



The 49th NCACC Annual Conference in Williamsburg, VA July 31-August 5, 2022 Jim Hivner & Amy Funderburk, Hosts



Valentine's Day is just around the corner. Now is the time to make plans to do something you'll LOVE — the NCACC Annual Conference!!!

Virginia is for lovers and there is so much to love about Williamsburg, Virginia!

The Williamsburg Woodlands Hotel and Suites will welcome you with open arms on Sunday, July 31st, as the conference begins. The hotel is conveniently located next to the visitors' center and offers shuttle service to art museums, Merchants Square for shopping and dining, and Colonial Williamsburg. It is also located within walking distance to the Historical Colonial Williamsburg Area, with everything from historical re-enactments to candle making to carriage rides. It is also a short 10-15 minutes from wine tours and tasting rooms, the famous Busch Gardens Amusement Park, and the very popular Williamsburg Premium Shopping Outlets.

On the evening of Sunday (July 31st) we will honor our historical conference events with a cocktail reception and world-famous auction. However, since this conference is truly “revolutionary,” we will visit both the Jamestown Settlement Museum (Monday, August 1st) and the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown (Wednesday, August 3rd). These events will include dinner, tours, immersive galleries, outdoor living-history, and costumed interpreters. A picnic at the Museum of Jamestown includes a delicious plethora of southern cuisine favorites, while Yorktown offers a delectable feast featuring the Tastes of Virginia!

In addition to all of this, plans are underway for a phenomenal educational program and many opportunities to share stories and ideas with your colleagues from across the country.

Make plans now to join us before the Williamsburg Conference is well...
“HISTORY!”

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THE DOCKET

News of the
National Conference
of Appellate Court Clerks

President: Larry Royster (MI)

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mmontgomery@akcourts.gov
(907) 264-0606

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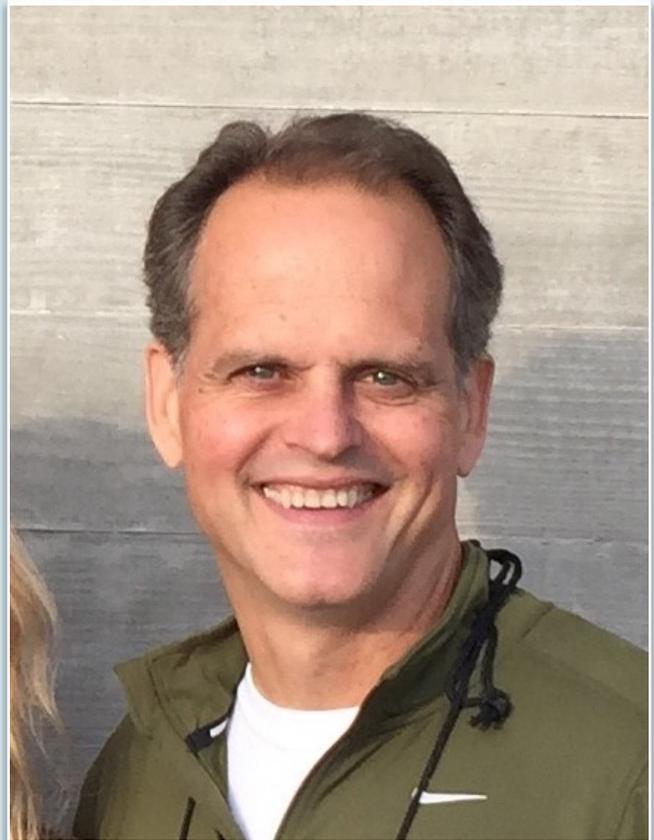
Greg Pachmayr (IN)

Doug Shima (KS)

THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

LARRY ROYSTER (MI)

