

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY / SPRING 2020 / ALUMNI MAGAZINE

CUMBERLAND LAWYER





Practical Tips from Behind the Bench

Cumberland Law Review Symposium

February 28, 2020



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Dean
Henry C. Strickland III

Director of Alumni Relations
Anne Marovich

Director of Development
Paula Kierce

Marketing and Communication
Manager
Morgan Black

Senior Designer
Stephanie S. Douglas

Creative Services
Sarah Howard, Laine Williams

Pictured on the left:
Cumberland Law Review hosts
annual symposium in February.
Pictured is Brooke Messina,
managing editor and third-year
student, welcoming the group.

Cover:
This issue is dedicated to alumnae
in recognition of the centennial
anniversary of women's suffrage.

We hope you find this publication informative. If there are stories and topics you would like to see in future issues, please let us know. This is your publication, and we need your feedback. We welcome your feedback at cumberlandlawyer@samford.edu.



Celebrating

This issue of the *Cumberland Lawyer* celebrates the centennial of the women's suffrage amendment to the United States Constitution. This centennial provides a fitting moment to celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of Cumberland women, and it provokes reflection on the importance of voting.

Cumberland School of Law played a special role in the history of women in law in Alabama. The late Justice Janie L. Shores became the first full-time law professor in Alabama when she joined the Cumberland faculty in 1965. She later became the first woman on the Alabama Supreme Court in 1974 and went on to serve four full terms. The pages that follow highlight just a sampling of Cumberland women who followed in Justice Shores's footsteps to serve our profession and our country with distinction.

The timing of the centennial and this issue is fitting because women this year make up the highest percentage of Cumberland's first-year class in the school's history. Women have been a slight majority of the first-year class multiple times over the past ten years. But women this year constitute 55% of the first-year class (which is also Cumberland's largest first-year class since 2013).

Remembering the dedicated struggle of American women to gain the right to vote also reminds us of that right's supreme importance. That right—along with freedom of speech—forms the core of our democracy and directly impacts our lives. I recall U.S. District Judge Virgil Pittman (for whom I clerked after law school) describing the impact of the Voting Rights Act on his hometown. He noted that neighborhoods in the town, like many other towns, were largely segregated by race. He also noted that most of the streets in black neighborhoods were unpaved dirt roads.

With the passage of the Voting Rights Act and its enforcement, voter registration among residents of black neighborhoods increased dramatically. As a result, Pittman observed, the streets in those neglected parts of town were paved almost before a single election cycle passed.

The right to vote alone seldom leads to immediate positive action like Pittman described, but the right's absence usually assures such action will never occur. Democracy requires that every person has the right to vote and thereby to have her plight and perspective considered in the shaping of government policy. A democratic republic works only if every person has the right to vote, and citizens have confidence in election processes.

Yet I fear we take the right to vote for granted. Our elections today are newly vulnerable to electronic hacking by foreign and domestic enemies, false and malicious social media campaigns, and new regulations—some well-intentioned and some subtly seeking to affect election outcomes—that at a minimum burden the ability of people to vote. We must follow the example of American women suffragists to demand universal suffrage and secure election processes. As has been the case throughout our history, the bulk of that work will fall to lawyers, like the conscientious women described in these pages and those currently enrolled at Cumberland.

Henry C. (Corky) Strickland II

Women's Suffrage

Dean Henry C. Strickland with the 2019 Daniel Austin Brewer Professionalism Award recipient, Isabel Montoya-Minisee. Endowed by Governor Albert P. Brewer, the award is granted each year to a graduating student who best exemplifies high standards of ethics and professionalism. While a student at Cumberland, Montoya-Minisee was a member of the Richard "Red" Jones National Moot Court Team, the Hispanic Interest Law Students' Association and the Trial Advocacy Board. She was an associate justice for the Henry Upson Sims Moot Court Board, a semifinalist in the Gordon T. Saad Moot Court Competition and was included on the dean's list for five semesters. Most impressively, Montoya-Minisee completed her law studies while commuting to and from Huntsville, Alabama, where she, her husband and six children live.



**Have you moved?
Changed jobs or addresses?
Received an award or honor?**

Cumberland Connections is our digital alumni newsletter published five times per year and the *Cumberland Lawyer* magazine is mailed biannually.

Send us news about your new role or award, a marriage or birth announcement to publish in Class Notes, and submit updated contact information.

Go to
samford.edu/cumberlandlaw/update-your-info
or email amarovic@samford.edu.

*Stay connected to your classmates and the
Cumberland School of Law alumni network!
We can help you to do so.*



Spring Class Reunions

The following Cumberland classes have planned reunion gatherings:

Friday, April 17
Classes of 1965 and 1970

Saturday, April 25
Class of 1990

Friday, May 1
Classes of 2015 and 1975

Saturday, May 2
Classes of 2010, 1995, 1980, 1985, 1975

*If you are in one of the classes listed above
and have not already received details, please contact Anne Marovich at
amarovic@samford.edu or 205-726-2443.*



Congratulations to our newest graduates.

Welcome to a wonderful group of encouraging
and supporting alumni!



Top left: December 2019 Juris Doctor graduates

Top right: December 2019 graduates of Cumberland's online
graduate program

Bottom left: New alumna of the Master of Science program,
Annisia Una Hatcher, with her sister-in-law, Nolanda Hatcher '97





FROM THE OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

The Roaring 2020s

The last issue of this magazine was dedicated to alumni and students who serve(d) our country in a branch of the U.S. military. With this issue, we proudly recognize alumnae, many of whom have used their Juris Doctor as a springboard to accomplish impressive and meaningful work that certainly strengthens the law school's reputation and inspires our students, male and female alike.

Our focus on alumnae is timely in light of the centennial anniversary of the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment, which organizations across the country are celebrating this year. Interestingly, in 1920, when the Nineteenth Amendment was adopted giving women the right to vote, there were 233 law students total at Cumberland School of Law. Of the 118 who graduated in 1922*, five were female. Currently, in our first-year class of 160 students, 55% are female—the highest percentage of entering females in Cumberland's history.

I became curious about the history of female leadership of our journals and found that with respect to the *Journal of Trial Advocacy*, six out of the last 10 editors-in-chief were female; 10 of the last 20, and 14 of the last 43. As for the *Cumberland Law Review*, four were female editors-in-chief of the last 10, eight in the last 20 years; and a total of 10 out of the 43 years. You can see the rate of progression toward equal numbers over the years. The first female editor-in-chief of the *Cumberland Law Review* was not until 1994—only 26 years ago.

I hope the following pages inspire you and make you proud to share the title "Cumberland lawyer" with these amazing alumnae.

Anne Marovich

**At that time, the LL.B. was awarded after two years of legal education. Many law students did not complete the program, unlike today, where the vast majority of entering students graduate.*

Above: Anne and Jim Morgan '69. Thank you Jim, for this wall plaque commemorating each recipient of our Distinguished Alumnus of the Year award since 1974. It is hung in the first floor lobby of the law school.



20 IN 20 ALUMNAE



Angela Debro '94

As general counsel for Alabama A&M University (AAMU), Angela Debro keeps close to her heart the determination instilled in her by her parents that "education empowers."

Upon graduation from law school, she began her legal career as a state prosecutor. After eight years, she became a federal prosecutor working white collar crimes. The common thread between both prosecution jobs was that poor educational options did not afford individuals the ability to make good choices or decisions.

In 2010, she accepted her current role at her undergraduate alma mater. For Debro, the change from criminal law to higher education was a challenge, but she enjoys seeing the difference she is making based on the values that her parents taught her and her sister . . . education empowers. For the last ten years, she has devoted herself to this emerging area of the law while making a commitment to do her part so that the students who attend AAMU will receive a quality education that can empower them to do more.

"Education has provided a pathway to take me to the place where I am today. Every pathway has led me to experiences that will forever change my life. Some I remember vividly, like spending most of my waking moments of law school at Cumberland, others not so much, but each one has shaped me into the person I am today."

Betsy Sue Scott '76

Since graduating Cumberland, Betsy Sue Scott has worked in New York, the District of Columbia and Virginia. Also admitted to practice in Pennsylvania, Scott has worked in the private and governmental sectors.

In government, she served in the Office of Foreign Assets Control at the U.S. Treasury Department. The office's national security and counter-terrorism programs hold a unique role in U.S. foreign policy.

In the private sector, in addition to continuing with the above, Scott has returned to the estate and trust area in which she worked during her first position after law school at a New York bank.

A Guardian ad litem for adults, Scott specializes in guardianships and cases involving cognitive impairments.

Before law school, she was a member of the first class of women at college and found that pioneering role a strong foundation in the practice of law. She has served the bar as president of the Virginia Women Attorneys Association and on many committees in Fairfax and Loudoun County. She is honored to serve as a special justice in Virginia's 20th Judicial Circuit.

Carolyn Lam '06

As general counsel and corporate secretary, Carolyn Lam leads Dallas-based Kynect's legal, human resources and compliance teams. In this role, she leverages her experience to design, implement and manage initiatives that avoid risk but empower business growth.

