



Briefcase

AUGUST 2026 VOL. 59, NO. 8

A PUBLICATION OF THE OKLAHOMA COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

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OCBA Election Results



By Christi Chandler
OCBA Executive Director

The Oklahoma County Bar Association is pleased to announce the results of its recent elections, welcoming new members to the Board of Directors and recognizing several leadership transitions for the 2026–2027 year.



Ybarra Weedn

Monica Ybarra Weedn will move into the role of President-Elect, continuing her service on the OCBA Executive Committee and preparing to lead the Association as President in 2027–2028.



Leibrock

Fred Leibrock, who ran unopposed, has been elected Vice President of the Executive Committee. The timing is especially fitting, as Leibrock was entering his final year of service as an OCBA Board mem-

ber. His election allows him to continue serving the Association in a new leadership capacity.

Joining the OCBA Board of Directors following this year's election are Genni Ellis, Maria Gonzalez, Judge Lydia Green, Paige Masters, Judge Barbara Swinton, and Jim Webb.

We look forward to the perspectives, experience, and leadership each will bring



Ellis



Gonzalez



Green



Masters



Swinton



Webb



Massey

to the Board.

Jeff Massey has also been elected to serve as Law Library Trustee and will serve alongside Grady Conrad, who is entering his final year of service in the position.

OCBA congratulates each of our newly elected leaders and extends its appreciation

to all those who were willing to place their names on the ballot and serve their fellow members. Their involvement helps ensure a strong and engaged Association as we begin another year of service to Oklahoma County's legal community.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

What Endures – A President's Farewell

By Todd Blasdel
President

This month marks the end of my term as President of the Oklahoma County Bar Association, and I can't help but look back over the past year and reflect on all that has changed. We moved into a beautiful new home after more than 25 years in our previous offices. We continued the transition to new leadership with our wonderful Executive Director, Christi Chandler. We refreshed longstanding events while preserving the traditions that make them meaningful.

Serving as President has been one of the greatest professional honors of my career, because it has given me a front-row seat to the people who make this organization exceptional. Before serving in this role, I appreciated the OCBA for its programs and events. Today, I appreciate it for something much deeper. I have watched judges give generously of their time after full days on the bench. I have seen Board members and committee volunteers devote countless hours to projects that most members will never know. I have watched our staff of Christi, Pam, and Odyssey work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure every event, CLE, and member service reflects the pro-

fessionalism our members deserve. Those efforts rarely receive public recognition, but they are the reason this association continues to flourish.



One of the greatest joys of this year has been watching our Young Lawyers Division continue to develop the next generation of leaders. Their energy, creativity, and willingness to serve give me tremendous confidence in the future of our profession.

Leadership is not something that suddenly appears one day. Rather, it is cultivated through opportunities to volunteer, participate, and give back. The OCBA has always been a place where those opportunities exist, and I am excited to see so many young lawyers embracing them. Many thanks to outgoing YLD president Genni Ellis for her efforts and accomplishments this past year.

This year has also reinforced for me that leadership is really stewardship. None of us owns this organization. Every president inherits the work of those who came before and has the privilege of caring for it for only a short time. Our responsibility is not to remake it in our own image, but to leave

it stronger than we found it. I have been reminded often that the OCBA's greatest strength has never been any one president, board member, committee, or executive director. Its strength lies in generations of lawyers who have quietly volunteered their time, shared their wisdom, mentored younger attorneys, and believed that our profession is stronger when we invest in one another.

Serving as President has also given me a renewed appreciation for the relationships that define our legal community. Every day, lawyers advocate passionately for clients whose interests often conflict. Yet through the OCBA, we are reminded that professionalism and civility are not obstacles to effective advocacy, but rather essential to it. The friendships we build, the respect we show one another, and the willingness to serve together strengthen both our profession and the public's confidence in it.

As my term concludes, I want to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who made this year possible. Thank you to our Board of Directors, committee chairs, Young Lawyers Division, our Executive Director and dedicated staff, our sponsors, volunteers, and every member who gave their time and talents to our association. Thank you to our judiciary for your partnership, ac-

cessibility, and unwavering support of the OCBA. I am equally grateful to the leaders who came before me, especially Cody Cooper, Judge Richard Ogden, and Courtney Warmington, whose vision and commitment made my service possible, and I look forward with great confidence to those who will follow, beginning with in-coming president, Judge Anthony Bonner. One of the great strengths of the OCBA is that each generation of leaders builds upon the work of the last, ensuring that our association continues to evolve while remaining true to its core values. Finally, thank you for the privilege of allowing me to serve as your President. It has been an experience I will always treasure.

When I look back on this year, I won't remember the office move, the meetings, or even the events as much as I will remember the people. They are what endure. They are the reason this association has remained strong for more than a century, and they are the reason I know its future is bright. Buildings change. Leadership changes. New ideas emerge. But, an organization built on service, professionalism, mentorship, friendship, and a shared commitment to the rule of law will continue to thrive. Thank you for allowing me to be one small part of that enduring story.

OCBA Golf Tournament Returns to Kickingbird Golf Club on Oct. 12

By Gary Chilton
Chairman, OCBA Golf Tournament

Due to overwhelming demand, the 2026 annual OCBA Golf Tournament is returning to the newly renovated Kickingbird Golf Club, a championship golf course in Edmond. If you missed last year's tournament, this is your chance to come out and experience Kickingbird. The 4-person scramble is scheduled for Monday, Oct. 12, with a shotgun start at 1 p.m.