I began my legal career as a central staff attorney with the Michigan Court of Appeals in March 1986. At the time, we didn't have computers. Our reports were dictated on cassette tapes that were then transcribed by the office secretaries using IBM Selectric typewriters. Hard copy was king. Everything filed with and produced by the court was on paper. Multiple copies in fact. Our legal research was entirely book-based. Each of the court's three main office locations had an extensive library comprised of Michigan's official reporters, the West regional reporters, SCOTUS reporters, decennial digests, ALRs, Restatements, Shepard's citations, treatises, etc. It was just a few years earlier that the clerk's office implemented a rudimentary case management system. Before that, case activity was recorded in log books or on note cards (log books were still being used by the Supreme Court to record some case activity when I became clerk in 2013). The pleadings, correspondence, and court orders and opinions were ACCO'd into physical files and stored in a large room full of shelving units. [I promise there's a point to this trip down Memory Lane. Bear with me.]



Fast forward thirty-five years and the operations of the clerk's offices and research departments of the Michigan Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court are substantially paper-free. Internal court documents are linked to either the case management system or to a shared computer directory and, with a few exceptions, are not provided in hard copy. The courts have an e-filing system that is mandatory for attorneys and used voluntarily by many self-represented

litigants. Paper filings are scanned and linked to the case management system. The Supreme Court no longer maintains paper files, having fully transitioned to digital files in 2018. Legal research is primarily conducted online via Westlaw or Lexis, and the number of book subscriptions has been significantly reduced. The courts' opinions are not issued on paper. The attorneys of record and the lower courts/tribunals are electronically notified of the opinions (programmatically by the Court of Appeals, manually by the Supreme Court). Attorneys, the media, and the public can subscribe to a free listserv to receive e-notifications of opinions that contain links to the opinions. Opinions are also posted on the courts' website the day after their release.

The digital transformation of the Michigan Court of Appeals and Supreme Court has largely occurred in the past five to seven years. I suspect we are ahead of some appellate courts but behind many others. Although it's not a competition to see who crosses the digital finish line first, it would be informative to know the digital capabilities of other courts—not simply out of curiosity but to learn about and possibly implement the best practices and functions. In 2010, an ambitious group of NCACC members researched, compiled, and published a white paper on the status of e-filing in state appellate courts. The paper was updated in 2014. No doubt, though, a lot has changed with your courts—as it has with the Michigan courts—in the last seven years. We've therefore decided it's time for

another update to the white paper. In the next week or so, Tim Gudas (NH) will send a message to the NCACC listserv with a link to a Google survey, which should take no more than five minutes to complete, that asks questions about your court's e-filing, e-record, online research, and e-notification capabilities. We hope to receive responses for all intermediate courts and courts of last resort. Even if your court has both feet firmly planted in the paper world, we ask that you fill out the survey. After the survey period ends, the results will be compiled and posted on the NCACC's website.

And speaking of our website, it will soon undergo a major facelift. The Executive Committee has given its approval to engage the services of Maxcreative, a web design and digital marketing company, to redesign the website. Members of the Technology Committee, led by chairperson John Tomasino (FL), are reviewing the current site to identify what information to retain, what to eliminate, and what to add. Once that work is completed in the next few weeks, Maxcreative will provide us with a cost estimate and time frame for completing the redesign. We expect the new website will launch well before this summer's conference in Williamsburg, VA.

Plans for the Williamsburg conference are being finalized thanks to the hard work and efforts of the co-hosts, Jim Hivner (TN) and Amy Funderburk (NC), and the Program Committee, especially its chairperson, Scott Mitchell (AL). They have a terrific slate of educational programs and social events planned for the conference, which will run from July 31 to August 4. Please mark your calendars and begin making your plans to attend. We are confident that COVID will be well behind us by then so we can re-establish professional connections and personal friendships at an in-person conference.

