Executive Director – Suzanne Duffey

It is almost unbelievable that we are already in July, but the year has been great so far.

In just the last couple of months, we have held two fantastic mentorship program luncheons, we hosted the Marina May Social and the Women’s Section Summer Social, and we have provided an additional four hours of free CLE presentations—with another five free CLE hours planned for the next three months. Thank you to all our sponsors and to everyone who attended these MCBA events. Please be on the lookout for more exciting opportunities coming your way!

Summer is officially upon us and while everyone has been working hard, I want to encourage all our lawyers to take some time to re-energize this summer. Step away and take time off. Enjoy a trip somewhere. Spend time with your friends and loved ones.

It is no secret that the legal profession can be devastating to our physical and mental health if we do not take care of ourselves—which includes taking time off.
The American Psychological Association ("APA") reported that a study of 800 attorneys revealed that lawyers taking a vacation actually reduced depression and lowered their stress at work. The APA concluded that there are four major reasons for attorneys to take time off from work: life satisfaction, physical improvements, mental health benefits, and improved productivity.

Many studies, including the Harvard Business Review, have shown that our performance is reduced when attorneys work for long periods with no time off, and taking vacation improved overall productivity and mental health.

While I know there is a privilege in being able to take a vacation, I hope that we are all able to find some little ways this summer to unplug, relax, and step away to re-energize. Our bodies deserve it, our minds need it, and our practice will be better served by it.

I hope that everyone has a safe and enjoyable summer, and as always, if you need anything from me or any member of our board, please just pick up the phone and call us. We are here to serve.

Sincerely,

Ali Hawthorne
President of the
Montgomery County Bar Association
Greetings Young Lawyers!

I want to personally thank all river region attorneys for taking a few hours out of your busy schedules to attend this year’s MARINA MAY. We calculated around one hundred individuals who were able to make an appearance for some great food and even better live music which was provided by THE KEPt.

Additionally, I want to thank our sponsors for making this event a tremendous success. Without their support, we simply wouldn’t be able to host the event that the Young Lawyer Section has come to love.

**Alabama Court Reporting**
Rushton, Stakely, Johnston & Garrett, P.A.
Gilpin Givhan, P.C.

Beasley Allen Law Firm

Ball, Ball, Matthews & Novak, P.A.
Bradley Arant Boult Cummings, LLP
Hawthorne, Atchison & Riddle, LLC
Hill, Hill, Carter, Franco, Cole & Black, P.C.
Capell & Howard, P.C.
Vickers & White, PLLC

Speaking of events that we cherish, please go ahead and mark your calendars for our Annual Charity Clay Shoot. This event is scheduled for Friday, September 29, 2023, and will once again be held at Lower Wetumpka Shotgun Club. Please be on the lookout for future emails regarding the event.

As a reminder, please e-mail me or contact any of our YLS Board Members if you know of any Young Lawyers in the River Region who would like to get involved with our section.

Happy Lawyering,

Landon Eley,
President of the MCBA
Young Lawyers Section
YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION EVENTS

MCBA Board of Directors Members with Marina May Sponsor Alabama Court Reporting

(L to R): Johnna Ingalls, Catie Malone, Matthew Ward, Claire Veal, Effie Hawthorne (Secretary-Treasurer), Britney McComb (ACR Marketing Director), Tim Gallagher (Immediate-Past President), Landon Eley (YLS President), Lori Warren (ACR President & CEO)
The Women’s Section hosted a social with Melissa Warnke Candles in May for our members. We learned to make candles and had a great time socializing with our members. Thank you to Veritext Legal Solutions for sponsoring this event!

