

Ingham County Bar Association

BRIEFS



March 2025



Court Staff

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SAVE
THE
DATE

Annual Shrimp Dinner/Annual Meeting
Wednesday, May 21, 2025
VFW Post 701 @ 5:00 Reception p.m.
Dinner @ 6:00 p.m.

Ask A Lawyer
Thursday, October 16, 2025
Capital Area District Library @ 5:00-7:00 p.m.

131st Annual Dinner
Wednesday, November 12, 2025
Crowne Plaza @ 6:00 – 8:00 pm

ICBF Fellows Reception
Thursday, November 13, 2025
Crowne Plaza @ 5:00 – 6:00 pm

Bench Bar 2026
Saturday, February 7, 2026
Veterans Memorial Courthouse

17th Annual Barristers
Thursday, March 12, 2026
U Club @ 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

BRIEFS
Publication Schedule

September
December
March
June



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ICBA Logo and Letterhead Policy

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

About ICBA

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



INGHAM COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

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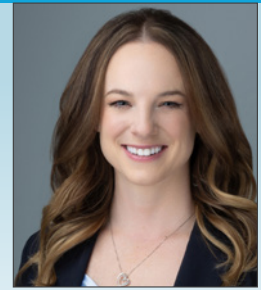
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President's Message



Lindsay Dangl,
Murphy & Spagnuolo PC
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This edition of BRIEFS honors the hard work of the Ingham County court staff. While judges and attorneys often receive public recognition, it's the diligent work of court staff that forms the backbone of our court system: the administrators, clerks, secretaries, court reporters, officers, service coordinators, interpreters, and many others who work behind the scenes. In the fast-paced world we live in, it can be easy to focus solely on your own to do list and meeting deadlines. But at the heart of our profession is something far greater than the day-to-day tasks - people. Court staff are often the first point of contact between the courts and the people who need access to justice.

Maya Angelou has been attributed with saying, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

This year, the importance of civility in the practice of law has been a running theme. In my experience, it's something our bar association does so well. A judge from another county remarked at our Meet the Judges event, "You all are so nice to each other." I am proud that our bar association leaves that impression - we can still fight for our clients passionately but be civil, respectful, and kind to each other as human beings.

However, sometimes people forget that

the concept of civility does not only apply to opposing counsel or the judge. Civility is a way of life that applies to every person we encounter. As Richard Branson said, "Respect is how to treat everyone, not just those you want to impress." This specifically includes the court staff whose hard work is just as vital to the administration of justice. Part of the oath we all swore as attorneys was to "...maintain the respect due of courts of justice and judicial officers." On the whole, lawyers tend to love words. Our profession is built on it. We write briefs, draft documents, and craft oral arguments. We know words have power. While as lawyers, we have to be passionate and zealous for our client's needs, in the busy of life, it's easy to underestimate that a moment of respect, a simple "thank you," or a tone of understanding can make all the difference in someone's day. As we take a moment to appreciate just how much court staff do to keep the wheels of justice turning, let's remember—words matter. Let's choose kindness and civility in our daily interactions because a legal system built on mutual respect functions more smoothly, fosters better communication, and ultimately serves justice more effectively.

Every year, ICBA honors five young attorneys who have distinguished themselves in their relatively short

careers by manifesting such exemplary character, integrity, judgment, and legal scholarship; service to the profession and the bar; service to the community; and a reputation for or the advancement of the highest legal standards and professional responsibility. The recipients are chosen by a diverse group of volunteers from the bench and bar that make up our awards committee. This year, the committee made stellar choices in selecting Jordan M. Ahlers-Smith of the Speaker Law Firm PLLC, Kyle M. Asher of Dykema Gossett PLLC, Susan L. Chalgain of Chalgain & Tripp Law Offices, Melanie L. Smith of the Michigan Department of the Attorney General, and Taylor E. Wicks of the Ingham County Public Defender's Office. Recognizing our members' accomplishments is one of the most meaningful things we do as a bar association. ICBA is proud to shine a spotlight on these incredible professionals and celebrate their achievements at our Barrister's Night.

This edition of BRIEFS is a lot to celebrate - the outstanding young lawyers and the court staff who make practicing law possible. We can all use our words wisely: to uplift, to appreciate, and to show the kind of professionalism that makes the Ingham Bar Association stand out. When it comes down to it, the practice of law is all about the people - and we've got some of the best!

The 2025-2026 Broadway in Detroit Musicals

Chris Wickman, ICBA-CDLS Co-Chair



Christopher Wickman
cwickman@nicholslaw.net

The first Broadway show I actually saw on Broadway was “In the Heights.” It was my 3L year of law school, and I was dating a girl in New York City, so I would take the bus from Philadelphia on the weekends to visit her. Rather than go to the movies or otherwise find something to do in the city, we would enter Broadway Lottery Rushes, which were held in person back then. You would enter your name in a drawing, and if you were one of the lucky people drawn in the raffle, you would get to buy up to 2 cheap tickets for the show. After we did not get drawn for the Wicked lottery rush, it was recommended we go check out the “In the Heights” lottery rush because “that one guy” (now known as the infamous LMM/ Lin Manuel Miranda) just finished his run. We were drawn, and I bought two front-row tickets for \$25 or so a piece. I was close enough to put my feet against the stage and lean back to look up nearly vertically at the actors on the edge of the stage. My love of Broadway was born and my wife and I take yearly trips to NYC to enter as many lottery

and other rushes as possible -as well as occasionally seeing a show for full price. Sunset Boulevard – here we come!