In addition to her experience as a strategic business and legal adviser, Lam has expertise in compliance, litigation, risk management and corporate governance. Prior to Kynect, she managed litigation and compliance matters for PLH Group Inc., a leading energy infrastructure provider and portfolio company of Energy Capital Partners.

Outside the office, she serves on the boards of the National Employment Law Council and the Association of Corporate Counsel's Dallas-Ft. Worth chapter.

Danielle Touart '10

When she began law school, Danielle Touart did not plan for a career in public interest law. That quickly changed when she accepted internships with the House of Representatives and The Innocence Project. Those experiences taught her that a career in public service was something she truly wanted to pursue. After graduating from Cumberland, Touart had the opportunity to move to Colorado for a position with the state public defender. "Accepting that position is one of the best decisions I have made," she said. "I have been fortunate to turn my passion for indigent defense into a rewarding career."

Over the past nine years, she has worked as a public defender for the state of Colorado as well as the federal public defender in Houston, Texas. Her current role as a lead deputy public defender in Colorado allows her to continue her felony litigation and trial work as well as providing her the opportunity to mentor and train less experienced attorneys within her office.



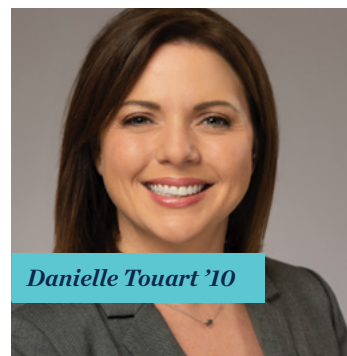
Angela Debro '94



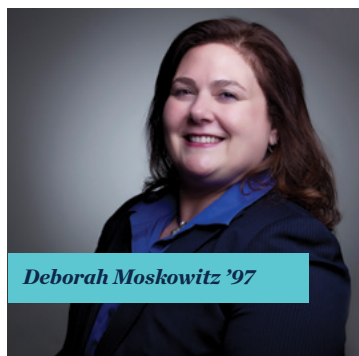
Betsy Sue Scott '76



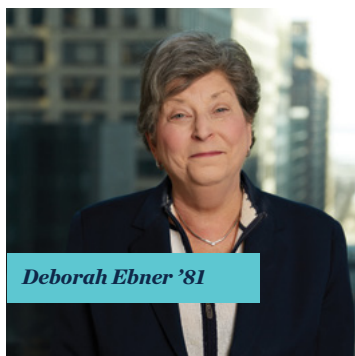
Carolyn Lam '06



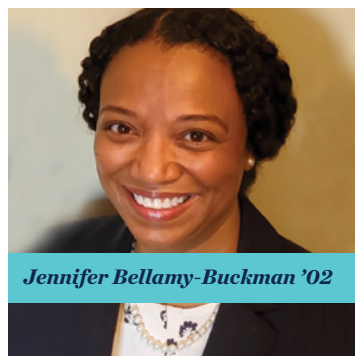
Danielle Touart '10



Deborah Moskowitz '97



Deborah Ebner '81



Jennifer Bellamy-Buckman '02



Judge Karon O. Bowdre '80

Deborah Moskowitz '97

Deborah L. Moskowitz is the managing partner for the Orlando office and a shareholder of Quintairos Prieto Wood & Boyer PA. The firm is the largest minority and women-owned law firm in the U.S. with almost 400 lawyers and 23 offices from coast to coast. Moskowitz represents the female ownership of the firm.

When she is not litigating cases around the country, she helps her husband with their hot sauce and gourmet condiment company, Fat Cat Gourmet Foods LLC. Fat Cat products are distributed throughout the U.S. and Canada as well as Europe and Central America. Moskowitz serves in multiple leadership roles in a wide variety of community organizations and has been recognized for her pro bono service.

Deborah Ebner '81

Deborah K. Ebner has been professionally thriving ever since graduating from Cumberland, practicing bankruptcy law in Chicago. She is Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent Peer Review Rated, the highest peer recognition for ethical standards and legal ability. In addition to her practice, Ebner has served as a federal bankruptcy trustee since 1983, having been originally appointed to that panel by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Her mediation background, extensive bankruptcy knowledge and national legislative awareness have all contributed to her ability to successfully renegotiate indebtedness in this distressed economic climate.

Ebner has extensive experience with the representation of creditor committees in chapter 11 cases, in a multitude of business environments, and is proficient with chapters 7, 11, 12 and 13 of the bankruptcy code. Her legal ability is well respected by the bench and lawyers alike, and she is known as a go-to, "result oriented" attorney. She has repeatedly been recognized by her peers as a "leading lawyer," and has been recognized as one of the top lawyers in the state of Illinois.

Although now a tried and true Chicago resident, she proudly continues to get smiles from those with southern roots as she walks around in her Auburn University sweatshirts.

Jennifer Bellamy-Buckman '02

Jennifer Bellamy-Buckman is a licensed attorney in Maryland who has spent her career working in law and politics to give voice to the vulnerable and marginalized in pursuit of justice.

As policy adviser for an international human rights organization, she interviewed child soldiers in Uganda and Rwanda and worked with leaders in African and Asian countries in efforts to reduce human-rights violations. She has also lobbied against exploitative child labor, human trafficking and the use of children as soldiers in armed conflicts.

Prior to serving as a policy adviser and lobbying for international human rights, Bellamy-Buckman worked as counsel for a senior member of Congress. Before she worked in Congress, she served as a judicial law clerk for several District Court of Maryland judges in Baltimore City.

In her current capacity, she serves as counsel at a national civil liberties organization.

Judge Karon O. Bowdre '80

Judge Karon Bowdre has served on the Federal District Court for the Northern District of Alabama since November 2001 where she was chief judge from Nov. 18, 2013, until Dec. 31, 2019. Since her appointment, Bowdre has presided over several high-profile trials, including ones involving public corruption and securities fraud. She currently presides over the Northern District of Alabama's Court Assisted Reentry Program, which is designed to help criminal defendants succeed as they return to the community.

The Southeastern chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates awarded Bowdre the Trial Judge of the Year award and Samford University recognized her as one of its Women of Achievement in 2014. She is an Alabama Law Foundation fellow, committed to giving back to the profession and to making access to justice a reality for those in need, and a member of the 2017 Class of Leadership Birmingham.

Prior to her appointment, she was instructor of law and director of legal research and writing at Cumberland. She also practiced civil litigation with Rives & Peterson after a federal judicial clerkship with Judge Foy Guin of the Northern District of Alabama.



Kelle Strickland '96



Lauren Wilson '89



Linda Whitlow Knight '76

Kelle Strickland '96

After 16 years on Capitol Hill, Kelle Strickland has held almost every position in a congressional office—from intern to legislative director to chief of staff. She also served as counsel to chairman Jo Bonner of the House Ethics Committee for more than two and a half years, earning respect on both sides of the aisle.

She then served five years as chief of staff to the most senior physician serving in the U.S. House of Representatives and one of only two Republicans who, at the time, served on two "A" committees. As chief of staff, she developed the strategy and led the execution of the successful bid of Representative Michael Burgess of Texas for Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee chair—a race believed by some to be the most contentious in recent memory.

She currently serves the institution in a nonpartisan capacity as chief of staff to the sergeant at arms, an elected officer and the chief law enforcement and protocol officer of the U.S. House of Representatives. Strickland is a member of the District of Columbia Bar. She lives in Arlington, Virginia.

Lauren Wilson '89

Lauren Wilson has had a diverse and surprising law career. During law school, she served as an intern for Senator Howell Heflin in Washington, D.C. Upon graduation, she moved home to Florence, Alabama, to help her father, Marvin A. Wilson '55, semi-retire after health issues hampered his ability to fully practice law.

After a year in Florence, she relocated to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where she began working with the Legal Services Corporation of Alabama as the leader of the Domestic Violence Task Force for a seven-county area.

She entered private practice in 1993, where she worked on various federal civil cases, with an emphasis on civil rights. During this time, she taught adjunct classes at The University of Alabama School of Law. Her interest in civil rights issues led her to begin work for the Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program at The University of Alabama in 1998. While in this role, she became an expert in Title VII, Title IX, ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and the

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) litigation.

In 2006, she transitioned to a new role in the Office for Research at The University of Alabama where she reviewed, analyzed and became an expert in various federal and state laws, regulations, administrative rules and policies.

In November 2019, she was named the assistant vice president for research and technology agreements for the university. In her role, she and her staff take the lead in negotiating sponsored agreements and in intellectual property protection and commercialization.

Linda Whitlow Knight '76

Jackson, Tennessee, native Linda Whitlow Knight, is a partner of the Nashville firm of Gullett Sanford Robinson & Martin PLLC where she practices in the areas of insolvency and commercial law, litigation and general business counseling.

Her experience includes corporate reorganizations, avoidance actions and other adversary litigation and contested matters, receivership proceedings in state and federal court, and the purchase and sale of assets in and out of bankruptcy.

She is Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent Peer Review Rated and has been recognized in Mid-South Super Lawyers for Bankruptcy: Business and the *Nashville Business Journal's* Best of the Bar. She received the Nashville Bar Association's CLE Excellence Award.

For many years, she has served as treasurer of the Tennessee Lawyers' Association for Women and secretary of the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society. She is also past president of both organizations and belongs to other bar organizations and civic and historical societies.

