for the Probate and Trust Section. The Section holds its in person meetings the second Wednesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. at Chalgian & Tripp Law Offices, PLLC, 1019 Trowbridge Road, East Lansing, MI 48823 (ZOOM option is available for those who are unable to attend in person). If you plan to attend the meeting in person, please RSVP to Ernsie at augustin@augustinlawoffices.com.

Upcoming Meetings:

- June 14, 2022: In Person.

Please join the Section's Facebook Group by searching "ICBA Probate & Trust Law Section" and connect with us on social media. As a way to streamline RSVPs and minimize emails, you can RSVP for the Section meetings via Facebook. Are you feeling generous?

Please consider sponsoring breakfast for our in person meetings.

If you are interested in sponsoring, please contact Joann at 517-377-0894 or email jschofield@fraserlawfirm.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:

- May 2023: ZOOM
- June 2023: ZOOM

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 (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 Chair Norm Witte for details.

To RSVP for meetings, contact Norm Witte at ncwitte@wittelaw.com.



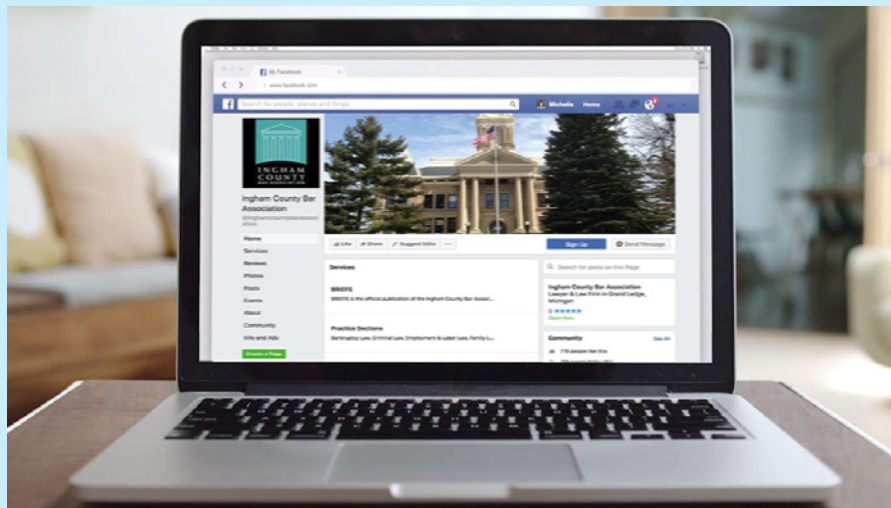
ICBA Sponsorship Opportunities

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.



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



ICBA Membership Scholarship Application

ICBA may offer scholarships to prospective members who may be experiencing a hardship and cannot pay the standard rates to be an active member of the Bar.

Recipients will remain anonymous. It is up to the discretion of the ICBA President to grant scholarships, but it can only be approved on an annual basis (i.e. this is not a benefit that automatically renews 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** 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



Feedback? briefs@inghambar.org

Next issue:

July 2023 Davis Dunnings Bar Association



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