If you would like to join the Women’s Section, please fill out a membership application and invoice and please e-mail it to us. You can also pay your dues online or by check. If you choose to pay by check, please make your check out to ”MCBA Women’s Section” and mail it along with your membership application and invoice to:

MCBA Women’s Section
Montgomery County Bar Association
Post Office Box 72
Montgomery, Alabama 36101-0072

Best Regards,

Erika McKay,
President of the MCBA
Women’s Section
WOMEN’S SECTION
EVENTS
MENTORING PROGRAM UPDATE

Thank you to District Court Judge Tiffany McCord for hosting the MCBA Mentoring Program Meeting on June 20, 2023.
Administrative:

- President Vance informed the Board that the Annual License Fee renewal will be an action item at the July meeting. He noted that financial projections should support the continued temporary reduced license rate of $300 for occupational license and $150 for special membership during FY 2024.
- A proposal to amend Rule 9 of the Client Security Fund was approved as presented at the previous Board Meeting. The amendment will allow an increase in the amounts payable to reflect inflation.
- Award nominations from various committees and sections were approved by the Board and will be presented at the Alabama State Bar Annual Meeting as follows:
  - Tony McLain Award – Maebeth Porter and Cole Portis
  - Bill Scruggs Award – Halron Turner
  - Judicial Award of Merit – Judge Eddie Hardaway, Jr.
  - Maud McLure Kelly Award – Celia Collins
  - Susan Bevill Livingston Award – Leslie Barineau
  - Jeanne Marie Leslie Award – Liz Young and Hugh Nickson
- The next meeting of the Alabama State Bar Board of Bar Commissioners will be July 12, 2023, at 1:30 p.m. at the Grand Hotel during the Annual Meeting.

Membership News:

- This year’s Legal Food Frenzy generated $71,679.29 to support Alabama’s food banks, which equates to nearly 350,000 meals for our food insecure in Alabama.
- Alabama State Bar leaders joined Fred Gray, Sr. and his family to officially break ground on the Fred Gray Courtyard adjacent to the Alabama State Bar building.
- Nearly 100 attorneys volunteered for Law Day. Thank you to everyone who took time out their day to make presentations to local schools!

Election Results and Appointments:

- Congratulations to our new and reelected bar commissioners, who will being their term in July!
  - 8th Judicial Circuit: David W. Langston
  - 10th Judicial Circuit, Place 4: S. Freddy Rubio
  - 10th Judicial Circuit, Place 7: Kitty Rogers Brown
  - 10th Judicial Circuit, Bessemer: Leslie Shifman Moore
  - 11th Judicial Circuit: Ralph E. Holt
  - 13th Judicial Circuit, Place 1: R. Edwin Lamberth
  - 13th Judicial Circuit, Place 5: Suntrease Williams-Maynard
  - 15th Judicial Circuit, Place 5: Felicia A. Long
  - 17th Judicial Circuit: J. Hunter Compton, Jr.
  - 18th Judicial Circuit: Clay R. Carr
  - 19th Judicial Circuit: J. Pratt Austin-Trucks
  - 21st Judicial Circuit: J. Kirkman Garrett
  - 22nd Judicial Circuit: Manish H. Patel
  - 23rd Judicial Circuit, Place 1: Mark Debro
  - 28th Judicial Circuit, Place 2: Lang Floyd
  - 30th Judicial Circuit: John W. Rea
  - 31st Judicial Circuit: D. Edgar Black
  - 33rd Judicial Circuit: Lee F. Knowles
  - 34th Judicial Circuit: Jeffrey L. Bowling
  - 35th Judicial Circuit: William Robert McMillan
  - 40th Judicial Circuit: Vacant
  - 41st Judicial Circuit: William Jefferson Sherrer

- The Board approved the following as Bar Commissioners upon nomination from the local circuit:
  - Lynn Perry - 28th Judicial Circuit, Place 3
  - Doug Smith - 18th Judicial Circuit, Place 3
  - Jerome Thompson - 36th Judicial Circuit
  - John Stamps was approved for a third term as At-Large Bar Commissioner, Place 9.
  - Lisha Graham was approved as a new At-Large Bar Commissioner, Place 6.
ADMINISTRATIVE

Commissioner Jeff Bowling gave an invocation and led the Board in the pledge of allegiance. President Gibson Vance called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Roll call was taken with a quorum being present followed by approval of the meeting agenda and the minutes of the March 10, 2023, Board Meeting. The Board unanimously approved the agenda and the minutes.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

President Vance recognized special guests including Associate Justice Will Sellers, Associate, Associate Justice Greg Cook, Supreme Court Clerk Megan Rhodebeck, and Past-Presidents Sam Rumore and Boots Gale.