From 2006-10, she was a founding member of the Tennessee Ethics Commission, appointed by the speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives. From 1998-2004, she served on the Tennessee Economic Council on Women, appointed by the governor, and was secretary during her entire tenure.

She and her husband, Richard H. Knight Jr. '76, were jointly recognized as Cumberland Alumni of the Year in 2016, the first spouses in the school's history to be so recognized. They are the parents of two grown daughters, who are also attorneys.



Marcella Auerbach '76

Marcella Auerbach's inspiration to become an attorney came when she was on a field trip to the courthouse in eighth grade. After seeing the female attorney in action, she knew this was the path for her. "I couldn't wait to tell my guidance counselor. But, when I got back to school, he offered a very unexpected response: 'girls don't become lawyers.' I was determined to make it happen."

And did she prove the guidance counselor wrong! Today, Auerbach is the managing partner at Nolan Auerbach & White LLP, a health care whistleblower law firm in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Her firm has won numerous multimillion-dollar recoveries under the False Claims Act.

She is a former federal prosecutor who spent more than 25 years at the U.S. Department of Justice in a variety of leadership roles, including first assistant U.S. attorney, chief of narcotics, special counsel to the U.S. attorney, and special attorney in the Organized Crime and Racketeering Section. She received numerous awards during her tenure such as the John Marshall Award for outstanding litigation work, and the Law Enforcement Woman of the Year Award. In 2011, Taxpayers Against Fraud named Auerbach and one of her partners as Lawyers of the Year.

Auerbach gives back by mentoring young women interested in becoming attorneys. She has worked pro bono on many domestic violence and abuse cases and for the Florida Bar Hurricane Disaster Project.

Nhan-Ai Du Sims '08

Nhan-Ai Sims has worked in juvenile courts for the past six years, most recently as the managing assistant district attorney of the Juvenile Division in the Gwinnett District Attorney's Office (Georgia).

She and her family immigrated to the U.S. as war refugees from Vietnam in 1980, so working in public service is a way she always believed she could give back to the country that welcomed her family with open arms. "Working as a juvenile prosecutor has been incredibly rewarding, because I get to focus not only on pursuing justice for victims, but also on serving delinquent juveniles that come through the system—with therapeutic and rehabilitative services, not just strict punishment."

Her ultimate goal is to be a juvenile judge so she can handle cases involving child abuse and neglect, help parents regain

custody of their children in the foster system, or find permanent homes for children whose parents are unable to care for them. Sims considers it a privilege to work for the juvenile justice system because, as she says, "the ultimate goal is to look out for the best interest of our society's most precious commodity, its children."

Judge Sheila Gallow '06

Born in Johannesburg, South Africa, Sheila Gallow immigrated to the U.S. in 1994. After completing law school, she became a naturalized U.S. citizen.

On Dec. 20, 2019, U.S. Attorney General William Barr appointed her to begin hearing cases. Prior to her federal appointment, she served as the assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Principal Legal Adviser in Atlanta, handling a wide array of immigration cases. She served as the chief assistant district attorney in the Atlanta Judicial Circuit for five years where she prosecuted criminal cases and served as the chief of the Capital Litigation Unit. Her first position out of law school was with the Office of Georgia Attorney General where she served as an assistant attorney general, litigating post-conviction cases in the Criminal Justice Division.

Since 2012, she has also served as a judge advocate general in the U.S. Army Reserves, serving as an administrative law attorney, trial counsel and brigade judge advocate. She was mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom to Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, for a year where she prosecuted military cases. Additionally, Gallow served as the legal adviser for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Region IV, where she was mobilized to support emergency operations for Hurricane Irma.

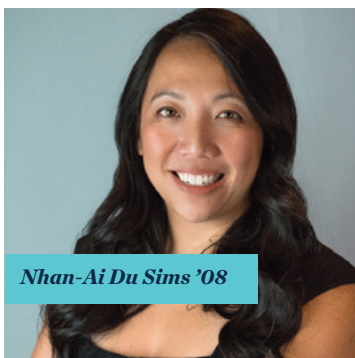
Judge Katherine Tess Percy Stromberg '01

Judge Katherine Tess Percy Stromberg serves as judge for the 23rd Judicial District Court of Louisiana, serving the parishes of Ascension, Assumption and St. James.

Prior to attending law school, she worked as an investigator for the Louisiana Board of Ethics and Campaign Finance. Stromberg maintained a general law practice until 2012, when she was appointed as the hearing officer and judicial administrator for the 23rd Judicial District Court. She served in that position until her election as district judge for the 23rd Judicial District Court, Division "C"; taking office on Jan. 1, 2015.



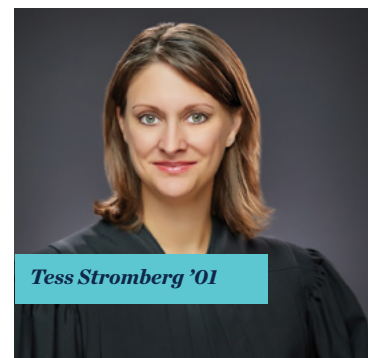
Marcella Auerbach '76



Nhan-Ai Du Sims '08



Sheila Gallow '06



Tess Stromberg '01



Stromberg is a member of the 23rd Judicial District Bar Association, Louisiana State Bar Association, Louisiana District Judges Association, and National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges and is the current president of the Louisiana First Circuit Judges Association.

Brittany A. Schaffer '10

Brittany Schaffer is Spotify's head of artist and label marketing in Nashville, Tennessee. In this role, she and her team oversee the relationships and marketing campaigns with Nashville's music industry, particularly with artists, labels and managers of all genres. Schaffer is also central to the development and execution of Spotify's global strategy to grow the country genre. This includes spearheading the transformation of the flagship Hot Country playlist into a nationally recognized brand and bringing Spotify and country music to fans through Spotify's annual four-day activation at CMA Fest, ongoing U.S. marketing campaigns, and Hot Country Live with artists such as Carrie Underwood, Florida Georgia Line, Dan + Shay, and Morgan Wallen. Since joining Spotify in January 2018, Schaffer has joined the ACM Board of Directors and the CRB Board of Directors, and her work within the Nashville community has garnered her recognition as one of *Billboard's* 2019 Country Power Players, *Billboard's* Women in Music 2018: Six Emerging Executives Shaping Music's Future (*Billboard*), *Variety's* 2018 Women Who Power Country Music, and one of the leading Women in Music City (*Nashville Business Journal*).

Prior to joining Spotify, she was senior counsel in the entertainment department of Loeb & Loeb LLP, where she began practicing upon graduating from Cumberland in 2010 and remained for over seven years. Schaffer maintained a robust legal practice focused primarily on the music industry and branded entertainment, including representing the contestants on Seasons 9-12 of *The Voice* and advising established and developing talent clients, including through the drafting and negotiation of record, publishing, producer, management, sponsorship and live performance agreements. She also worked with major consumer brands, live event companies, and digital services to assist their teams in developing music strategies and in negotiating key licensing and talent agreements. During her time as a lawyer, Schaffer was recognized consistently as a Mid-South Rising Star (*Super Lawyers*), as one of the leading Women in Music City

(*Nashville Business Journal*), and by *Variety* as one of Hollywood's Future Leaders.

Hilaire Armstrong '12, J.D./M.B.A. '16

"To whom much was given, of [her] much will be required."

Luke 12:48

Being the first lawyer in the family has given Hilaire Armstrong a tremendous opportunity to serve. She has always possessed a strong desire to help others, to serve the less fortunate, and to speak loudly for those who struggled to find their voice. Service is the heart of her life and practice.

Armstrong's desire to serve led her to Legal Services Alabama (LSA). During her time at LSA, she represented vulnerable families in a variety of legal issues. She protected their homes from wrongful evictions, fought for the return of their illegally condemned wages, advocated for Social Security benefits for the disabled, and filed bankruptcies for those becoming impoverished by debt.

Currently, Armstrong serves as the Alabama Bankruptcy Assistance project coordinator at the Alabama State Bar. In this role, she recruits and trains attorneys to take on pro bono bankruptcies, ultimately producing quality services for low-income individuals desperate to obtain financial relief.

"Serving those at the most vulnerable times of their lives has reminded me of the importance of looking beyond myself and advocating for those in need because it is required of me."

Cynthia Ransburg-Brown '98

In February 2016, Cynthia Ransburg-Brown joined the University of Alabama System's Office of Counsel at UAB Health System as a university counsel after spending 17½ years in private practice with the Sirote & Permutt PC. At Sirote, Ransburg-Brown was a partner and shareholder in the firm's Health Care Consulting Group. She serves as an adjunct professor in UAB's School of Health Professions where she teaches a health law course to both residential and executive students pursuing a Master (or an Executive Master) of Science in health administration.