Broadway in Detroit hosts a lot of great shows every year, and we usually make a few trips per year to go see shows there. We may even subscribe this year because the lineup is so great! For those not ready to dive in fully on a subscription and looking to pick up some cheap tickets, I may recommend liking their page on Facebook to see when there are discounted ticket specials or when they are doing Lucky Seat (lottery rush) drawings. I do not work for Broadway in Detroit, nor do I receive any compensation for this - I just want to share my love of musicals with you. The opinions below are my own only and not the opinions or recommendations of the ICBA or the Nichols Law Firm.



Not every show is for every person. If you’re looking for a recommendation or have any questions, feel free to reach out to me – cwickman@nicholslaw.net. Enjoy!

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

October 1-12, 2025

This classically styled musical that was originally performed in 1994 on Broadway is based on the Academy Award winning 1991 movie (remade in 2017 with Emma Watson) and features a lot of classic music. It is a classic big-style Disney musical with great musical numbers, diverse backdrops, fun dancing, and wonderful costumes. It has a lot of the magic of the original show with a bit more depth for its main characters.

You may like this musical if you

like: Aladdin, Cinderella, either of the movies, Disney music/movies/musicals, musicals with known music, or visual musicals.

Chris’s Personal Ranking: #62, but it may move up after seeing it again.

BACK TO THE FUTURE: THE MUSICAL

October 28-November 9, 2025

“Wait a minute, Doc, are you telling me you built a time machine out of a DeLorean?” The second of our “based on the movie” musicals of the season, Back to the Future is based on the 1985 movie of the same title. For big fans of the movie, the musical delivers with all the nostalgia and emotions. Originally

debuting on Broadway in 2023, the show delivered for the audience, with the biggest star being the DeLorean itself. On Broadway, this was a truly visual show that left people of all ages in awe and wondering, “How did they do that?!” I have heard the tour has delivered on the same wonderment on its current stops to date as well.

You may like this musical if you like:

Mrs. Doubtfire, the classic movie, visual shows, known properties, and cool special effects.

Chris’s Personal Ranking: Never seen it – looking forward to the first time!

HELL’S KITCHEN

December 2-14, 2025

One of the best highly decorated Jukebox musicals in years, Hell’s Kitchen is a semiautobiographical musical featuring the music and experiences of the amazing Alicia Keys. It is all about the love and life between mother and daughter in the Hell’s Kitchen neighborhood in New York City. This 2024 show just won the Grammy for Best Musical Theater Album, and both the music and staging deliver for the audience.

You may like this musical if you like:

MJ, Jagged Little Pill, Ain’t Too Proud, the music or gravitas of Alicia Keys, impressive dance numbers, and real-life stories.

Chris’s Personal Ranking: Never seen it – looking forward to the first time!

SHUCKED

December 23, 2025-January 4, 2026

Shucked just wrapped up not too long ago at the Wharton Center when I write this. It was the show I was most

looking forward to in the season (and it was wonderful), and it is coming to Detroit next year. Seeing it for the first time definitely brings raucous laughter/guffawing, so if you regret missing it in East Lansing (or just want to see it again), I’d highly recommend seeing it in Detroit. Shucked is a newer Broadway show from the 2023 Tonys season. When a small town whose entire identity is centered around corn has their crop threatened, a young woman must venture out of the only place she’s ever known seeking help to save their home. When, during her trip to the “big city,” she runs into a con man, drama and comedy ensue as they return to try to save her small town. The hilarious script (book) is at odds with the more heartfelt and powerful musical numbers. While it was the show that I most looked forward to at Wharton Center this past year, another show takes that award for the Detroit schedule this time around – keep reading!

You may like this musical if you like:

Avenue Q, Book of Mormon, puns, one-liners, small towns, comedy, country music, or heartfelt stories.

Chris’s Personal Ranking: #8

THE OUTSIDERS

March 3-15, 2026

Here we are at our last, but definitely not least, of the movie/book adaptations of the season. Based on the 1967 book and 1983 movie (directed by Francis Ford-Coppola) of the same name, this is the 2024 Tony Best Musical Award Winner, and it definitely deserved it. Following the gritty story of the down-in-life Greasers as they navigate a very divided Tulsa (including their clashes with the well-to-do Socs (pronounced

soches)), this show delivers heartfelt songs focusing on family and belonging and features amazing choreography and visual effects. Although I preferred the story and songs of another show on this list that it beat for the coveted Best Musical Tony, this is more classic Broadway, and I can definitely see why it won the awards it did.

You may like this musical if you like:

West Side Story, Ghost the Musical, the classic story, a growing up story, complex but loving family dynamics, “Big Broadway,” choreography and special effects.

Chris’s Personal Ranking: #11

& Juliet

March 31-April 12, 2026

A twist on the classic Romeo and Juliet, it asks the question, “What if Juliet didn’t kill herself at the end?” Sorry – spoilers. This musical uses and reimagines classic pop hits by Max Martin, such as “Larger than Life” and “I Want it That Way” by the Backstreet Boys, “Baby One More Time” and “Oops I Did it Again” by Britney Spears, “It’s My Life” by Bon Jovi, and many, many more to put on a highly energetic and entertaining show.

You may like this musical if you

like: Six, Moulin Rouge, pop music, fun choreography, and coming-of-age stories.

Chris’s Personal Ranking: Never seen it – looking forward to the first time!