The virtual educational sessions held in 2020 and 2021 in lieu of the Point Clear, AL, and Portland, OR, conferences, while not ideal, showed us that interesting and worthwhile programs can be held remotely on relatively short notice and at minimal cost. Given that experience, I'm pleased to announce that the Program Committee will offer a mid-year educational session on Thursday, March 24, from 2:00-5:00 PM EST. The free session will consist of two programs: (1) verbal diffusion and violence de-escalation techniques, and (2) planning for and protecting against active shooter situations. The idea for the first program came from a posting on the listserv by Joe Stanton (MA) a couple months ago concerning verbally abusive litigants. It was clear from the responses that many of us are experiencing an increase in the number and volatility of such litigants. The second program has recent personal significance to me. I grew up in a small town in southeast Michigan called Oxford. My parents, two siblings,

and many friends still reside there. Oxford recently made national headlines because of a mass shooting at the high school that ended the lives four beautiful and innocent teenagers and severely injured several others. It's cliché to say, "I can't believe something like this could happen in my [town/neighborhood/school/court]." Until it does. This will not be not an easy topic to consider but, as shown by the survivors at Oxford High and of other mass shootings, training and preparedness is key to protecting ourselves and our colleagues from the unthinkable.

As always, if you have questions about the NCACC or ideas on how to improve services to our members, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Larry Royster, NCACC President
Clerk of the Michigan Supreme Court
Ph: (517) 373-2553
Email: RoysterL@courts.mi.gov

SAVE THE DATE!

**VIRTUAL EDUCATION
PROGRAM**

**March 24, 2022 2:00 -
5:00 EST**

A New Role: CIO 2.0

By Bob Rath, Chief Innovation Officer, Indiana Office of Judicial Administration

An organization that promotes exploration of a better path forward is an organization that will survive and thrive. The role of a Chief Innovation Officer is to find those opportunities and to facilitate the team in blazing that path forward.

The Chief Innovation Officer is growing increasingly common in government and private sector organizations. The CIO role is designed to encourage and facilitate developing new ideas and launching pilot projects that span multiple functional areas or jurisdictions.

Mid-size and larger organizations are typically structured in silos described as agencies, departments, business units, counties, courts, and the like. Naturally, leaders in these hierarchies manage their respective agencies to be successful. Sometimes, new ideas may be only tangentially related to an agency's immediate goals, especially if the idea is new to the market and its success is not guaranteed. Leaders may be hesitant to try something that is so new (i.e., a matter of first impression), its success cannot be guaranteed.

A 2014 article of the Harvard Business Review described seven key responsibilities of a Chief Innovation Officer:

1. Supporting best practices
2. Developing skills
3. Supporting business units in new product and service initiatives
4. Identifying new market spaces
5. Helping people generate ideas
6. Directing seed funding
7. Designing shelter for promising projects.

Some of these responsibilities may sound familiar as they can apply to any leadership position. However, “Helping people generate ideas” and “Designing shelter for promising projects” are particularly critical to the CIO role.

I have enjoyed serving as CIO since the Indiana Supreme Court established this role within the Office of Judicial Administration at the beginning of 2020. My time is split between projects that directly impact courts or the public – such as our Innovation Initiative – and those that are focused on processes within the OJA.

[Innovation Initiative](#)

The Indiana Supreme Court launched a statewide innovation program in late 2019 to explore ways to make Indiana's system of justice more efficient, less expensive, and easier to navigate while continuing to ensure that justice is fairly administered and that the rights of all litigants are protected.

The Indiana [Innovation Initiative](#) brings together people with a diverse range of skills and experiences to work towards these goals. The Initiative began with two subgroups, the Family Law Taskforce and the Technology Working Group, to assist in its efforts. The Civil Litigation Taskforce was established in 2021.

The family law and technology groups submitted their reports and recommendations to the Supreme Court. The OJA is considering how and which ideas can be realized. Several pilot projects have been launched already, including online dispute resolution and a digital evidence portal for civil litigation. Initial ideas from the groups include:

- Triage family law cases to match the level of services and case management to families' needs
- Partnering with the Coalition for Court Access to update and expand resources for self-represented litigants at indianalegalhelp.org
- Providing trauma-informed training for family and juvenile judges
- Implementing ODR for small claims and family law cases
- Creating an online dashboard allowing attorneys and parties easier access to view documents in their cases.