She was named the 1998 Outstanding Female Law Graduate at Cumberland School of Law and that success continued with being named to the Best Lawyers in America for Health Care Law, *Birmingham Magazine's* Best Lawyers Edition, and *Birmingham Business Journal's* Best of the Bar. She is a fellow of the American Bar



Brittany A. Schaffer '10

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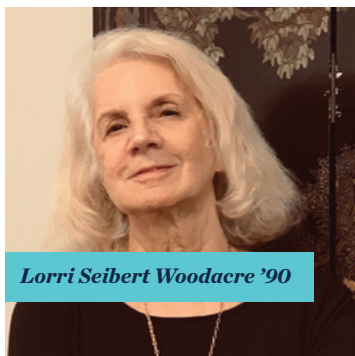
***Hilaire Armstrong '12,
J.D./M.B.A. '16***



Cynthia Ransburg-Brown '98



Anne Lamkin Durward '95



Lorri Seibert Woodacre '90

Foundation, and a former member of Alabama Bar Association's Character and Fitness Committee and the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Health and Life Sciences Law*, published by the American Health Lawyers' Association.

Anne Lamkin Durward '95

Anne Lamkin Durward is a shareholder in the law firm of Massey Stotser & Nichols PC in Birmingham, Alabama. Her primary areas of practice are family law, estate planning and probate.

Durward is a fellow in the International Academy of Family Lawyers (serving on the Board of Governors) and a fellow in the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. She serves on the board of directors as the president-elect for the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers Foundation, the Board of Trustees for the Legal Aid Society of Birmingham (past president), and as a life fellow for the Birmingham Bar Foundation.

Durward has been very active in the Birmingham Bar Association serving in various leadership roles. She served on boards of directors for both the Birmingham Bar Foundation (past president) and the Birmingham Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program. She also is a member of the Women's Committee of 100 of Birmingham, the advisory board for DELTA Inc. (past chair), and the Dean's Executive Council for Samford University's Orlean Beeson School of Education. She received the inaugural Excellence Award from the Birmingham Bar Foundation in 2018 for her work with the Foundation and BBA. She coaches Cumberland's National Moot Court teams. Durward finds her service to the Bar, Cumberland and other organizations has been rewarding and enhances her abilities as a lawyer and has helped her career.

Lorri Seibert Woodacre '90

Lorri Woodacre maintains a boutique law practice in Wellesley and Mattapoisett, Massachusetts. She came to Cumberland via Tampa where she grew up and was encouraged by her brother-in-law Judge Robert Simms to attend law school. She attended the 25th class reunion with her niece Jacqueline Simms-Petridis who is a partner at Burr Furman's Tampa Office.

Her daughter, Courtney, whom some classmates may remember, grew up to be a lawyer at the Securities Exchange in New York. Her son, Paul, then at Altamont, grew up to have one of the first internet businesses in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and went on to work for Oracle.

In 1989, after being a deputy campaign manager in a Massachusetts congressional campaign, she ran the campaign that resulted in the election of the first woman to the Circuit Court Bench in Florida.

Woodacre returned to Boston in the wake of the popular *My Cousin Vinny* movie and survived the many humorous (and some not so humorous) references to the movie.

Having clerked as a law student for Judge Charlie Najar, she concentrated in family law and walked a bed of nails the first few years of practice. She is believed to be the only Alabama trained family law litigator in the Boston area. Sometimes she just has to "Roll Tide."

Centennial of the Woman's Suffrage Amendment

by William G. Ross

This year marks the centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment, which enfranchised women by providing that "[t]he right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." The amendment, which became law after the Tennessee legislature ratified it in August 1920, generated considerable political and constitutional controversy.

Invoking federalism, opponents argued that the amendment would unconstitutionally invade the reserved powers of the states over the conduct of state and local elections and that no federal remedy was needed because states were free to enfranchise women, as approximately half the states had done, at least to some extent, by 1920. Although the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870 had prohibited racial discrimination in voting, opponents of the suffrage amendment contended that the Fifteenth Amendment was anomalous because it was a necessary correlation to the abolition of slavery in the Thirteenth Amendment.

Advocates of the suffrage amendment contended that an unconstitutional constitutional amendment was an oxymoron, and they pointed out that highly restrictive amendment processes in many states and widespread political opposition to enfranchisement of women precluded the likelihood of suffrage legislation in a significant number of states.

Opponents of the amendment assailed its constitutionality even after its enactment, until the U.S. Supreme Court sustained it in a 1922 decision, *Leser v. Garnett*. Justice Louis D. Brandeis explained that a constitutional amendment is "a federal function derived from the Federal Constitution; and it transcends any limitations sought to be imposed by the people of a State."

The history of the Nineteenth Amendment is intertwined with that of the so-called prohibition amendment, the Eighteenth Amendment, enacted in 1919, which prohibited the manufacture, sale or transportation of alcohol. Since women had been highly active in the prohibition movement, the enactment of the prohibition amendment mooted fears of opponents of prohibition that enfranchisement of women would facilitate prohibition. The enactment of the prohibition amendment also undermined constitutional arguments against women's suffrage because invasion of states' rights had been one of the major arguments against nationwide prohibition; if the Constitution could mandate



nationwide prohibition, its power to require states to enfranchise women seemed clearer.

Although social and cultural changes and the widespread enfranchisement of women throughout the Western world during the early 20th century almost surely made enfranchisement of American women inevitable, American participation in the First World War during 1917-18 probably hastened it. Throughout the war, advocates of women's suffrage insisted that a nation purporting to fight a war for the survival and spread of democracy could not without hypocrisy deny the vote to more than half its population. As the president of the Women's Political Union explained, the triumph of the suffrage movement would ensure victory in the war because it would enable the nation to "fight with clean hands and clean consciences for democracy." Moreover, the critical contributions of women to the war effort in households, offices, farms, factories, and hospitals demonstrated that women were responsible citizens who could be trusted with the ballot. President Woodrow Wilson, who long had favored leaving suffrage to the states, emerged as an advocate of the suffrage amendment in 1918, declaring that "[t]his war could not have been fought . . . if it had not been for the services of women."

Although the Nineteenth Amendment did not end widespread gender discrimination, its enactment was a necessary predicate for the many advancements in gender equality that have occurred during the following century.

*William G. Ross is the Albert P. Brewer professor of law and ethics. His recent book, *World War I and the Constitution* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), includes a chapter about the woman's suffrage amendment.*



Lynn Hogewood '93, J.D. '03

Created in 2016, Cumberland's academic support program has been an integral part of our students' experience, and director Lynn Hogewood has been crucial to its success.

An energetic and passionate advocate for students, Hogewood works with faculty and staff to develop programming to help first-year students adjust, to help struggling and at-risk students succeed, and to implement intentional and direct communication with students as they prepare for the bar exam.

To complement her role, and stemmed from her own passion for health and wellness, Hogewood has initiated a series titled Contemplative and Mindful Lawyering with a goal to provide opportunities for students, and alumni alike, to enhance learning, lawyering and wellness in the practice of law.

What do you see as the connection between law student wellness and academic success?

In my opinion, the connection between the two hinges on developing problem-solving and thinking abilities through personal growth, self-awareness, emotional intelligence and connection. Developing these essential legal skills and abilities through a holistic approach leads to professionals and leaders in the legal community who can problem solve, persevere and promote resiliency and empathy in themselves and their clients.

What wellness programs have you found to be the most successful?

Ultimately, I think just making folks aware that law school and the legal profession can be challenging and that mental health and wellness matters has been most successful. By simply opening the discussion and reducing stigma attached to issues and seeking help for those who struggle has made a world of difference. Some of the programs that have had a good response have been Mindful Moments, Bending the Law Yoga, academic support mentors, healthy study strategy sessions, and an open-door policy for checking in and talking. Also, we have had speakers engage the students on cognitive skills and development, on mental health and counseling services, and on resiliency and grit that have been successful. In the fall, I rolled out several activities to promote discussion and wellness on the ABA's Law Student Mental Health Awareness Day. I plan to make an annual day of events to coincide with the ABA's tools and resources.

In regards to preparing for the bar exam, how do you help students manage stress?

Preparing for the bar exam can feel isolating, so, connection becomes very important during that time. My focus is on providing opportunities for connection and self-reflection, healthy study strategies and activities that reduce stress. We have been holding 3L orientation in the fall and 3L meetings in the spring to introduce strategies to be used throughout the final year and heading into the bar prep season. I have a Bar Prep Boot Camp that I put together for a workshop that introduces some things.

What resources would you recommend to a lawyer or law student wanting to take control of their wellness?

I would start with an honest, self-assessment of what brings peace and joy and what may reduce peace and joy. Starting with a check-in may be all it takes to form good, healthy habits. Those of us who are a little less disciplined in taking care of ourselves may need specific guides or ideas. The ABA has done a super job of creating resources for lawyers, like Toolkits and articles—they are taking the bull by the horns in offering awareness resources as well. Local bar associations, like the Birmingham Bar Association, are offering more discussion and awareness. And, law schools are also providing more resources for law students through their websites or connection with academic success programs.

All Cumberland students and alumni are eligible to use the programs' services. To get involved as a mentor or to simply participate, contact Lynn Hogewood at ldhogewo@samford.edu.



Jill Evans

Professor Jill Evans has been an integral member of the Cumberland faculty since she joined us in 1994. A graduate of Northwestern University's School of Law, Northwestern's Kellogg Graduate School of Management and the University of California-Irvine, Evans' primary teaching interests include environmental law and torts. Recently she took the over Cumberland's summer study abroad program in Cambridge, England, and will assume an additional role as associate dean of academic programs beginning fall 2020.