PUBLIC REPRIMANDS

Mobile attorney Darryl Tyrone Blackmon was ordered to receive a public reprimand with general publication on November 4, 2022, by the Disciplinary Commission of the Alabama State Bar, for violating Rules 1.1 [Competence], 1.3 [Diligence] and 1.4 [Communication], Alabama Rules of Professional Conduct. On July 2, 2021, Blackmon was retained by clients to file for custody/guardianship of their 16-year-old granddaughter. The clients paid Blackmon $875 on July 2, 2021. The child had been residing with her grandparents since February 2020. The child has a medical condition associated with epilepsy and the grandparents needed a court order permitting them to seek and obtain medical care on her behalf as well as educational decisions. The child's father abandoned the child with the grandparents. After Blackmon was retained, the grandparents had difficulty communicating with him. Blackmon failed to return calls, emails, text messages and his voicemail was continuously full. Blackmon failed to appear in court on September 25, 2021, and did not answer calls from the grandparents, the GAL nor the court. In court, there were no records of service on the child's mother. Following the missed court appearance and the continued difficulty reaching Blackmon, the grandparents terminated him. The grandparents learned the case was misfiled in probate court, and they incurred additional expenses and delay of time to file in the appropriate juvenile court. The grandparents requested a refund of $875.

Meridian, Mississippi attorney, Joseph Anthony Denson, who was also licensed in Alabama, was issued a public reprimand with general publication on May 5, 2023, as ordered by the Disciplinary Commission of the Alabama State Bar, for violating Rules 1.3 [Diligence], 1.4 [Communication], 1.16(d) [Declining or
Terminating Representation], 8.4(g) [Misconduct], Alabama Rules of Professional Conduct. In 2016, Denson was retained to represent a client and his trucking company in a breach of contract. The client paid Denson $10,000 at the outset of the representation. Denson failed to file a response to the Motion for Summary Judgment and failed to notify the client of the dismissal of his lawsuit.

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

President Vance provided an update on the Drive for Five visits. He shared photos and highlights of visits to Jackson, Dekalb, Cherokee, Calhoun, Cleburne, Marshall, Escambia, Lee, Coosa and Clay counties. A map that included all circuits was shared with the board showing how the work of the staff, bar leadership, and the local commissioners has provided the opportunity for the Alabama State Bar to visit all 41 circuits during this bar year. He announced that final visits will take place on May 12th, 16th, and 24th. He brought special attention to the work of the Jackson County Bar, Commissioner Deb Dunsmore, and Circuit Judge John Graham, by sharing about the experience of attending Drug Court and spending time with the Judge, the local lawyers and the Drug Court participants. He went on to share that we had a delicious BBQ lunch on the lawn, worked in the Hope Garden, and painted with Sonya Clemons, aka the “Artlady”.

President Vance also shared photos and updates from recent activities that included Lawyers in the Classroom, the Legal Food Frenzy, and the Fred Gray Courtyard groundbreaking.

**SECRETARY/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Secretary/Executive Director Terri Lovell recognized the bar staff, the bar leadership, and the chairs of the Bylaws and Strategic Planning Task Forces for their work to steadily improve our governance and internal operations. She also thanked the justices for their guidance and support through some of the internal challenges.

Lovell shared information about the Bar Exam results that were released on April 21st. She reminded the board to stay informed and engaged on the pending changes to the bar exam. She recognized Justice Jay Mitchell for his guidance as Court liaison to the Alabama State Bar and acknowledged his attendance along with Karen Laneaux, Dan Johnson, and Dave Boyd at the National Conference for Bar Examiners.

Lovell reported that she now provides the Supreme Court with a monthly memorandum prior to their monthly general conference. She stated that it generated an opportunity to receive valuable feedback on issues of concern to the Court. She updated the Board on continued work with the Court and other agencies on financial changes. Lovell indicated that the staff is working on an annual report to be released with several other informational factsheets closer to the annual meeting.