[OJA Process Improvement](#)

Judge Kimberly Bacon, a member of the Technology Working Group, invited a team to review the case flow in a high-volume docket in her small claims court in Lawrence Township, Marion County, Indiana. The project team proposed several ideas, many of which Judge Bacon has since developed further, especially in landlord/tenant cases.

The brainstorming was led by TWG member Roger Schmenner, professor emeritus of operations management with the Indiana University Kelley School of Business. Prof. Schmenner wrote the book, literally, on a methodology called *swift, even flow*, which applies elements of business process reengineering, lean management, Six Sigma, and the Theory of Constraints. In fact, Prof. Schmenner describes *swift, even flow* as the “underlying and unifying concept that stands behind these initiatives. Understand *swift, even flow* and you understand why these other initiatives work as they do.”

Several OJA teams have used *swift, even flow* workshops to develop ideas for improving their business processes. For example, one group focused on the licensing procedures for out-of-state attorneys who request permission to represent *pro hac vice* a party in an Indiana case, a topic that will be described in the next issue of *The Docket* by NCACC member Greg Pachmayr, Clerk of the Indiana Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, and Tax Court.

We are designing further training for the OJA team, building on the experiences of *swift, even flow*. It's rewarding any time you can learn from the person who “wrote the book” – especially when the initial results have been so positive. Continuous improvement can be a challenge, but “continuous” means that there is *always* a better way. Luckily, it's a great feeling when you build a better path forward.

SCHOLARSHIP ASSISTANCE FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA



Might funding or budget constraints keep you from attending the Annual Conference in Williamsburg? If so, please consider applying for a scholarship, even at this early date.

Scholarship funds are awarded to promote attendance at annual meetings of the NCACC by members who would otherwise be unable to attend. Funding may be requested for transportation and lodging, and the registration fee may be waived. You may request a full or partial scholarship. In some years, we do not award all of the funds available for scholarships, so do not hesitate to apply. If you apply and later find that full or partial funds are available to you from your court, please inform the scholarship committee so we can help as many applicants as possible.

The application may be accessed via the link below. Scholarship criteria may be found in the NCACC directory under the Committee Operation Guidelines/NCACC Scholarship Committee. Please submit your application electronically to the National Center for State Courts by May 1, 2022 via the following link:

https://ncsc2.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dh8PkJU0hsuJpmC



For More Information Contact:

Lonn Weissblum (FL),
Scholarship Committee
Chair

NCACC Scholarship Committee

Lonn Weissblum (FL)
Jenny Kitchings (SC)
Lilia Oquendo-Solis (PR)
Chris Prine (TX) – EC
Liaison

CALL FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS

Nominations for the **J.O. Sentell Award** and the **Morgan Thomas Award** are being sought by the 2021-2022 Awards Committee. These awards will be presented at the 2022 NCACC Annual Conference in Williamsburg, Virginia. If we are unable to meet together in person, they will be announced in whatever virtual forum we find ourselves.

James Oscar Sentell, Jr., was a founding member and the first president of the NCACC. The **J.O. Sentell Award** is given to a NCACC member who has contributed substantially to the objectives of the conference by improving skill and knowledge through conferences, seminars, or other educational programs; promoting and improving the contribution of appellate court clerk offices within the areas of effective court administration; and the collection and dissemination of information and ideas concerning the operation and improvement of the offices of appellate court clerks (see Article II of the Bylaws). Last year’s recipient of the **J.O. Sentell Award** was Daniel E. Shearouse, retired Clerk of the Supreme Court of South Carolina.

The **Morgan Thomas Award** is given in recognition of an individual who is not a member of the NCACC but who has made significant contributions to professionalism and supports the goals of the NCACC as a body and of its member individually. The most recent recipient of the **Morgan Thomas Award** was Nikiesha Cosby of the National Center for State Courts.