What positive changes have you seen since you began teaching at Cumberland? The law school has always been student centered. Both faculty and staff were and remain committed to ensuring the student classroom experience is one that encourages learning and that faculty are available outside of class for additional help. That focus has expanded to include adding additional academic support resources that are designed to facilitate success while in law school and also success on the bar exam. Our Career Development Office has also widened the scope of services and presentations they offer to students. Equally important, however, has been the growing effort to support student health and wellness, and other non-academic needs.

What is your favorite activity outside of teaching law? I love arts and crafts but, as I concluded in college, I was neither creative nor

talented enough to be other than a starving artist. I still dabble as a stress reliever and to provide a balance to work and family.

What research have you been conducting lately? I have several different research threads in progress. My current research focus is on third party duties of care in tort law and that research encompasses several different areas where social changes may demand reconsideration of traditional tort obligations. I have a work-in-progress with a co-author on removal and have finished a third, and last, in a series of articles on repose, although I am considering taking it in a slightly different direction.

What is a favorite project you have worked on recently? I now have oversight of the Cambridge study abroad program and have been pretty immersed in pulling the pieces together for the coming summer. We have made some changes that I hope will provide an even better experience for students in the program and I am pretty excited about the things we have planned. I also am in the midst of clearing space for a new Children in Law room, which we are creating to provide a place for student parents to go when they find it necessary to bring their children to campus.

What is one thing others may not know about you? What most people didn't know (and still may not) is that I am incredibly shy and hate public speaking. It seems incongruous that I chose to be a litigator, and now a professor, given my introverted nature. I have to admit it took some work for me to push past my natural reticence.

What is the best piece of advice you've been given and by whom? There isn't any one piece of advice that I can point to as the best. My father was frequently my go-to, but I've had great advice from different sources depending upon the context and the time. If I were to say which advice has served me the best across the board, it would probably be a version of the "be true to yourself" adage that floats through the ether. In my case it was actually, "never lie to yourself." I do not recall the source but have found that examining the real reasons motivating an action I am contemplating or reaction I am having helps determine what I then do or whether I adjust my response. It has proven a valuable approach.

What is your favorite part about working with law students? Honestly, I enjoy just engaging with students from different backgrounds and with different perspectives and life experiences about some of the legal issues we face today. I enjoy our students both in and out of the classroom and that constant exchange of ideas.

New Staff • Barika M. Hamilton

Marvel and DC Comic Universe enthusiast Barika McNeal Hamilton joined the Cumberland School of Law team in 2019 as director of operations. In her role, she is responsible for the fiscal, budgetary and daily operational aspects of the law school.

A native of Livingston, Alabama, Hamilton brings more than 17 years of business and supply chain leadership experience. Most recently she served as a productivity engineer for The University of Alabama Productivity Center (APC). The APC is a nonprofit organization, housed within Culverhouse School of Business, that enhances economic and workforce development. In that role, Hamilton was a consultant to existing Alabama industry providing business coaching and training solutions.

Prior to joining APC, Hamilton was a group logistics manager for Ryder System Inc. where she worked for 14 years. While there, she led teams across multiple geographic locations dedicated to providing just-in-time (JIT) supply chain solutions to Honda Manufacturing of America.

Hamilton holds a Bachelor of Science from Alabama A&M University and an M.B.A. from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

When she is not working in her community, she enjoys sports, traveling and exploring Birmingham with her husband and their two young children.



Generous Alumni Support Robinson Hall Renovations

Cumberland School of Law Plans for More Upgrades

Thanks to the support of several generous alumni, Cumberland School of Law was able to unveil two renovated classrooms in fall 2019.

The renovation of 121 Robinson Hall was supported and named by Ernest "Ernie" '81 and Vivian Cory on behalf of the Cory Watson Attorneys law firm in Birmingham, Alabama. Cory is the founding and managing partner of the firm.

Simultaneously, 115 Robinson Hall is named for the Beasley Allen Crow Methvin Portis & Miles firm based in Montgomery, Alabama. The renovation of this room was supported through gifts from Tom '88 and Amy Methvin, Wilson "Dee" '89 and Sandra Miles, and Ted '91 and Carla Meadows. Methvin is the firm's managing attorney, Miles serves as the head of the firm's Consumer Fraud section, and Meadows is principal of the firm's medical drugs and devices section.

As Cumberland School of Law looks to the future, more upgrades are projected for our law school building.

Louis '91 and Ovaline Hatcher have dedicated support for renovations in 123 Robinson Hall. Hatcher is a partner at Watson Spence LLP in Albany, Georgia.

The opportunity to support the renovation of two large classrooms at the \$200,000 level is still available for naming. Funding will support the renovation of a technologically advanced, comfortable, large classroom to include a prominently displayed donor recognition wall, stylish furnishings, and the addition of natural light.

These enhancements will greatly improve the educational experience of our students by providing a more productive learning and scholarly environment allowing the law school to be competitive as we recruit future generations of Cumberland lawyers.

To support these renovations, contact director of development Paula Kierce at pkierce@samford.edu.



The opportunity to support the renovation of two large classrooms at the \$200,000 level is still available for naming.

SAVE THE DATE

Jere F. White Jr.
**Trial Advocacy
Institute**



In conjunction with the Alabama Chapter of the American College of Trial Lawyers, Cumberland School of Law CLE will offer the sixth Jere F. White Jr. Trial Advocacy Institute which supports fellowship opportunities for Cumberland School of Law students.

FRIDAY
NOV.
13
2020

Sheraton Hotel,
Birmingham, Alabama
Registration will be available
July 1, 2020.

samford.edu/go/advocacy-institute





Practitioner's Perspective: An Interview with Alumna April Richardson

April M. Richardson, a recent Cumberland School of Law graduate program alumna, completed her Master of Science with a focus in health law and policy. Richardson works as a quality improvement adviser for AQAF, a nonprofit consulting firm that provides quality improvement assistance to the health care provider market through contract arrangements. She chose to pursue this degree to help enhance her career in the health care quality and performance improvement field.

How has completing this program helped your career? Completing this program has allowed me to stand out among my colleagues as a subject matter expert in compliance, security/privacy issues, training and education. Also, in my role as a quality improvement adviser, I have become such a great asset to many clinicians and administrators providing education and best practices for performance improvement.

What would you say to someone who is on the fence about applying to the program? If you are seeking a comprehensive overview of health care compliance, Cumberland School of Law offers an excellent list of courses. You will not regret enrolling in this program; it is very promising. The professors have a plethora of experience in the field of health care law and health care administration. The instructors and cohort of students hold advanced degrees, high-level careers/positions, and have a wealth of knowledge relevant for today's health care system. Not to mention, the program provides opportunities to attend health care compliance conferences to network with diverse groups from all over the U.S.

What advice would you give a student who is beginning the program? I would advise potential candidates to take advantage of the all resources provided by the instructors, their approach to teaching and introducing students to materials can be applied to any work setting. Group work is encouraged—definitely take full advantage of networking and meeting new people. Some of the people I met became my closest friends and the ones that encouraged me to complete the program even during difficult times.

How were you able to fit this program into your professional and personal life? What was the online classroom experience like? I was able to fit this program into my personal/professional life due to the online course structure. Students have online access to courses 24 hours a day, seven days a week. No matter where you are geographically located, you have several options to get questions answered, and most importantly complete your assignments.

If you've been in the workforce for a number of years, what made you decide to go back to school? "Anything worth doing is worth doing right." I decided to go back to school to enhance my legal knowledge in compliance. One of the goals for the health care community is to reduce health cost, medical errors and deliver value-based care. I perceived that I could better contribute to the community by learning and disseminating the information where needed.

To learn more about Cumberland School of Law's online graduate programs, go to samford.edu/go/gradlaw.



Cumberland School of Law *Hosts Regional Round of the National Trial Competition*

Samford University's Cumberland School of Law hosted Region 8 of the National Trial Competition (NTC) Feb. 7-9, 2020, at the Jefferson County Civil Courthouse. The competition is one of the most prestigious mock trial competitions in the nation, created to encourage law student interest in developing trial advocacy skills.

The regional competition welcomed 22 teams from law schools across the country, 200 judges, more than 40 witnesses, and 75 Cumberland student volunteers. Over the course of the weekend, there were a total of 50 mock trials, with each trial having at least three scoring judges. As the host school, Cumberland's trial program recruited, trained and coordinated all judges and volunteers.

The competition ran seamlessly and provided an excellent experiential learning opportunity for student participants. "Every student that participated in this competition entered as students and came out as advocates," said Allison Connelly, professor and coach at the University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law. "The event was run flawlessly, and the students were well taken care of."

This year, more than 300 mock trial teams competed at regional competitions during the month of February and the top two teams from each of 15 regions advanced to the national competition in Texas. Because Cumberland served as the host of

Region 8, the school's trial teams participated in Region 6 at Stetson University College of Law, where they swept the competition and advanced to nationals.

Ramona Albin, assistant professor of law and director of advocacy programs at Cumberland, served as the tournament director; Tracy Luke, advocacy program coordinator, was the director of logistics; and Lynda Reynolds served as assistant director of logistics.