She thanked various staff for help with elections, the Legal Food Frenzy, Lawyers in the Classroom, the Hall of Fame ceremony, and the membership database implementation. She thanked all the commissioners for helping with the Drive for Five local bar visits, and Gibson for his vision, adaptability, and endurance.
Lovell closed by sharing that new board training materials and an updated version of the President and Leaders manual will be provided at the new commissioner orientation. She reminded the board that all staff evaluations and performance evaluations for the General Counsel and Executive Director will be completed prior to the annual meeting. She encouraged the commissioners to let her know areas that need additional attention and areas where they feel they could serve most effectively and efficiently.

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

The OGC explained the need and effect of the changes to the Client Security Fund rules that was listed as an action item. The Office of General Counsel updated the Board with regards to the two letters received from Supreme Court Liaison Justice Jay Mitchell. Those letters requested advance notice of Disciplinary Commission and Disciplinary Board recommendations and discussed the need for additional information related to the impact of the proposed advertising rule changes on solo and small firm practitioners. The OGC further updated the Board on preliminary discussions with the Secretary of State’s office regarding a proposal to encourage more attorneys to become poll workers.

ASB FINANCIAL REPORT

For the 2nd quarter of the fiscal year, ASB revenues remained ahead of last year’s revenues by nearly 1%. The revenue increase was prevalent in the license and special membership fee lines; however, slowed by the intermittent decreases seen in bar exam and pro hac vice revenues for the year.

ASB spending increased by 9% over the previous year, as mainly anticipated by rising personnel costs this year with the latest cost-of-living adjustment and staff additions. Travel has resumed to pre-pandemic levels with conducting the in-person BBC meetings and active staff travel. Supplies and materials also increased over the year due to printing, credit card fees, and conference registration fees associated with travel. There was, however, a sizable decrease in professional services costs due to procurement delays and less paid legal fees year-to-date.

ASB investment balances increased in total by 7.6% over the fiscal year as the market began to stabilize but have yet to recoup the total market losses experienced over the past year.

ASB FOUNDATION FINANCIAL REPORT

Director of Finance Merinda Hall reported that the ASB Foundation revenues declined by 1% over the year due to fewer revenues generated in website banner ads.

With the unexpected building repairs due to inclement weather, HVAC equipment replacements, and the ASB membership database implementation costs this year, the ASB Foundation spending increased by nearly 44%.
Although the foundation investment balances showed gains throughout the fiscal year, they are down from last year’s balances by 3.8%. On account of the unexpected repairs and maintenance costs over the year, the ASB Foundation is expected to close its fiscal year over budget but remain in a reasonable cash position.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORT

Commissioner Mark Debro reported on the membership database implementation progress and shared an overview of activities in the IT department.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE

Legislative Counsel Suzi Huffaker informed the Board that there are 18 days left in the legislative session. She reminded the Board of the Alabama State Bar’s weekly legislation tracking system. She provided information regarding the new judicial position legislation, the guardian ad litem compensation legislation, and local court costs bills.

ANNUAL LICENSE FEE RENEWAL

President Vance informed the Board that the Annual License Fee renewal will be an action item at the July meeting. He noted that financial projections should support the continued temporary reduced license rate of $300 for occupational license and $150 for special membership during FY 2024.

ABA HOUSE OF DELEGATE APPOINTMENT

President Vance informed the Board that the term of Leslie Barineau is expiring on the ABA House of Delegates. He reported to the Board that Mrs. Barineau has expressed an interest to continue serving. The appointment will move to an action item at the next meeting of the board.

PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN

Commissioner Tom Perry, Co-chair of the Long-Range Strategic Planning Task Force, informed the Board that the Strategic Plan and a task force report was provided in the meeting materials. Mr. Perry thanked the members of the task force, and shared insights from the work that had been completed. Following an opportunity for discussion, Commissioner Perry concluded by recommending that the board adopt the plan at the July meeting.