Suffs

April 14-26, 2026

Here it is – the show I am most excited about to see in this coming season of Broadway in Detroit. It is also the

newest entry to my top 5 musicals I have seen. Another historical musical (similar to Hamilton, but most of the major comparisons end there), the story follows the tail end of the fight to ratify the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, guaranteeing women the right to vote. The story compels with its competing factions, strong characters (all played by women), and moving performances. A largely true-to-history tale, it features struggles between factions across age and racial divides and follows the evolution of the characters as they fight. It left me feeling strengthened, energized, and exalted – and I am looking forward to feeling it all over again.

You may like this musical if you like: Hamilton, The Unsinkable Molly Brown, strong female characters, and smaller, intimate productions.

Chris's Personal Ranking: #5

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ICBA Shrimp Dinner

VFW Post 701 5:00 – 9:00 p.m.

May 21, 2025

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These Three Words

By Kristina Bilowus



Kristina Bilowus
bilowusk@msu.edu

I write this article in my personal capacity, and this article expresses solely my personal opinion and does not necessarily reflect the views of the ICBA or any other professional organization that I am affiliated with.

Over the course of the past several weeks, I have contemplated the various changes, challenges, and conversations concerning three words: Diversity. Equity. Inclusion. For the past several years, I have noted the fluctuation in the nomenclature surrounding these three words. I have heard the pros and cons of saying those three words. For many, DEI represented a shift, active engagement, and tangible means toward creating more opportunities. A chance to do better than our predecessors in greater representation of all people, and in particular, for populations who have experienced systemic racism and/or bias during some of this country's most shameful eras. For others, those three words became a shield, insulating and supporting agendas of continued prejudice, hate, and discriminatory ways.

Today, DEI is under attack at both the federal and state level. Whether you agree or disagree with the significant changes that are taking place on this front, these three little words are back in the spotlight with a flurry of confusion and change.

On the macro level, one may think there is nothing to be done. That we are in a shifting political landscape, and like other moments in history, there are monumental peaks and valleys. Another approach can be, wait and see. Finally, as society grapples with the legality of it all, I acknowledge the very real boundaries that are being implemented. Funding is being cut, prohibitions are being put in place, and there is fear over the loss of livelihood.

Conversely, for some of us the day-to-day responsibilities that we have may hardly be altered. Others may think that we are engaging with "business as usual" and that we can disguise or redress DEI with new nomenclature.

Rest assured, DEI is not a political issue. It's a necessary factor in order to be a decent human being.

Today, as I reflect on the flurry of Executive Orders, federal updates, articles, and letters surrounding these three words, I had to come to grips with how I move forward as a certified diversity professional, an adviser, a leader, a woman, a wife, a lawyer, and as a person. I don't have the answers that I am desperately seeking, and I wrestle with both the pain and privilege of who I am.

I am one of the lucky ones, as my sex is still recognized. I'm in pain for my students and friends, whose very existence is being denied and disrespected because the leader of the free world said so.

I am privileged because I am educated and a lawyer. Yet, I am painfully aware of how uncertain legal issues have become. Nearly every day, I ask, "Can he legally do that?" And the cacophony of opinions ensues, yet the answers come with little clarity.

I was born privileged as a white woman who, since childhood, felt security in her citizenship. In a breathlessly short amount of time, I see fear and anxiety for many others who lack the privileges I have taken for granted for many years.

These examples are not exhaustive. Rather, they bring into sharp focus that words matter, but actions speak louder. I make the choice each day of how to live intentionally or what I choose to ignore. Articles are written about DEI, policies are being changed, and there is significant upheaval in so many spaces. At its core DEI is about decency, every voice counting, and individuals. These three words may feel reduced to a buzzword or represent the biggest challenge. Beyond words, each of us is accountable for our own actions.

How do we continue to be decent human beings while balancing the need for compliance and our livelihoods?

What are we going to do to make every voice be heard and counted while fearful of backlash?

Where are the safe spaces for individuals to go when there are efforts to marginalize them beyond recognition?

I don't have answers to these questions, and I presume you don't either. What I expect of myself and hope for others is that we speak up and out for decency, be voices for the voiceless, and continue to

work toward a profession where all are welcomed.

These three words we use convey so much more than the acronym. I encourage each of us to use intentionality and choose inclusion. I hope that we continue to find diverse representation for our various geographic spaces in the state of Michigan and for the entities we serve. And finally, a call for equity – to meet people where they are at.

At the end of the day, these three words are meaningless if we don't practice them. And we can use different nomenclature, roadblocks, and the like to abandon the mission. So, I conclude this article and a step forward into the future with a reminder from the great, late Dr. Maya Angelou: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

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For Immediate Release

February 26, 2025

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Fraser Trebilcock Welcomes Dakota A. Larson to the Firm



Dakota A. Larson

dlarson@fraserlawfirm.com

Lansing, MI – Fraser Trebilcock is pleased to announce the hiring of attorney Dakota A. Larson who will work primarily in the firm’s Lansing office.

Ms. Larson focuses on insurance defense and business matters. She has experience handling complex liability, coverage, and bad faith claims in multiple lines of insurance and in multiple jurisdictions.

Prior to joining the firm, Dakota worked as a Research Attorney at the Michigan Court of Appeals and in-house at a national insurance company. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with family, friends, and her dog, Lola. She

also enjoys trying new restaurants and watching MSU sports or the Detroit Lions.