"Cumberland excels at training and supporting student advocates," Albin said. "Hosting a large, prestigious tournament further shows our commitment to training practice-ready advocates. We thoroughly enjoyed hosting students from our region and providing an environment where students can learn and grow as litigators."

The Region 8 competition was co-sponsored by the Texas Young Lawyers Association (TYLA) and the American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL). Glenda Cochran Associates sponsored a dinner Saturday evening for all the participants.

Cumberland's trial program is consistently ranked among the top trial advocacy programs in the country. *U.S. News & World Report* ranked the program 15th in the nation in 2020.



Thank you alumni, students and friends for volunteering your time. And, thank you to Glenda Cochran '82, Glenda Cochran Associates, for your support!

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Honoring Beloved Cumberland Faculty Member

Judge T. Brad Bishop '61, J.D. '71



Samford University President Andrew Westmoreland joined together with Cumberland School of Law faculty, staff and other university leadership to honor Judge T. Brad Bishop's service of more than 50 years to the university on his birthday, Jan. 7, 2020.

Fortunately, this was not a retirement celebration, as he still continues to captivate our law students every day!

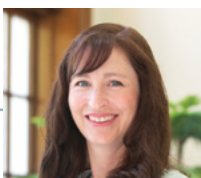


A GLIMPSE AT FACULTY ACTIVITIES



Ramona C. Albin

Ramona C. Albin, assistant professor and director of Cumberland's advocacy program, was a featured speaker on Nov. 8, 2019 at the Reimagining Advocacy Conference sponsored by Stetson University College of Law. Her presentation was titled "Reimagining Advocacy Education." Her law review article titled "Appropriating Women's Thoughts: The Admissibility of Sexual Fantasies and Dreams Under the Consent Exception to Rape Shield Laws" was published by the *Kansas Law Review* in March 2020.



Alyssa A. DiRusso

Alyssa A. DiRusso, Whelan W. and Rosalie T. Palmer professor of law, became the editor-in-chief of the *American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC) Law Journal* in March 2020. She will serve in this role for two years.



Tracey M. Roberts

Tracey M. Roberts, assistant professor, presented "Stranded Assets and Efficient Pricing for Regulated Utilities: A Federal Tax Solution" at the 20th Global Conference on Environmental Taxation," in Limassol, Cyprus, Sept. 27, 2019. On Jan. 18, 2020, Roberts and her tax students staffed Pro Bono Day at the IRS to resolve taxpayer disputes with the help of Alabama Legal Services and the Internal Revenue Service prior to the upcoming session of the U.S. Tax Court in Birmingham. She organized a talk by civil rights attorney, James U. Blacksher, on the Alabama Constitution and Educational Opportunity on Jan. 23, 2020. Her article, "Greenbacks for the Green New Deal, 17 PITT. TAX REV. ____ (forthcoming 2020)," has been accepted for presentation at the Law and Society Association Meeting in Denver, Colorado, May 28-31, 2020, and at the Society for Environmental Law and Economics meeting at Selwyn College, Cambridge University, Cambridge, England June 22-23, 2020.

Women, Whiskey and Taxes **April 23, 6-8 p.m.**

Vulcan Park and Museum, Birmingham, Alabama • \$10 General Admission

In coordination with the gallery exhibit *Right or Privilege? Alabama Women and the Vote* at Vulcan Park and Museum, assistant professor Tracey Roberts will present the complex and interlocking history of women's suffrage, prohibition and the federal income tax. Before they became the most famous pair of advocates in the U.S. women's suffrage movement, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were temperance activists. Advocating for the prohibition of alcohol in a world in which women lacked both political and property rights, they sought to curb other social ills: family poverty, unemployment, domestic violence and violent crime. Through the early 20th century, however, the U.S. relied heavily on excise taxes, including those on liquor, to fund government operations. The passage and ratification of the Sixteenth Amendment, authorizing a federal income tax, was needed before the Eighteenth Amendment, prohibiting alcohol, could be passed. In turn, the Nineteenth Amendment, granting women the right to vote, was ratified, in part, on the strength of the time-honored argument that women should not face taxation without representation.

Tickets: samford.edu/cumberlandlaw/events/Women-Whiskey-and-Taxes





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CLASS NOTES

COLLECTED FEBRUARY THROUGH JANUARY 2020

1969

Ben R. Rice was inducted into the Alabama Law Foundation's 2019 Class of Fellows.

1977

E. Hamilton Wilson was inducted into the Alabama Law Foundation's 2019 Class of Fellows.

1978

David Drabkin is a director at Dixon Hughes Goodman LLP in Tysons, Virginia.

1979

Gary Lee Smith, chief executive officer of PowerSouth Energy Cooperative, was named to the inaugural 2019 Class of the Yellowhammer 15, a list to honor those in the private sector moving Alabama forward.

1982

J. Gregory Shaw was inducted into the Alabama Law Foundation's 2019 Class of Fellows.

1983

Mark A. Newell was inducted into the Alabama Law Foundation's 2019 Class of Fellows.

1984

Robert Smith was inducted into the Alabama Law Foundation's 2019 Class of Fellows.

1985

Kevin Sanders opened a second law office location in Jacksonville, Florida.

Jay Ross is the managing partner of Adams and Reese LLP in Mobile, Alabama.

1986

Brig. General John Miller is vice president and chief counsel for Platforms & Services and deputy chief counsel for Combat Vehicles, BAE Systems Inc. in the Washington, D.C., metro area.

Judge Jennifer Dent was appointed to the Business Court division of the 11th Judicial Circuit in West Virginia.

1988

Judge James T. Ferrara joined Shapiro Blasi Wasserman & Hermann as a partner in Boca Raton, Florida.

1989

Laura A. Wilson is an assistant vice president for research and technology agreements at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Randy Poitevent DeFoor won the District 14 Council seat in Jacksonville, Florida. As well, she is the senior vice president and a member of the national agency council for Fidelity National Financial.

1990

Judge Sybil Cleveland of the Huntsville Municipal Court, who implemented the first mental health court in the state of Alabama, is one of five Women Honoring Women honorees.

1991

Rachel J. Moore is secretary for the Greater Birmingham Chapter 53 National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) and chair of the (NAWIC) Southeast Region of Emerging Professionals Committee.

1993

Leslie Kroeger is the 59th president of the Florida Justice Association. She is the second female president in the history of the association. Kroeger is a partner of Cohen Milstein in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

Lt. Col. T. J. Skinner IV is the command judge advocate at the 31st CBRN Brigade.

Shawn J. Cole was inducted into the Alabama Law Foundation's 2019 Class of Fellows.

1994

Jonathan Lowe is a mediator with The Neutral Solution in Birmingham, Alabama.

Joseph Beach is a wealth adviser at South State Wealth in Greenville, South Carolina.

1995

Judge Lee Wendell Loder was reappointed to a second term on the Birmingham Municipal Court by the Birmingham City Council.

Mary Ann Etzler received the 2020 Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award, the highest statewide pro bono award. The award was presented by Chief Justice Charles T. Canady in a ceremony at the Supreme Court of Florida on Jan. 30, 2020.

Michael Velezis is vice president and general counsel of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama.

Brian F. Hansen has joined Adams and Reese LLP as a partner in its global trade, transportation and logistics practice in Atlanta, Georgia.

Anne Lamkin Durward is president-elect for the board of directors of the American Association of Matrimonial Lawyers Foundation.

1996

Douglas Baymiller is principal at Service Contract Compliance Consulting in Nederland, Colorado.

Judge Deana Hood joined the board of trustees of Battle Ground Academy in Franklin, Tennessee.

1998

Col. Trey Dowdey is a partner at Swift Currie McGhee & Hiers in Birmingham, Alabama.

Lana Olson was elected second vice president of Defense Research Institute (DRI).

Jeffrey Pomeroy is a shareholder at Baker Donelson in Birmingham, Alabama.

Courtney French received the President's Award from the Alabama State Baptist Missionary Convention.

1999

Derek Meek was selected to become the 2020 global president of the Turnaround Managing Association (TMA). Beginning Jan. 1, 2020, Meek will serve a one-year term as president over the corporate restructuring organization, which boasts nearly 10,000 members internationally. In addition, he was recently invited to join the American College of Bankruptcy in which he will be inducted into as a fellow in 2020.

Kem Marks founded her law firm, Just In Time Legal Solutions, in Bessemer, Alabama.

2000

Sean Modjarrad is an adjunct instructor at the University of Texas-Dallas for the seventh year. Modjarrad teaches constitutional law focusing on race, law and civil rights.

Nicole Rocco is a board member of The Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County, Florida. Rocco is a corporate counsel with Florida Crystals Corp in West Palm Beach.

2003

Emily L. Baggett was inducted into the Alabama Law Foundation's 2019 Class of Fellows.

2002

Robert Tidwell was selected to become the municipal judge of Woodstock, Georgia. He remains a partner of Tidwell Strimban in Woodstock.

2004

Josh Bell is associate general counsel for Hoar Construction in Birmingham, Alabama.

2005

Joseph Ryan Will joined Morgan & Morgan in Daytona Beach, Florida.