Please send nominations to Jenny Abbott Kitchings (jkitchings@sccourts.org) via email by March 14, 2022. Awards Committee Members: Jenny Abbott Kitchings (Chair); Ed Hosken (VA); Deana Williamson (TX); Kevin Lane (CA); Susan Clary (KY); and Christie Roeder (NC).

AWARDS NOMINATION FORM

J.O. SENTELL AWARD

I nominate: _____

Reasons:

MORGAN THOMAS AWARD

I nominate: _____

Reasons:

Past recipients of the **J.O. Sentell Award:**

<u>Recipient</u>	<u>Court</u>	<u>Year/Conference</u>
J. O. Sentell	Alabama Supreme Court	1979, Monterey CA
Ronald L. Dzierbicki	Michigan Court of Appeals	1980, Orlando FL
Wilfried J. Kramer	California COA – Third District	1981, Jackson Hole WY
Morgan Thomas	Georgia Court of Appeals	1982, Boston MA
Lewis C. Carter	Kansas Supreme Court & Court of Appeals	1983, New Orleans LA
Mary Ann Hopkins-Young	Arizona Supreme Court	1984, Seattle WA
Alexander L. Stevas	U.S. Supreme Court	1985, Lexington KY
Luella Dunn	North Dakota Supreme Court/COA	1986, Austin TX
Jean M. Kennett	Massachusetts Supreme Court	1987, Hartford CT
John C. Scott	Kentucky Court of Appeals	1988, Helena MT
Joline B. Williams	Georgia Supreme Court	1989, Charleston SC
Frans J. Labranche	Louisiana Supreme Court	1990, Tucson AZ
Gloria J. Engel	South Dakota Supreme Court	1991, St. Louis MO
Reba Mims	South Carolina Court of Appeals	1992, Washington DC
Stephen W. Townsend	New Jersey Supreme Court	1993, Nashville TN
Peggy Stevens McGraw	Missouri Court of Appeals	1994, San Diego CA
Kevin A. Swanson	California COA – Fifth District	1995, San Antonio TX
Glen D. Clark	Arizona COA – Division One	1996, Des Moines IA
William S. Fulton, Jr.	US Army Court of Criminal Appeals	1997, Point Clear AL
Ella M. Williams	Michigan Court of Appeals	1998, Portland OR
Joyce A. Goldsmith	Arizona COA – Division Two	1999, Portsmouth NH
John H. Wilkerson, Jr.	Alabama Court of Civil Appeals	2000, Savannah GA
R. Keith Richardson	Iowa Supreme Court and COA	2001, Newport Beach CA
Marilyn R. Graves	Wisconsin Supreme Court/COA	2002, Minneapolis MN
David G. Beach	Virginia Supreme Court	2003, Asheville NC
Penny L. Miller	North Dakota Supreme Court	2004, Anchorage AK
Kenneth J. Deblanc	Louisiana COA – Third Circuit	2005, Key West FL
Joseph A. Lane	California COA – Second Division	2006, Fort Worth TX
Sherie M. Welch	Georgia Supreme Court	2007, New Orleans LA
Leslie D. Gradet	Maryland Court of Special Appeals	2008, Pittsburgh PA
Diana Pratt-Wyatt	Louisiana COA – Second Circuit	2009, Sacramento CA
Christie Cameron	North Carolina Supreme Court	2010, Whitefish MT
Ed Smith	Montana Supreme Court	2011, Annapolis MD
Tom Hall	Florida Supreme Court	2012, Charleston SC
William K. Suter	U.S. Supreme Court	2013, Seattle WA
Steven F. Lancaster	Court of Appeals of Indiana	2014, Richmond VA
Marilyn May	Alaska Appellate Courts	2015, Snowbird UT
Bill DeCicco	U.S. Court of Appeals Armed Forces	2016, Denver CO
Rory Perry	West Virginia Supreme Court	2017, Lake Tahoe NV
Deena Fawcett	California COA – Third District	2018, San Diego CA
Sherry Williamson	Texas Eleventh Court of Appeals	2019, Lexington KY
Susan Clary	Kentucky Supreme Court	2020, ZOOM(Point Clear AL)
Daniel E. Shearouse	South Carolina Supreme Court	2021, ZOOM (Portland, OR)