BYLAWS TASK FORCE

Commissioner Pat Sefton, Co-Chair of the Bylaws Task Force, advised the Board that the Bylaws and a task force report was circulated in the meeting materials and in a separate email prior to the meeting. Following
an opportunity for discussion, Commissioner Sefton recommended that the Bylaws be approved at the July meeting.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**AT-LARGE COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDATIONS – PLACE 6 AND PLACE 9**

President Vance stated that a list of all applicants for at-large commissioner seats had been included in the meeting materials. He informed the Board that an at-large commissioner must be chosen for At-Large, Place 6 and Place 9. John Stamps was approved for a third term as At-Large Bar Commissioner, Place 9. Lisha Graham was approved as a new At-Large Bar Commissioner, Place 6.

**APPOINTMENT OF VACANT BAR COMMISSION SEATS**

The Board approved the following as Bar Commissioner upon nomination from the local circuit and on motions from the Board:

- 28th Judicial Circuit, Place 3, Baldwin County – Lynn Perry
- 18th Judicial Circuit, Place 3, Shelby County – Doug Smith
- 36th Judicial Circuit, Lawrence County - Jerome Thompson

**APPROVAL OF AWARDS**

Award nominations from various committees and sections were approved by the Board and will be presented at the Alabama State Bar Annual Meeting as follows:

- Tony McLain Award – Maebeth Porter and Cole Portis
- Bill Scruggs Award – Halron Turner
- Judicial Award of Merit – Judge Eddie Hardaway, Jr.
- Maud McLure Kelly Award – Celia Collins
- Susan Bevill Livingston Award – Leslie Barineau
- Jeanne Marie Leslie Award – Liz Young and Hugh Nickson

**PROPOSED CLIENT SECURITY FUND RULES CHANGES.**

A proposal to amend Rule 9 of the Client Security Fund was approved as presented at the previous Board Meeting. The amendment will allow an increase in the amounts payable to reflect inflation.

**THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:13 A.M.** The next meeting of the Alabama State Bar Board of Bar Commissioners will be July 12, 2023, at 1:30 p.m. at the Grand Hotel during the Annual Meeting.

alabar.org
The Beasley Allen Law Firm and the Montgomery County Bar Association Present

A Beginner's Guide to Complex Litigation

FREE FOR MCBA MEMBERS - $25 FOR NONMEMBERS

Ryan Duplechin
Principal
Medical Devices

Rachel Minder
Principal
Business Litigation

Thursday, August 8, 2023  12:00 - 1:00

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!
Next time you see text that looks like this—MCBA’s webpage—try clicking on it. These are interactive hyperlinks within each issue of The Docket!

Hyperlinks to webpages will automatically open your internet browser to that webpage, and hyperlinks to e-mails will open a new e-mail to the appropriate person with an appropriate subject line.

Additionally, some images and tables are also interactive! Clicking on flyers with registration links (like the ones above) will take you directly to the appropriate event registration webpage, and the sections of each issue listed in the “In This Issue” table on page 2 will take you to the first page of that section. Try clicking on the two hyperlinks here to try it out yourself!
PRACTICE TIPS FOR FIRST-YEAR LAWYERS

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023
12:00 - 1:00
CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!

FREE for MCBA Members - $25 for Nonmembers

Alex Alred
Hawthorne, Atchison, & Riddle, LLC

Gavin King
The Beasley Allen Law Firm
WILLS FOR HEROES

How You Can Help Our First Responders

Tuesday, September 12, 2023
Noon - 1:00
Click here to register!
ANNOUNCEMENTS

MCBA Announces its New Online Career Center

MCBA is proud to announce its new Career Center—the premier resource to connect local career opportunities with highly qualified legal talent. The Career Center is designed to provide you with a better overall experience through a modern design and an intuitive interface. You will be able to access the Career Center through any device of your choice—smartphone, tablet, or PC. Click here to visit the Career Center today!