Stephanie Martin Pollard joined McCollum & Wilson PC in Auburn, Alabama.

Lindsey O'Dell Simmons is a partner located in the new office of King Simmons Ford & Spree PC located in Daphne, Alabama.

Jenifer Champ Wallis joined Munck Wilson Mandala as a partner in Los Angeles, California.

Melanie Bradford Holliman authored an article published in the *Alabama Lawyer* September issue titled "Special Needs Trusts: What You Need to Know to Help Your Clients and Avoid Client Complaints."

2006

Judge Sheila Gallow was invested as a federal immigration judge for the Department of Justice's Executive Office of Immigration Review. She will sit in Atlanta, Georgia.

Paul Greenwood is a partner of Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis in Birmingham, Alabama.

Hirlye "Ryan" Lutz III is a shareholder of Cory Watson in Birmingham, Alabama.

Noel S. Barnes is general counsel for the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency.

2007

Ashby Pate became a partner of Lightfoot Franklin & White.

Michael Berson became a partner of Adams and Reese LLP. Berson works from the Mobile, Alabama, office.

Christopher Yearout became a partner of Lightfoot Franklin & White.

Jamie Durrett is an associate at Wilson Elser in Clarksville, Tennessee.

Stephanie Mays is chief talent officer for Maynard Cooper in Birmingham, Alabama.

Erin Donohoo is a senior compliance risk manager for USAA in Birmingham, Alabama.

Graham Hewitt is interim director of the Volunteer Lawyer Program in Birmingham, Alabama.

2008

Meridith Barnes is a member of the 2019-20 Alabama Leadership Initiative class.

Kimberly Baker Floyd is managing attorney of J. St. Louis & Associates in Atlanta, Georgia.

2010

Ashley Peinhardt is an adjunct instructor at Cumberland School of Law where she teaches trial skills.

Heather Ward is associate general counsel of the Multifamily Legal Department at FreddieMac in McLean, Virginia.

Matt Tully is a litigation manager with Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. in Birmingham, Alabama.

Brandi Maiorino is counsel at Maynard Cooper & Gale PC in Nashville, Tennessee.

2011

Kristin Gray Hanna was promoted to major in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Christopher H. Daniel is a partner of Sheffield & Lentine in Birmingham, Alabama.

Felicia Lee is a member of the 2019-20 Alabama Leadership Initiative class.

2012

Craig Lawrence became a partner of Adams and Reese LLP. Lawrence works from the Birmingham, Alabama, office.

Elizabeth "Liz" Eiland became a partner of Beasley Allen in Montgomery, Alabama.

Brittany Stancombe Hopper became a partner of Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis in Nashville, Tennessee.

Brie Zarzour became a partner of Phelps Dunbar in Mobile, Alabama.

Dan Ruth was elected to partnership of Balch & Bingham in Birmingham, Alabama.

Phillip A. Sellers II is a shareholder of Rushton Stakely in Montgomery, Alabama.

Meg Clements founded her own practice, Meg Clements Law in Pell City, Alabama.

Matthew Akin is an associate at Jon Kohler & Associates in Birmingham, Alabama.

Samantha-Anne Horwitch was named a 2019 Top 50 General Counsel in Texas by the National Diversity Council in Houston, Texas.

2013

Sydney Jackson is president-elect of the Magic City Bar Association in Birmingham, Alabama.

Veronica Williams-Crenshaw is the special education compliance liaison for the Georgia Cyber Academy in Atlanta, Georgia.

Leon Hampton Jr. became a partner of Beasley Allen in Montgomery, Alabama.

Nicholas Arciniegas is a program analyst for FEMA in Washington, D.C.

J. Curt Tanner is a principal of Cory Watson PC in Birmingham, Alabama.

Sean Hicks is founder of Sean Hicks Attorney at Law in Auburn, Alabama.

Chris Weaver is an assistant district attorney in the 10th Judicial Circuit for Jefferson County, Alabama.

2014

Clark Cary is an assistant state attorney, in charge of prosecuting all firearm offenses in Hendry County in the 20th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida.

Aubrey Gordon is assistant counsel at TennCare in Nashville, Tennessee.

Nate Bovin is a corporate compliance specialist at Gaylor Electric in Indianapolis, Indiana.

2015

Allen Sorrell is an associate at Brockwell Smith in Birmingham, Alabama.

David Trice is an associate at Armbrecht Jackson in Mobile, Alabama.

Samantha C. Page joined MendenFreiman LLP as an associate in Atlanta, Georgia.

Will Stanford is a real estate agent at ERA King Real Estate in Birmingham, Alabama.

Katy Reed is director of quality and risk at Encompass Health in Birmingham, Alabama.

Katie Fish is an associate at GDCR Law Firm in Atlanta, Georgia.

2016

Landon Graham is an associate at Carr Allison in Vestavia, Alabama.

Clinton Freeman is senior corporate counsel at Surgical Care Affiliates in Birmingham, Alabama.

Walker Beauchamp is an associate with Burr & Forman in Birmingham, Alabama.

Jessie Vallimont Barnhill is a licensed realtor at Sold South Realty in Birmingham, Alabama.

Elise Mardis is an associate at McMichael & Gray PC in Huntsville, Alabama.

2017

Hayden Bashinski is an associate at Littler in Birmingham, Alabama.

Mary Katherine Flynn Alemany is an attorney with Tindal Alemany LLC in Roanoke, Alabama.

Louis S. Bode V is an associate at Fish Nelson & Holden in Birmingham, Alabama.

William Hagood is an associate at Morgan & Morgan in Atlanta, Georgia.

Miya Moore was named as a 2019 National Black Lawyer Top 40 Under 40. Moore is an associate at Burr & Forman in Birmingham, Alabama.

Holly Worly is an associate at Cloud Willis & Ellis in Birmingham, Alabama.

Lindsey Voelker Davis is an associate at King Simmons in Birmingham, Alabama.

Kaylie Becker is an associate at the Law Office of Sandi Gregory Eubank LLC in Birmingham, Alabama.

2018

Sherles Durham is staff counsel at Cadence Bank in Birmingham, Alabama.

Chelsea Cloud Brewton is a member of Momentum Birmingham's 2020 Upward Early Career Program (2020).

CLASS NOTES

COLLECTED FEBRUARY THROUGH JANUARY 2020

Taylor Akers Pruett is an associate at Cory Watson in Birmingham, Alabama.

Charlie Hearn is an associate at Lightfoot Franklin White in Birmingham, Alabama.

Lindsey Catlett is corporate counsel at BBVA in Birmingham, Alabama.

2019

Corbin Potter is an associate at Bradley Arant in Birmingham, Alabama.

Amanda Lowndes is an associate at Sandi Eubank Gregory, Attorneys at Law LLC in Birmingham, Alabama.

Gage Smyth is an associate at Carr Allison in Birmingham, Alabama.

Denzel Okinedo is an associate at Burr & Forman in Birmingham, Alabama.

Hannah Cory is an associate at Cory Watson Attorneys in Birmingham, Alabama.

Kameron Buckner is an associate at Wiggins Childs Pantazis Fisher & Goldfarb in Birmingham, Alabama.

Hunter Horton is an associate at the Revill Law Firm in Birmingham, Alabama.

Averie Armstead is an associate at Starnes Davis Florie in Birmingham, Alabama.

Krista James accepted a seat at the University of East Anglia to earn an L.L.M. in international trade law.

Justice Neloms is an associate at Simpson McMahan Glick & Burford in Birmingham, Alabama.

Tony Bellan is a senior contracts representative at Honeywell Aerospace in Tampa, Florida.

Jennifer Jayjohn is an associate with Cunningham Bounds in Mobile, Alabama.

Haleigh Chastain is an associate with Bernstein Stair & McAdams in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Lanier Savage Felton is an associate with Aiken Bridges Elliott Tyler & Saleeby PA in Florence, South Carolina.

Craig Shirley is an associate with Carr Allison in Birmingham, Alabama.

Averie Armstead received the Jack Davis Professional Achievement Award from the University of Alabama College of Human Environmental Sciences.

Molli Masaniai is an associate at Maynard Cooper in Birmingham, Alabama.

Caleb Faulkner is an associate at Boyd Fernambucq & Dunn PC in Birmingham, Alabama.

Tiffany Walker-Jones is a law clerk for the **Judge Elisabeth French** of the 10th Judicial Circuit in Birmingham, Alabama.

Kacey Cooper is an assistant district attorney in Lee County, Alabama.

Births

Lindsey Drexler Cochran '16 and her husband, Grant, announced the birth of their son, Thomas George, on Sept. 3, 2019.

Heather Locklar Civils '10 and **Stewart Civils '10** welcomed their daughter, Julia Rae, on Sept. 6, 2019.

Dru Bishop '13 and **Baxter Bishop '15** welcomed their daughter, Evelyn Blake, on Sept. 6, 2019.

K. Elizabeth Bannister Scissum '14 and Kiyoshi Scissum announced the birth of their daughter, Kana Ren, on Sept. 9, 2019.

Graham Hewitt '07 and **Lindsay Nadeau Hewitt '13** welcomed their son, Paul Armistead, on Sept. 10, 2019.