“We are excited to have Dakota join the firm and are confident that she will continue the mission of providing excellent legal services to our clients,” said Thaddeus E. Morgan, President of 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 | scglegal.com.

Criminal Law Section Update

By Jessica Zimbelman, ICBA Vice-President
Managing Attorney, State Appellate Defender Office

** The criminal case law update will include Michigan Supreme Court decisions, substantive orders, and published Court of Appeals decisions from the prior quarter. If there are specific topics a reader would like a deeper dive on, please email me at jzimbelman@sado.org.*



Jessica Zimbelman
jzimbelman@sado.org

Michigan Supreme Court

Otis Moffitt, Docket No. 166838, issued December 26, 2024: the Court remanded for an evidentiary hearing about whether the prosecutor withheld exculpatory information and why a second aggravating factor for the criminal sexual conduct charges was presented to the jury when the information listed only one aggravating factor.

Gary Nicoll, Docket No. 167597, issued December 26, 2024: the Court reversed the Court of Appeals's grant of a new trial based on the lack of a reasonable probability of a different outcome without trial counsel's errors.

Benjamin McKewen, Docket No. 158869, issued December 26, 2024: the Court held that it is not a double jeopardy violation to be convicted of

both assault with intent to cause great bodily harm and felonious assault.

Christian Gardner, Docket No. 163124, issued December 26, 2024: the Court held that it was a double jeopardy violation to convict Mr. Gardner of both assault with intent to commit murder and felonious assault.

Frederick Fredell, Docket No. 164098, issued December 26, 2024: the Court held that it was a double jeopardy violation to convict Mr. Fredell of both reckless driving causing death and involuntary manslaughter.

Dacoda Brownfield, Docket No. 167115, issued December 27, 2024: the Court vacated the portion of the Court of Appeals opinion regarding the scoring of OV 7 and remanded for reconsideration.

Evan Oslund, Docket No. 165544, issued December 27, 2024: this case was about whether Mr. Oslund was properly waived into adult court based on being charged as an aider and abettor to assault with intent to do great bodily harm. The Court held there was insufficient evidence to satisfy the requirements of waiver because he did not personally assault anyone, nor did he have a weapon.

Jessica McNew, Docket No. 167613, issued January 24, 2025: the Court remanded to the trial court for resentencing because the trial court

twice stated an inaccurate guidelines range and did not appear to recognize it was imposing a departure sentence, and thus relied on inaccurate information.

Published Court of Appeals decisions

Edward Charboneau, Docket No. 364596, issued November 15, 2024: the trial court did not violate Mr. Charboneau's constitutional rights in excluding demonstrative evidence at trial; OV 4 was improperly scored, and Mr. Charboneau was entitled to resentencing.

Richard Klungle, Docket Nos. 364125, 367795, issued November 19, 2024: trial counsel was not ineffective for conceding his guilt as to the trespassing charge; Mr. Klungle's sentences were not disproportionate.

Gwendolyn Alexander, Docket No. 364063, issued November 20, 2024: there was sufficient evidence of torture; the prosecution's expert testimony regarding a "medical torture" diagnosis was proper; OV 5 and OV 7 were improperly scored, and Ms. Alexander was entitled to resentencing.

Zvi Levran, Docket No. 370931, issued December 3, 2024: interlocutory appeal; the Court held that the standard jury instruction MI Crim JI 20.24(5) did not accurately state the applicable law in

MCL 750.520(1)(f)(iv) and therefore the trial court should have granted the prosecutor's motion to modify the standard instruction.

Brandon Berry, Docket No.

370494, Erin Buchholz, Docket No.

370495, issued December 13, 2024:

interlocutory appeal; Because Berry co-owned the home in question, he could enter that home without permission, even though he did not reside in it. Berry gave Buchholz permission to enter the home, so likewise, she could not be charged. The Court affirmed the circuit court's quashing of charges of first-degree home invasion.

John Burkman, Docket No. 356600,

Jacob Wohl, Docket No. 356602,

issued December 13, 2024: on remand

from the Michigan Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals held there was sufficient evidence to bindover even under a narrowed construction of the charging statute, MCL 168.932(a) (felony interference with an elector). This case involved robocalls before the 2020 election.

Todd Harper, Docket No. 371144,

issued December 18, 2024:

interlocutory appeal; the Court held that to sustain a charge of willful neglect of duty, an obligation from a sheriff's policy manual is not a duty enjoined by law. But, MCL 51.75 does impose a legal duty to prevent escape, but because the prosecutor did not charge the offense based on this duty, the Court remanded to the trial court to provide the prosecutor the chance to amend its complaint or to dismiss.

Tylor Sattler-VanWagoner, Docket No. 362433, issued December 19,

2024: expert testimony that false reports of criminal sexual conduct are "rare" should not have been admitted. It was plain error, but the Court affirmed his convictions because there was no prejudice from the error. The Court also held that the mandatory 25-year minimum sentence was not cruel or unusual punishment.

Bo Cole, Docket No. 366825, issued

December 19, 2024: the Court held that

a dismissed felony charge must lead to the destruction of Mr. Cole's DNA sample and profile.

Donyelle Black, Docket No.

367831, issued December 19, 2024:

interlocutory appeal; in this juvenile life without parole resentencing case, the prosecutor sought to have Mr. Black examined by their own psychologist after Mr. Black submitted a report from his expert witness. The Court held that Mr. Black either had to submit to the government's examination or allow his own report to be excluded.