The newly-designed MCBA Career Center will allow you to:

Manage Your Career:

• POST multiple resumes and cover letters or choose an anonymous career profile that leads employers to you
• SEARCH and apply to hundreds of fresh jobs on the spot with robust filters
• SET UP efficient job alerts to deliver the latest jobs right to your inbox
• ASK the experts advice, get resume writing tips, utilize career assessment test services, and more

Recruit for Open Positions:

• EMAIL your job directly to job seeking professionals
• PLACE your job in front of our highly qualified members
• SEARCH our resume database of qualified candidates
• MANAGE jobs and applicant activity right on our site
• LIMIT applicants only to those who are qualified
• FILL your jobs more quickly with great talent

We are excited to offer this new resource and hope the MCBA Career Center will make a significant difference for our members as they navigate their career paths. Thank you for your ongoing support!
Balch Donates Historic Desk to Montgomery County

The firm of Balch & Bingham LLP recently donated a historic desk to be placed in the Montgomery County Courthouse. The desk is on display on the first floor of the Phelps-Price Justice Center across from the Jury Assembly Area.

The desk was built in Montgomery around 1840, and served as the first permanent Circuit Judge’s Bench in the first permanent Courthouse for Montgomery County. The courthouse was located on Court Square where the building at 1 Court Square is now located.

The desk was moved to the next Montgomery County Courthouse and used as a judge’s bench until 1854. It was removed from the Courthouse in 1909 and discarded by the County.

Judge Walter B. Jones obtained the desk in 1920. It served as his personal desk until 1962. Prior to his death, it was given to Circuit Judge Richard P. Emmett. It served as a judge’s bench for Judge Emmett until his retirement in 1977.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRADLEY RECEIVES ALABAMA STATE BAR PRO BONO AWARD

BRADLEY ARANT BOULT CUMMINGS LLP is pleased to announce the firm’s Montgomery office has received the 2023 ALABAMA STATE BAR PRO BONO AWARD IN THE LAW FIRM/GROUP CATEGORY. The award was presented at the Alabama State Bar Annual Meeting on July 15.

The Alabama State Bar’s annual Pro Bono Awards recognize the outstanding pro bono efforts of attorneys, mediators, public servants, law firms, and law students in the state. Honorees are recognized for a proven commitment to the delivery of quality legal services to the poor and to providing equal access to legal services. Honorees are evaluated on criteria that includes the total number of pro bono hours and complexity of cases handled, the impact of the work and benefit for the recipients, the specific expertise provided or need satisfied, and the successful recruitment of other attorneys for pro bono representation.

“We are very proud to have received this special honor. Our attorneys have devoted a significant amount of time and effort to help ensure access to justice for those in need throughout Montgomery,” said Tiffany M. Graves, Bradley’s Pro Bono Counsel.

Last year, the office received the Gold Medallion Firm Award from the Montgomery Volunteer Lawyers Program for the outstanding contributions of Bradley attorneys participating in legal programs. Attorneys in Bradley’s Montgomery office have served as president of the Montgomery Symphony Association, on the Alabama Children’s Hospital Committee for the Future, on the Montgomery Area Arts Council, and taken active roles participating in legal clinics and many other civic and charitable endeavors.

Bradley’s Pro Bono program helps address the unmet legal needs of indigent individuals and charitable organizations. Attorneys from across the firm’s offices devote a significant amount of time each year to pro bono work, representing individuals in matters ranging from death penalty and human rights cases to intellectual property work for low-income inventors, artists and entertainers.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

MCBA AND MVLP MEMBERS RECEIVE ALABAMA STATE BAR PRO BONO AWARDS

Three MCBA and MVLP members received pro bono awards from the Alabama State Bar.

Tara Rose, a volunteer attorney with MVLP from Rose Family Law, received the Albert Vreeland Award for most outstanding pro bono attorney in the State. Rose also received the Tom Methvin Volunteer Lawyer of the Year Award from MCBA earlier this year.

Kelly F. McTear, Clinical Associate Professor of Law and Director of Public Interest Programs at Thomas Goode Jones School of Law, received the Public Interest Attorney Award.

Anna M. Spidle, currently with the MVLP after recently graduating from Thomas Goode Jones School of Law, received the Law Student Award.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

GILPIN GIVHAN WELCOMES WISDOM TO FIRM

Gilpin Givhan, P.C., is pleased to announce that David B. Wisdom, Jr., has joined the firm, where he will focus his practice in the areas of Corporate and Securities, Commercial Real Estate and Economic Development. He received his J.D. from Samford University’s Cumberland School of Law and his B.S. in Business Administration from Auburn University.