Past recipients of the **Morgan Thomas Award:**

<u>Recipient</u>	<u>Association</u>	<u>Year/Conference</u>
Charles D. Nelson	West Publishing Company	1991, St. Louis MO
Justice James Duke Cameron Justice Harry A. Spencer Justice William A. Grimes	(AZ) retired (NE) retired (NH) retired	1992, Washington, DC
Sandra M. Roos	American Bar Association	1995, San Antonio TX
Jane Sanchez Lew Tippett	Bureau of National Affairs Lexis Nexis	1996, Des Moines IA
Michael J. Whetson	West Publishing Company	1997, Point Clear AL
Dwight D. Opperman	West Publishing Company Dwight D. Opperman Foundation	2003, Asheville NC
Brenda Stephens	Louisiana Court of Appeal, Second Circuit	2005, Key West FL
Linda Watson	Louisiana Court of Appeal, Third Circuit	2007, New Orleans LA
Lisa Hall		2011, Annapolis MD
Tom Leighton Nikki Dougherty	Thompson Reuters Lexis Nexis	2012, Charleston SC 2012, Charleston SC
Brenda Williams	National Center for State Courts	2014, Richmond VA
Karyn Bowie	Bloomberg BNA	2016, Denver CO
Shauna Strickland	National Center for State Courts	2017, Lake Tahoe NV
Nikiesha Cosby	National Center for State Courts	2021, ZOOM (Portland, OR)

Welcome New Members!

Introduced by Doug Shima (KS)

Alabama - Illinois - Kentucky - Louisiana - Washington



Nathan Wilson was appointed as the Clerk of the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals effective January 1, 2022. He grew up in Mobile, Alabama. He graduated from Birmingham-Southern College in 2000 with a B.A. in History and earned a J.D. from the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law in 2003. Nathan has served in various roles in the Alabama judicial system, including law clerk for Hon. Tennant M. Smallwood, Jr., in Birmingham; staff attorney at the Alabama Administrative Office of Courts; senior staff attorney for Hon. Scott Donaldson of the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals; the Assistant Administrative Director of Courts and Legal Director of the Alabama Administrative Office of Courts; and senior staff attorney for Hon. Sarah H. Stewart of the Supreme Court of Alabama. Nathan resides in Montgomery with his wife, Anna, and their two children. FUN FACTS ABOUT NATHAN: His office is next to Scott Mitchell; he recently learned “it is possible for the University of Alabama to lose to the University of Georgia in football”; can’t live without coffee; could survive on Fettuccini Alfredo; and loves coaching his kids’ sporting teams.



Cynthia A. Grant was appointed as the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Illinois effective December 1, 2021. Previously, Cindy served as Assistant Clerk in the Clerk’s Office since 2013. She previously served four years as assistant legal counsel for the Illinois Secretary of State’s office and also spent two years on the staff of the Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives. Cindy earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Journalism from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. She earned her *Juris Doctor* from the University of Illinois Chicago School of Law.