Todd Wisniewski, Docket No. 361978,

issued January 8, 2025: the Court held

that severance was not required; it was not an abuse of discretion to admit text messages and Mr. Wisniewski's internet search history; it was not error to admit testimony about other acts of sexual misconduct; the prosecutor's closing argument and references to "victims" was not plain error; it was proper to deny Mr. Wisniewski's motion for discovery of privileged counseling records; and the consecutive sentences were proper and the sentence was proportional.

Andre Abraham, Docket No. 364574,

issued January 10, 2025: Motion for Relief from Judgment under MCR

6.500 et seq; mandatory life in prison without parole does not violate the equal protection clause or the cruel or unusual punishment clause. Mr. Abraham was 22 at the time of the sentencing offense.

James Eads, Docket No. 357332,

issued January 16, 2025: Mr. Eads was

16 years old when he was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 50 to 75 years in prison. The Court held this was a disproportionate sentence and violated the Michigan Constitution's prohibition on cruel or unusual punishment.

Darius Hines, Docket No. 363151,

issued January 16, 2025: the Court

affirmed Mr. Hines's convictions and held that the warrantless search of his home was proper and that impermissible drug-profile testimony did not warrant a new trial because it was not outcome-determinative. The Court remanded for resentencing, holding that OV 19 was improperly scored and that trial courts must properly justify discretionary sentencing enhancements under MCL 333.7413(1), with reasons specific to the person being sentenced and the offense.

Shannon Dingee, Docket No. 365531,

issued January 24, 2025: the Court

of Appeals affirmed Ms. Dingee's conviction under MCL 750.411s (unlawfully posting a message). The Court held that Facebook records come in as self-authenticating business records under MRE 902(11); there was no as-applied violation of the First Amendment; it was not error to not instruct the jury on the First Amendment; there was sufficient evidence; and OV 19 was properly scored.

Michael Kvasnicka, Docket No. 371542, issued February 13, 2025: interlocutory appeal; the Court held that MCL 750.543m (making a threat of terrorism) is facially unconstitutional because it does not require proof that a person had a subjective understanding of the threatening nature of their statements and that they acted recklessly when making the statements.

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](#).

2025 Meet the Judges

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ICBA Wellness Committee Park Profile

- Lake Lansing South Park

By Christopher Wickman



Christopher Wickman
cwickman@nicholslaw.net

On behalf of the ICBA Wellness Committee, next up in our regular “Park Profiles” column is another one of the most popular parks in Ingham County – Lake Lansing South Park. Located in Haslett on Lake Lansing (originally called Pine Lake), Lake Lansing South is one of a few wonderful parks on Lake Lansing that offers the most activities to stay busy! There are large swaths of green space, multiple volleyball courts and horseshoe pits, and shelters for rental. There are also numerous family and kid-friendly activities, such as the swimming beach, the tremendous fort-style playground area, and the tricycle track. During the summer, there are free Friday Night Concerts hosted by the Friends of the Ingham County Parks that are open to the community and often have a bounce house and giant inflatable slide for children. It is a wonderful summer activity, so grab your lawn chair and the family and come enjoy yourself with a picnic (but no alcohol) with your loved ones!

What I personally love about Lake Lansing South is how much there is to do. The park is always busy during the warm weather months and offers a tremendous feeling of community – especially during the Friday Night Concert series. The immediately surrounding neighborhood is also wonderful. It includes local watering holes such as The Blue Gill Grill (with a wonderful rooftop patio open during nice weather) and The Watershed Tavern and Grill with their famous Bloody Mary selections. There is also the amazing MSU Sailing Center, where you can take classes to learn to sail or rent canoes, kayaks, or paddle boards. The other side of Lake Lansing also has a public boat launch. - Chris

More information about Lake Lansing South Park can be found at https://pk.ingham.org/parks/lake_lansing_south.php. More information about the 2025 Concert series can be found here: https://pk.ingham.org/parks/friday_night_concert_series.php. If you want your favorite Ingham County park featured (or would like to write a feature of your favorite park), contact co-chairs Chris Wickman (cwickman@nicholslaw.net) or Jackie Dupler (jdupler@fosterswift.com).



Staying Active in Winter: Finding the Right Balance Between Movement and Rest

By Julie Dillon



Julie Dillon

juliedillon2000@gmail.com

Julie Dillon is the owner of Be Balanced Studio. She is a speaker, certified Yoga teacher, Pilates instructor, and Yoga-Qi Gong practitioner with 20 years of experience in the wellness industry. Her practice provides a holistic approach to coaching: integrating movement with breathwork, postural alignment, flexibility, and other mindfulness techniques.

To learn more, visit her website:

www.bebalancedstudio.com

517-927-8431

Winter brings colder temperatures, shorter days, and, often, a natural drop in energy. While staying active is important year-round, it's just as crucial to be mindful of your body's needs during this season.

If you feel sluggish during the colder months, you're not alone. According to Dr. Luisa Bazan, a sleep medicine specialist at Henry Ford Health, "We have less exposure to sunlight during the winter months, and that affects our internal clock." The reduced sunlight causes an increase in melatonin production, the hormone responsible for making us feel sleepy. This, combined with lower vitamin D levels and mood fluctuations, can lead to an overall sense of fatigue.

A study from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) also shows that Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) can cause lower energy, sluggishness, and decreased motivation to exercise. Shorter daylight hours disrupt our circadian rhythms, making it harder to stay energized throughout the day.