JONES SCHOOL OF LAW HIRING INFORMATION FOR GRADUATES & STUDENTS

Graduates and students of Thomas Goode Jones School of Law are available for Alabama lawyers to interview for any open associate or clerkship positions.

For more information, contact Bryan Morgan, Director of Career Development, at (334) 386-7905 or bmorgan@faulkner.edu, or visit the Symplicity website.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jones School of Law Adds Generational & Ancestral Property (GAP) Clinic

Those at Thomas Goode Jones School of Law continue to seek justice and serve their communities through the addition of a fourth pro bono clinic that will help Alabamians legally retain the right to their land that has been in their family for generations.

Called the GAP (Generational and Ancestral Property) Clinic, this clinic is the first of its kind in the State. Its goal to assist low-income clients in filling gaps in title to their family's property to provide a pathway to financial stability and generational financial health. It will initially serve clients in Montgomery and Macon counties.

Beginning in the Fall 2023 semester, ten students with the GAP clinic will conduct property searches, counsel clients regarding ownership options, litigate or mediate, and conduct community education events on the importance of clear property ownership.

Professor Kelly McTear, Director of Jones School of Law Public Interest Programs, said a lack of clear property ownership is a widespread issue throughout the rural areas of Alabama.

“There is an astonishing amount of property in the South where the person who was deeded the land died 100 years ago and so that property legally belongs to 50 or more different heirs,” McTear explained. “Those who are paying taxes on the land cannot use it or sell it and are limited with what they can do with it because they do not actually own the property. Owning land is the best way to improve financial position, and without ownership, you cannot access the value of the property. This is one of the root causes of generational poverty in our state. Through this clinic, we hope to be able to provide clear ownership and thus provide generational financial stability for families.”

Those who are interested in acquiring the services of the free GAP clinic may call the law school at (334) 386-7915.
IN MEMORIAM

RICHARD MARLON JORDAN

Richard Marlon Jordan passed away on June 17, 2023 at age 84.

He was a 1958 graduate of Lee High School in Montgomery, and he received his undergraduate degree from the University of Alabama. He received his Juris Doctor from the University of Alabama School of Law where he was President of the law school student body and of the Bench and Bar Legal Law Society. He also served on the Law School Student Body Executive Council and was a member of Sigma Delta Kappa Legal Fraternity.

Mr. Jordan was admitted to the Alabama State Bar Association in 1964. He previously served as Montgomery Assistant Municipal Judge and was President of the Montgomery County Bar Association in 1982. He practiced law in Montgomery for almost 60 years.

FRANK CHADWICK MORRISS

Frank Chadwick Morriss passed away on May 10, 2023 at age 63.

He was a 1977 graduate of Sylacauga High School. In 1981, he received an undergraduate degree in political science from the University of Alabama. In 1984, he graduated with honors from the University of Alabama School of Law.

Mr. Morriss was admitted to the Alabama State Bar in 1984. After his bar admission he joined Rushton, Stakely, Johnston & Garrett, P.A., where he served as a partner until 2009. He then moved his practice to Covington & Burling LLP as a partner and later to the firm of Kirkland & Ellis LLP as a partner in its litigation group.
We're excited to welcome our members to the new MCBA website built from the ground up with you in mind! We are ecstatic with the results, and we think you will be, too. If you haven't already, please visit the site and log into your profile to see all the new options available to our members.

For more information, please contact Suzanne Duffey at (334) 265-4793.
ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

The Docket, the official publication of the Montgomery County Bar Association, Inc., is published six times a year.

MCBA is happy to offer its vendors and sponsors a variety of advertising opportunities that reach hundreds of attorneys and legal professionals across the Montgomery area. There is no better way to advertise or share with the legal community in Montgomery than MCBA.

MCBA ADVERTISING RATES FOR THE DOCKET

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- All advertisements are subject to approval by MCBA’s Board of Directors.
- All advertisements must be paid in advance.
- All payments for advertisements must be submitted to MCBA’s physical location.
- Please contact MCBA for any questions or additional information.

For more information, click here to visit the Advertising page on our website.