New Members, continued



Kate Rickly Morgan became clerk of the Kentucky Court of Appeals on August 02, 2021. Kate is the second woman to serve as clerk of the Court of Appeals since the Judicial Article was enacted in 1975 and created Kentucky's modern court system. She has dedicated her career to public service, which has given her broad experience in Kentucky's trial and appellate courts. Kate started with the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board prosecuting educator misconduct. In 2010, Kate moved to the Court of Appeals, where she served as an appellate staff attorney for Judge Glenn E. Acree from 2010 to 2018. Starting in 2018, Kate served as a regional staff attorney for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, prosecuting termination of parental rights cases and achieving permanency for Kentucky's most vulnerable citizens – its children. Kate earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Eastern Kentucky University in 2006. She also graduated summa cum laude from Salmon P. Chase College of Law in 2009. Kate was ranked third in her law school class, served as Editor-in-Chief of the Northern Kentucky Law Review, and was a member of the inaugural Chase Arbitration Team, winning the regional championship and earning a bid to the national arbitration competition. She volunteered with the Franklin County Citizens Foster Care Review Board as a member from 2013 to 2018. **FUN FACTS ABOUT KATE:** She too wishes she had RBG as a mentor; believes hard work pays off in the journey despite the outcome; lived in Ukraine for 2 months in 2014; loves Crossfit; wants to swim with dolphins, go to the Superbowl, and travel; would eat chocolate cake every day; and loves to cook with her favorite cast iron skillet. (P.S. I think Kate and Sarah Pendelton (WA) are kindred spirits, they just don't know it yet.)

New Members, continued.



Veronica O. Koclanes was appointed Clerk of Court for the Louisiana Supreme Court on May 27, 2021. Veronica became the first female Clerk of Court in the Louisiana Supreme Court's 208-year history. A native of New Orleans, born and raised in a family of thirteen children. Married to a Denver native, with two daughters. Attended Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, where she was actively engaged in student government and academic organizations. Attended Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert School of Law. Worked at the Louisiana State Senate Office of the President for ten years. Following a one-year clerkship with the Louisiana Supreme Court, practiced as a commercial litigator with the New Orleans law firm of Milling, Benson, Woodward, & Hillyer for several years. Returned to the Louisiana Supreme Court, working as a staff attorney specialized in the area of attorney and judicial discipline and, subsequently, serving as a law clerk to six justices until her appointment as Clerk of Court.



Sarah Pendleton began her role as the Deputy Clerk at the Washington State Supreme Court in July 2021. Prior to coming to the Court, she served as the Chief of Contracts and Legal Services at the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). Sarah began her career in state service as an IT Contracts Manager at DSHS in 2015 and later moved into an IT Contracts Counsel position in 2016. Sarah interned at the UN International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia as a member of the Francophone Chambers working on finalizing the decision on the Prlic case. Sarah graduated from the University of Washington with a B.A. in international studies with a focus on European studies, and she received her J.D. from Seattle University School of Law. She also holds a certificate of completion in International Law from L'Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po) and completed a Master II certification program at the L'Universite Paris Ouest Nanterre (Paris X), both in Paris, France. FUN FACTS ABOUT SARAH: Would have RBG as a mentor if she could; she recently learned a lot about the federal census and redistricting; loves to cook; wants to visit every state in the U.S.; wants to learn to crochet; and like all of us can't live without her cellphone.

Tell us about your Courthouse...

This is a new feature—we want to learn about each other’s workplaces—what you love and what you love to hate.

If you want to tell us about your courthouse, please reach out to a member of the Communications Committee.

This edition is courtesy of *Scott Mitchell (AL)* and features the:

Alabama’s Heflin-Torbert Judicial Building



Opened to the public in 1993, the seven-story, 339,682 square-foot Heflin-Torbert Judicial Building (“HTJB”) brought about a new day for both the Alabama Judiciary and the downtown of Alabama’s capital city. The previous judicial building was a 38,000 square-foot former Scottish Rite Temple. Quarters were so cramped that an employee’s desk was located on a staircase landing and a copier was located in a women’s restroom. The new building brought the three appellate courts, the State Law Library, and the Administrative Office of Courts under one roof for the first time. The decision to build the HTJB on historic Dexter Avenue – a street that witnessed both the inauguration of the Confederate president as well as the culmination of the Selma-to-Montgomery March– ushered in an era of redevelopment for downtown Montgomery.