The Benefits Of Winter Movement

Despite the urge to hibernate, staying active in winter can help combat fatigue and boost mood. Exercise stimulates endorphin production, improves circulation, and helps regulate sleep. According to the Mayo Clinic, physical activity is one of the most effective

ways to manage seasonal depression, as it stabilizes mood and increases overall energy levels.

Cold-weather workouts also come with unique benefits. Since the body works harder to maintain core temperature, outdoor exercise in the winter can lead to increased calorie burn and improved cardiovascular function. However, the key is to approach movement with mindfulness rather than forcing high-intensity workouts when energy is low.

How To Exercise Mindfully In Winter

Rather than pushing through exhaustion, consider adjusting your routine based on your body's needs. Here are some ways to stay active while respecting your winter energy levels:

1. **Take Advantage of Daylight:**
Exposure to natural light helps regulate circadian rhythms and boosts vitamin D levels. Try to exercise during the brightest part of the day, such as a morning or early afternoon walk, to combat winter fatigue.
2. **Opt for Low-Impact Movement:**
On days when energy is low, gentle activities like yoga, stretching, or brisk walking can keep the body active without overexertion.
3. **Dress for the Weather:** Proper winter gear makes outdoor exercise more comfortable and safe. Layer moisture-wicking fabrics to stay dry, and wear

insulated outerwear to protect against the cold. Don't forget gloves, a hat, and appropriate footwear to prevent heat loss and avoid slips.

4. Listen to Your Body: Your energy levels may fluctuate, and that's okay. Some days, a high-intensity workout might feel right, while on others, restorative movement—like mobility exercises or breathwork—may be more beneficial. Tuning in to what your body needs each day is key to maintaining consistency without burnout.

5. Stay Hydrated: Cold air can be deceptively drying, leading to dehydration and increased fatigue. Since thirst cues may be weaker in winter, make it a habit to drink water throughout the day, even when you don't feel particularly thirsty.

Winter is naturally a time for restoration. While exercise is important, so is rest. Proper sleep, nourishing foods, and hydration all support energy levels and overall well-being. If you need a break, take it—pushing through extreme fatigue can do more harm than good.

Instead of fighting the seasonal shift, embrace it. Adjust your routine, stay consistent with movement, and honor your body's natural rhythm. The next time you feel tempted to skip movement in favor of another nap, consider a short, gentle workout instead—it might be just what your body needs.

BRIEFS Author Guidelines & Policies

IN GENERAL

Publication Schedule

Copy Deadline

BRIEFS Committee Meetings

Author and Article Pictures

Article Length and Format

- **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

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To donate visit <https://www.inghambar.org/icbf-home-page/> and click **DONATE**.

News: Individuals who have given one billable hour for three consecutive years will be recognized in Summer 2025.

The Ingham County Bar Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Meeting our Newest 30th Circuit Court Judge

Judge Patti Tremblay

By Christopher Wickman



Christopher Wickman
cwickman@nicholslaw.net

On February 14, 2025, Judge Patti Tremblay was appointed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer to fill the remaining portion of Judge Joyce Draganchuk's term, which will expire on January 1, 2027. She was kind enough to answer a few questions during the first-weekend post-announcement so that our local bar association could get to know her better. Congratulations, Judge Tremblay!

1. Tell us a little bit about your career path to becoming our newest 30th Circuit Court Judge. I have been working in public service most of my life. This was a conscious choice. We seem to be going through a time where public service is no longer respected or recognized as important, but I was raised to believe that in order for government to be effective, good people must be willing to participate. Early in my career, I was working in the legislature; I decided that pursuing a legal education could help me to better understand the making of law and the law. Since that point, I have been honored to

work for the legislature and governor in a variety of capacities.

I think that the things I have learned during my years of public service are extensions of what I learned from my parents – people matter, be a straight shooter, everyone should be treated fairly, and don't shy away from difficult decisions.

2. Where are you originally from? It is easiest to say I am a Michigander. I was born in Kalamazoo but moved to Vulcan (a village in the UP on the Wisconsin border) before I started school. My formative years were spent in the UP until I moved to Grayling in high school. I moved to East Lansing for college and, except for a few years traveling and working odd jobs around the US and Canada, have made this community my home for my entire adult life.

3. What was your motivation for becoming a lawyer and then seeking to become a judge? I feel my motivation for becoming a lawyer is the same as many lawyers: I wanted to make the world, or at least my corner of the world, a better place. What a better way to do it than try to make better laws by having a better understanding of how laws are interpreted once they are looked at through the lens of our legal system.

4. Describe some of the most significant accomplishments in your career. Several of my career accomplishments occurred while I

worked in the Governor's office. So much of what we did has had wide-ranging impact on the people of Michigan. As deputy legal counsel, I had a lead role in shaping gun legislation and similarly worked on legislation implementing reproductive health protections. I am also proud of my advocacy and work on the state budget, in particular, the working families tax credit, which will have a positive impact on the people of Michigan. Earlier in my career, working on the Detroit Chapter 9 bankruptcy, which changed the trajectory of the city of Detroit, was also of great consequence. I am proud of the part I played in all these issues. While these were big, meaty issues that took up much of my time, I am also very proud of the human resources legal work I did while chief legal counsel for the Democratic caucus in the House of Representatives.

5. What are some of your hobbies or interests outside of work? My favorite activity outside the office is walking/hiking in the outdoors. We are fortunate in Michigan that we have so many great spaces to hike and walk. Whether I am with my dogs, my husband, or by myself, a couple of hours on a trail clears the mind and refreshes me. Additionally, I enjoy time with my family. I have two children who are now young adults and are simply a joy to be around. Also, my younger sister, who was just made a partner at Thrun Law firm,

lives in the area. Spending time with her family brings joy to my life.