Katy Beth Carr '09 and **Michael Carr '09** welcomed their daughter, Eleanor Marie, on Sept. 14, 2019.

Nick Leslie '17 and his wife, Lauren, welcomed their daughter, Olivia Dean, on Sept. 18, 2019.

Kristen Jeffreys Pace '11 and her husband, David, welcomed twin daughters, Olivia Esther and Caroline Walker, on Sept. 24, 2019.

Matthew Brown '11 and his wife, Sarah, welcomed their daughter, Ruby Anne, on Sept. 25, 2019.

Elizabeth Teel '13 and **Al Teel '13** welcomed their son, James Albert, on Sept. 28, 2019.

Alison Dennis '15 and **Garrett Dennis '15** welcomed their son, Arthur Samuel, on Sept. 30, 2019.

Brooks Marks '10 and his wife, Louisa, welcomed their son, William Brooks Marks Jr., in September 2019.

Evan Clark '12 and his wife, Ashley, announced the birth of their son, Easton, on Oct. 15, 2019.

Whitney Laine Eiland '19 and her husband, Jake, announced the birth of their daughter, Sophie, on Oct. 22, 2019.

Amanda Kistler Hinchey '11 and **Patrick Hinchey '13** welcomed their daughter, Stella Anne, on Oct. 29, 2019.

Brittany Stancombe Hopper '09 and her husband, Andrew, welcomed their daughter, Abigail Blaine, on Nov. 25, 2019.

Paige Yarbrough '10 and her husband, Matt, welcomed their daughter, Hannah Katherine, on Dec. 21, 2019.

Carter Montgomery '14 and his wife, Lindsey, welcomed their son, William Campbell, on Dec. 27, 2019.

Stewart Alvis '16 and his wife, Kelsey, welcomed their daughter, Emerson Grace, on Jan. 2, 2020.

Marriages

Katie Bouldin '11 married Andrew Perez on Sept. 7, 2019.

Matthew Woodham '15 and **Ashleigh Hunnicutt '15** were married on Sept. 27, 2019.

Kacey Cooper '19 married Joe Swartz on Oct. 4, 2019.

Candace Townes '18 and **J.B. Brown '19** were married on Oct. 5, 2019.

Mackenzie Luce '19 married Luke Killam on Nov. 9, 2019.

Lauren Miles '15 married Wynn Kelley on Nov. 23, 2019.

Cassie Witcher '10 married Ean Cain on Nov. 23, 2019.

LaBella Alvis '84 and **Charles "Chip" McCallum III '86** were married on Dec. 15, 2019.

Allie Segrest '19 married Will Montgomery on Jan. 4, 2020. They reside in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Callie Brister '19 married Austin Edens on Jan. 4, 2020. The couple resides near Houston, Texas.

In Memoriam

James Lewis Corbet '64, of Wickenburg, Arizona, passed away on Aug. 16, 2019.

Tommy Davis '05, of Birmingham, Alabama, passed away on Sept. 2, 2019.

Brent Alden King '88, of Decatur, Alabama, passed away on Sept. 19, 2019.

Mark B. Reed '76, of Daphne, Alabama, passed away on Sept. 30, 2019.

William Lawrence Ronning '01, of Savannah, Georgia, passed away on Oct. 5, 2019.

Nancy Howell Mitchell '75, of Hartselle and Tuscaloosa, Alabama, passed away on Oct. 6, 2019.

Deedra Abernethy '92, of Shalimar, Florida, passed away on Oct. 8, 2019.

Dell (Dee) Yarbrough Rollins '87, of Mobile, Alabama, passed away on Nov. 16, 2019.

Jerry Brantley Oglesby '67, of Anniston, Alabama, passed away on Nov. 17, 2019.

Charles D. Baker '73, of Jasper, Alabama, passed away on Nov. 26, 2019.

Judge Robert Daniel "Dan" Beck '83, of Fort Payne, Alabama, passed away on Dec. 23, 2019.

Robert Henry Sheppard '81, of Montgomery, Alabama, passed away on Jan. 13, 2020.

Robert William Witek '76, of Yerington, Nevada, passed away on Jan. 16, 2020.



Judge Elisabeth French '97 becomes *First Female Presiding Judge of Jefferson County Court System*

The newly elected presiding judge over the state courts in Jefferson County is a woman for the first time, and a Cumberland alumna. Judge Elisabeth French '97 is the first woman selected to serve at the helm of the Jefferson County judicial system since its beginning in 1821.

She replaced Judge Joseph Boohaker who retired at the end of February. The presiding judge is selected by the circuit judges of the 10th Judicial Circuit. "It has been an honor to serve the citizens of Jefferson County as a judge since 2010," French said. "I am looking forward to now taking on such an important role with the support of my fellow judges," she added.

As presiding judge, she is responsible for assigning judges to established divisions, executing the administrative duties of the

courts, making sure that the courts function properly and having general supervisory authority over court officials. Judge French will also continue to hear cases.

The 10th Judicial Circuit is the largest circuit of the Alabama Judicial System and consists of a total of 38 judges, including 26 circuit judges and 12 district judges. French is the first female African American presiding judge in the state of Alabama.

In November 2010, Judge French was elected as a Jefferson County Circuit Court judge. She was re-elected in 2016. During her tenure on the bench, French has disposed of thousands of cases. Prior to that in the private practice of law for 14 years, French managed complex litigation.

Summer 2020 Alumni Events

Join us at the following alumni receptions this summer:

Annual Florida Bar Convention: Thursday, June 1

Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek & Waldorf Astoria • Orlando, Florida

State Bar of Georgia Annual Meeting: Friday, June 12

Hilton Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort • Miramar Beach, Florida

Alabama State Bar Annual Meeting: Thursday, June 25

Hilton Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort • Miramar Beach, Florida*

*You need not be a registered seminar attendee to attend Cumberland's alumni reception

U.S. Magistrate Judge *and Current Samford Parent*

Cumberland School of Law's Black Law Students Association (BLSA) hosted the 26th Annual Thurgood Marshall Symposium, Thursday, Feb. 20, featuring Regina S. Edwards, U.S. magistrate judge for the Western district of Kentucky.

Edwards, also a current Samford parent, addressed the group about her journey to become a federal judge, while encouraging them to overcome being underestimated.

Theo Edwards-Butler, a musical theater major and president of Samford's Black Student Union, performed a musical selection prior to proudly introducing her mother.

Edwards began by sharing her own challenges that she has encountered along her journey.

"Many of you know that Theo is a musical theater major which requires her to have a strong skill set in acting, singing and dancing—in other words, she must be a triple threat," she said. "When I look back on the challenges that I have faced, I can sum them up as a triple threat in a different way: I'm black, I'm a woman, and I'm from the mountains of eastern Kentucky—I'm literally a coal miner's daughter. Each of these attributes carries with it

stereotypes, preconceived notions of abilities, and often my own lowered expectations."

Edwards shared one specific challenge she faced when she was in high school visiting the guidance counselor. Although she was a student with a high GPA and even higher aspirations, the counselor suggested that she lower her expectations because girls like her would have challenges pursuing higher education.

"This was one of the first times I felt underestimated," Edwards added. "Needless to say, I did not heed her advice."

Edwards went on to pursue two bachelor's degrees in psychology and sociology from the University of Kentucky, followed by her Juris Doctor from Vanderbilt Law School.

"At the time when I attended law school in 1988, it was the largest number of black law students Vanderbilt had ever admitted—three women and six men," she said. "There was such a wealth of diversity among us, but still there was no one like me. I allowed doubts to creep in, asking myself 'how can I compete?,' but I got past that doubt by realizing that my uniqueness was an attribute rather than an albatross."



Addresses 26th Annual Thurgood Marshall Symposium

While preparing for her presentation, Edwards reviewed Thurgood Marshall's life's works.

"Beyond the accolades that are very well known, he too was often underestimated," she said followed by detailed descriptions of challenges he faced throughout his career.

She then challenged the students in the room. "How are you underestimating your own value? When those doubts creep in, you must remind yourself that each of you has a unique voice that adds value."

"In this room there may be the next Thurgood Marshall," she added. "Be ready to rise beyond all expectations and underestimations and know that you are truly capable of accomplishing all that you set out to achieve."

In addition to her extensive and impressive legal career, Edwards also pursued and received a culinary degree in 2003. She plans to put this degree to use by restarting a volunteer cooking program for kids in local community centers in her area of Kentucky.

"We understand that there has been a long history for us, as minorities, having struggles to be in this position," said Terrell Blakesley, the 2020 Thurgood Marshall Symposium chair and third-year law student. "But, it's great to have someone like Judge Edwards, who has been through similar struggles, come talk to us and encourage us that we can make it, and we can overcome being underestimated."

The event closed with presentations and remarks from Cumberland School of Law Dean Corky Strickland.

Following the closing, Judge Edwards shared words of sentiment toward the university and the law school.

"I am so honored to be a part of this program that has been going on for the last 26 years," she said. "It really speaks so highly of the Cumberland School of Law and Samford communities that they support this program and diversity efforts for the students here. Since I have a daughter in undergrad, I am just really appreciative that the school, on so many different levels, is really working to make sure that all of their voices are heard."



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