Described as a contemporary interpretation of neoclassical architecture, the HTJB is clad in Indiana limestone and encompasses an entire city block. Upon entering the HTJB, visitors pass through a glass foyer and into a three-story rotunda that is surrounded by eight 34-foot-tall columns made of marble quarried from the same quarries in Carrara, Italy, from which Michelangelo worked. The rotunda floor is comprised of over 300 pieces of marble and shaped like an ancient mariner’s compass. Even though most of the interior spaces of the United States Supreme Court is lined with Alabama marble, only a small area at the center of the HTJB’s rotunda floor contains Alabama marble. Due to a fold in the quarry in Sylacauga, insufficient monument-grade Alabama marble was available when the HTJB was built. The lobby level also houses the State Law Library, the Clerk’s offices for the Court of Criminal Appeals and Court of Civil Appeals, and classrooms for the Alabama Judicial College. A mezzanine level also contains a large room used for Judicial College instruction and other large judicial functions.

The second floor houses the courtrooms and chambers for the Court of Criminal Appeals and Court of Civil Appeals. The courtrooms are mirror images and face each other across the upper rotunda. The semicircular-shaped courtrooms' paneling and furnishings are Honduran mahogany, and each courtroom has seating for 32 spectators. Although each of the intermediate appellate courts have 5 judges, the HTJB was constructed with expansion of the courts in mind and each court has 11 chambers available for use.



The Alabama Supreme Court is housed on the building's third floor. Its courtroom is housed beneath the building's dome and is patterned after the University of Virginia's Rotunda designed by Thomas Jefferson. The curved 40-foot mahogany bench contains the Court's seal that was hand carved by a former Navy pilot who was a POW in Vietnam for over seven years. The chamber's wool carpet was custom designed by the building's architect and took 3 years to be woven by the Edward Fields firm in New York City. The courtroom's lectern is at its center and is placed so that it is at the center of an imaginary 100-foot diameter sphere reaching from the floor of the rotunda to the dome's oculus. Symbolically, this places counsel at the most important place in the judicial process.



The building's ground floor contains quarters for the Administrative Office of Courts as well as the computer operations for the State's Judiciary.

Since its construction 28 years ago, several delegations from other appellate courts have visited the Heflin-Torbert Judicial Building seeking inspiration as they plan their new buildings. Come visit Montgomery to take in its many historical offerings, and while you are here stop by and visit our judicial building.

Fall 2021 Executive Committee Meeting Photos

Williamsburg VA / National Center for State Courts



Larry Royster (MI), Greg Hilton, (MD), Amy Woods (AZ), Chris Prine (TX), Jim Hivner (TN), Claudia Jenks (TX)



Hybrid in-person / Zoom meeting at the NCSC



Deena Williamson (TX), Larry Royster (MI), Amy Funderburk (NC), Greg Hilton (MD), Amy Woods (AZ), Chris Prine (TX), Scott Mitchell (AL), Claudia Jenks (TX)

Member Remembrance: Joseph Lane

Contributed by *Kevin Lane (CA)*

On October 18, 2021, our friend and colleague, Joseph Lane, passed away peacefully surrounded by his family. Joseph was a proud servant of the People of California and its courts, having served the Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, for 39 years and retiring in 2018 as Clerk of Court, a position he held for over 26 years. More so, he was an integral part of our NCACC family, volunteering on countless committees, serving as our president from 1998 - 1999, and hosting the 2001 NCACC Conference in Newport Beach. Joseph was often the one behind the scenes welcoming new members and encouraging them to work on committees and actively investing in the future leadership of the conference. For many of us, we wouldn't have been so involved had it not been for his encouragement. This organization was so much more to him than a work function; it was about family. At the conference each year, his son Peter and daughter Allison were by his side and they became as much a part of the organization as the members. He was also seen playing in each golf tournament, but I think he enjoyed awarding the Warthog Award to a lucky recipient in the hospitality suite even more as this award celebrates the spirit of camaraderie and sportsmanship, which are traits Joseph cherished. He lived his life with passion: passion for work, passion for fun, and passion for our organization. So, next time you see someone in a Hawaiian shirt grasping a much-needed cup of coffee, think fondly of Joe. He will be truly missed by all those he leaves behind.



Joseph Lane