6. What do you wish every attorney knew coming into your courtroom?

I feel it is important for attorneys to realize how important rules, statute, and case law are to me. That the rule of law matters. I hope to demonstrate how hard I am willing to work and show I will put in the work to understand their issue.

7. What do you wish that every family knew about you before coming before you? I think it is important for them to know that I will see them as humans and understand that they may be struggling. I realize this might be one of the hardest days of their lives, and I will do everything in my power to not make it harder. I want them to realize that I will strive to be fair and will work hard to make sure the law is followed with compassion and empathy.

8. What non-legal field-related job have you had that you had that you feel has impacted you most

and why? Since I was older, when I was licensed and started work in a family business at 12, I have a lot of work history to choose from. However, the jobs I had when I was in college imprinted on me. During these summers, I worked for the county road commission, taking care of public restrooms during the day, and I waited tables at Big Boy in the evening. These were very long weeks. There was a lot of interaction with all types of human emotions those summers. Plus, they were, at times, very dirty and physically demanding jobs. Now, feeling down and exhausted after a week full of working 16-hour days, I remind myself that there were harder times when I was not as privileged as I am now.

9. What is a fun fact about you that people may not know? There are not many fun facts about me. Some version of work plus school has consumed the majority of my adult life, which has left little of interest. However, maybe an interesting fact is that I have a rich and complex

family life that is full of love. I come from a large, blended family and have multiple parents, siblings, cousins, aunts, and uncles. I have siblings that were born in the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s. So, there are always a lot of varying views to listen to at the dinner table.

10. What message or advice would you have for a younger you if you could go back in time and deliver it? I have reached an age where I no longer have just one younger self but multiple versions of a younger me. I would tell All younger versions of me the same thing – show up, always speak up, stay true to your values, and be true to yourself. And always do this no matter what room you are in or what person is in the room with you. These core philosophies were guiding principles that worked for you. Stick with them. Don't waver. And don't let a wishbone grow where your backbone should be. (Or, conversely, INVEST IN MICROSOFT!!)



The Ingham County Bar Association is reviving its memorial initiative program to celebrate and honor the contributions of deceased members of ICBA. You can help. If you know of a member who has recently passed, please email support@inghambar.org along with a mailing address for a spouse, relative, etc., of the deceased member so we can send them a certificate of appreciation.

Section Chair Profile

William (Bill) Tomblin, Principal, William D Tomblin & Associates and Co-Chair of the Ingham County Bar Association Real Estate Section



William Tomblin
wtdomblaw@aol.com

- 1. Where are you originally from?**
Cincinnati, Ohio
- 2. What was your motivation for becoming a lawyer?** I have wanted to be a lawyer since I was a very small child. I wanted to serve our society and the profession, as well as provide help to those in need. My family members were all very big into public service.
- 3. What is your educational background?** University of Cincinnati College of Law, JD, Dean's List – all semesters; Mary Jo Brueggeman Scholar; University of Cincinnati Scholar; Multiple Recipient American Jurisprudence Book Award; University of Cincinnati, B.A. Political Science, High Honors, Magna Cum Laude; Certificate in Economics (Minor); graduated in three years.
- 4. How long have you been with your current firm, and what is the nature of your practice?** I founded William

D Tomblin & Associates (f/k/a Law Offices of William D Tomblin) in 1994, after seven years at Dickinson Wright in its Chicago and Lansing Offices. I specialize in complex commercial litigation and complex real estate transactional and leasing work, and I also perform general business and transactional work.

- 5. What are some of the most significant challenges/rewards in your area of practice?** I love helping small business persons, family businesses and entrepreneurs and my occasional pro bono clients, who would otherwise not be able to afford the level of practice I provide.

- 6. Describe some of the most significant accomplishments of your career:**
Significant prevailing lead trial counsel accomplishments:
Eastwood, LLC, et al v Lansing Towneast/Towneast Parking, LLC, Charter Township of Lansing Downtown Development Authority/Charter Township of Lansing, Case No. 21-0624-CB, Ingham County Circuit Court – Business Court; successful multi-million dollar Consent Judgment (and related additional real property tax settlement and additional financial relief) arising from long term ground lease and related agreements

In re J Wick Productions, LLC, Case No. 2:18-bk-12875-smh, US Bankruptcy Court, District of Arizona;

lead trial counsel for prevailing equity holder and creditor in multi-million-dollar Chapter 11 reorganization and associated control and acquisition litigation.

In Re Big Buck Brewery & Steakhouse, Case No. 04-5676-SWR; US Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of Michigan; lead trial counsel; approximately \$15,000,000 confirmation dispute and \$6,000,000 valuation dispute and secured claim determination

Lansing Pavilion v Eastwood, LLC, et al, Case No. 02-1734-CK, Ingham County Circuit Court, Case Nos. 265970, 281811, 282332, and 283071, Michigan Court of Appeals (multiple interlocutory appeals); co-trial counsel and co-appellate counsel for \$30+ million construction dispute

Eyde v Eyde, Case No. 98-153-CB, Eaton County Circuit Court (and successful appeal to Michigan Court of Appeals); lead trial counsel and co-appellate counsel; \$200+ million real estate partnership and related entity dissolution

Reported cases – In Re Mt. Pleasant Limited Partnership, 144 BR 727 (BR WD Mich 1992); The Christman Co. v Anthony S. Brown, 210 Mich App 416 (1995)

Significant successful lead transactional counsel accomplishments:

Developer's Counsel –
\$127,600,000.00 Bond/Certificate of
Participation Transaction in 2000 for
Constitution Hall, Lansing, Michigan,
State office building

Developer's counsel, Eastwood
Towne Centre, Lansing Township/
East Lansing, Michigan; 192-acre
shopping center project involving
hundreds of millions of dollars of
development and transactional work

Developer's Counsel, 735 East
Michigan, Michigan State Housing
Development Authority Building;
\$20+ million dollar office building
sale

Tatra, A.S.; investor's counsel and
special advisor to company for niche
European heavy truck manufacturer
based in the Czech Republic with
worldwide sales – 2006 – 2013

**7. How did you become involved with
the Ingham County Bar? Slowly...**

and then all of a sudden. I started at
the urging of some of my mentors at
Dickinson Wright and increased my
participation as the years went on, and
my involvement in the community
grew.

**8. What do you feel ICBA provides
to Michigan lawyers? It is a great
source of support and camaraderie for
our legal community.**

**9. What do you feel is the greatest
benefit of becoming involved with
the Bar? The continuing education
and connections it provides, the
goodwill it engenders between
counsel and source of pride, giving
back, and accomplishment it provides.
My father often told me, "You always
have to give back."**


**10. Why would you encourage others
to become involved with the Bar?
I think my prior answer pretty much
covers this one, so I will not make
everyone read more.**

**11. What are some of your hobbies
and interests outside of work? I
enjoy spending time with my family
(including my amazing wife, two
tremendous daughters, and long-
martyred mother) and friends. In
my free time, I enjoy travel,
golf, skiing, boating, basketball,
volleyball, baseball, and other sports
with his kids, nieces, and nephews,
reading and television (particularly
mysteries, legal thrillers, and the
Buckeyes, Bengals, and Reds),
following politics, "FoodBooking"
and cooking. I was recently
nominated to be a "Fellow" of the
Ingham County Bar Foundation and
am looking forward to getting more
involved in their work.**

ICBA MEMBER DIRECTORY
Are you listed in the [online member directory](#)?

Hon. Shauna Dunnings tells why
you should be an ICBA Member

[CLICK HERE](#)



Member Directory

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Save The Dates

2025

Upcoming 2025 ICBF Events

ICBF Judicial Retirement Reception
When: April 17, 2025
Where: Country Club of Lansing
2200 Moores River Drive, Lansing, MI 48911

ICBF 20th Memorial Golf Classic
When: August 6, 2025
Where: Timber Ridge Golf Club
16339 Park Lake Road East Lansing, MI 48823
Registration at 8:00 am, Shotgun Start at 9:00 am



inghambar.org



Criminal Defense Law Section

I'm happy to announce our newly-planned May event below.

For additional information, the April registration link is also included: April 11, 2025 – Defending CSC Cases: Rape Shield and the Right to Present a Complete Defense - [Click Here](#)

On Friday, May 16, 2025, the Ingham County Bar Association Criminal Defense Law Section presents “Do you Know Why I Searched You: Warrantless Searches and Vehicles.” This event is open to defense attorneys only. Presenting will be Mr. Michael Nichols of the Nichols Law Firm, who is a highly experienced defense attorney specializing in operating while intoxicated cases. While warrantless searches are presumed unreasonable and unconstitutional, there are many exceptions to a warrant that make them more common than warranted searches. Multiple of these exceptions frequently arise when an individual is operating or in a vehicle – inventory searches, preliminary breath tests, frisks, plain view, requests for identification, Terry stops, etc. Mr. Nichols will

review the law regarding common warrantless searches in the vehicle context and review common attacks to return the presumption of unconstitutionality to them.

The presentation will begin promptly at Noon and will be held via Zoom. It will last approximately one and a half hours. Registration is required. Please RSVP via Zoom here. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. The event is provided free of charge. You do not need to be a member of the ICBA to attend, though we hope you'll consider joining. Attendees may be eligible for up to 1.5 hours of MIDC credit for attendance at this presentation, but you should check with your local appointing authority to verify.

Sincerely,

Marisa Vinsky (marisa@cndefenders.com) and

Chris Wickman (cwickman@nicholslaw.net)

ICBA-CDLS Co-Chairpersons

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 Chair is Kelly McClintock. Contact Kelly if you have ideas for topics and speakers.

Upcoming Meetings: 4th Tuesday of the month – Noon,
Location: TBA

If you have questions about Section meetings, please email Kelly at mcclintock@bwlawonline.com.

Family Law Section

The Family Law Section meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from noon to 1 p.m. Location TBD. Lunch is provided.

Section Co-Chairs are Jennipher 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.



Probate and Trust Section

The Probate and Trust Section Chair is Ernschie Augustin. The Section holds its in person meetings the second Wednesday of every other month at Noon 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 Ernschie at augustin@augustinlawoffices.com.

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 lunch for our in-person meetings. Email Ernschie Augustin if you are interested.

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 Sailor, Megan Cochrane, and Emily Erbisich.

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.

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, Ellen E. Ward, and Mitchell Zolton.

Upcoming Meetings: 4th Friday of the month unless specified otherwise via Listserv (No meetings June, July, August, and December) — Noon

Location: 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.

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Next issue: Diversity



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