We expect a full field for this year's tournament, so get your 4-person team together and get your entries in early. Even if you do not have a team, enter and we'll put you on one. Mercedes-Benz of OKC is again sponsoring one of our Hole-In-One contests and will have one of their new cars on the tee box. A Hole-in-One will win you a fully paid, two-year lease.

"Kickingbird is so popular, we are very fortunate to have secured another tournament there," said Tournament Chairman Gary Chilton. "The renovated course is outstanding, the service at the course is fantastic, and the new facilities are second

to none. I hope everyone can come out."

After being closed for two years to undergo a \$21 million renovation, Kickingbird reopened in the summer of 2023 with a new clubhouse, event space, renovated driving range, and several completely redesigned golf holes that added 200 yards to the course. Kickingbird has received numerous awards as the best public golf course in Oklahoma and was host to the Oklahoma Open from 1979-1985.

This year, we are again not using handicaps. All ringers welcome! You also do not have to have a team — we will put you on one. The only restriction is that golfers must be attorneys, judges, law clerks, court clerks, or legal assistants or — for the first time — a sponsor of the tournament. Teams will be flighted after the tournament into three flights based on that day's scores. The Grand Champion of Championship Flight will get a large traveling trophy to display in your law office or judicial chambers until the following year. Winners of each flight will get trophies and gift certificates. Second place finishers will get gift certificates.

The entry fee is \$165 per player for OCBA

Members and \$205 for non-members, which includes 18-holes at Kickingbird, golf cart, lunch and post-round snacks. There will be hole-in-one and closest to the pin contests, drawings and more. There is also a hole-in-one contest for a 2-Night/3-Day trip to Pebble Beach Golf Club.

Entry deadline is October 1 — but don't wait. Register now online at www.okcbar.org or call the OCBA at (405) 236-8421. Checks should be made payable to OCBA and mailed to 211 N. Robinson, Ste. 400, Oklahoma City, OK, 73102, or you can pay when you arrive at the registration table.



BRIEFCASE
August 2026

Briefcase is a monthly publication of the Oklahoma County Bar Association
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■ STUMP ROSCOE | By Roscoe X. Pound

Faithful readers will recall that, in our last installment, my temporary office manager Aubrie, a/k/a The Countesse, handed me a mysterious missive.

I took little comfort in the fact that one of my own envelopes appeared with the company name and address printed on the front. On the back, it bore a puddle of red wax embossed with the figure of a bat with a dragon-like tail.

The signet of Areyna Darquenesse. I accepted like a queasy kid might accept a handful of pumpkin guts during his first try at Halloween Jack-o'-lantern carving. I had more questions for Aubrie, but she had already turned her attention to Daddy Mike as she patiently explained to the old mercenary the differences between Goth, Emo, and just being badly dressed.

I tore down along the edge and removed the document within. This is what I found:

MEMORANDUM TO: Roscoe X. Pound, Esq. (Self-Proclaimed)
FROM: Areyna Darquenesse, Dark Baroness Of The Front Desk
DATE: July 23, 2026
SUBJECT: While You Were Away Playing Hemingway With The Sharks

THE BRIEFCASE COLUMN
(DRAFTED BY ME)

Question 1 (From B.A., in Edmond): Can a client sue his getaway driver for breach of contract if the guy stops at a Sonic drive-in during the pursuit because it's Happy Hour?

Answer: Are you layout-challenged or what, Billy? First off, illegal contracts are void from the jump, you absolute stunad. Second, anyone trying to grab a Route 44 cherry limeade during a hot pursuit deserves the cage anyway. That's not a breach of contract; that's just God punishing your boy for lack of situational awareness. Tell your guy to pack a juice box next time.

Question 2 (From P.B., in OKC): If a deputy claims he smelled weed in a pickup truck, but the driver argues it was just a dead skunk under the flatbed, is that probable cause or just Oklahoma air?

Answer: Look, Pete, where I'm from, smelling like ditch-weed is just called "high school," but out there in the dust, you people that I've met think everything smells like nature dying. Kinda a rosy outlook in my book, but I digress. Legally speaking, a sniff-test needs articulable facts, not just a deputy guessing between a dime bag and roadkill. But honestly? The real crime is driving around with a decomposing animal. I'd convict him myself of assaulting my olfactory senses. Tell him to plead down and buy some patchouli like a civilized person.

OFFICE CHAOS & CLIENT ACTIVITY

The Snitches and the Cops: Your buddies from both sides of the law kept crossing paths in the lobby. I had to separate a Hudson County deputy and a local bookie by threatening to curse their bloodlines and screaming like my maternal unit does when someone touches the Sunday gravy. They both left quietly.

The Bait-Shop Bounty: A Rabbit called "Three-Toes Tony" tried to claim he missed court because he was on your boat. I called bullshit on account of how you hate sharing your chum bucket, and you also had two minions of the law for shipmates. He is now

in a cell, and we have the Petition for Remission already on file.

The Desk Bourbon: I confiscated your bottle of cheap rye. If you are going to play hard-boiled detective, at least drink something that doesn't smell like turnpike run-off.

Why I Am Leaving Now: Severe Burnout. Managing your dissociative disordered life as a PI, bondsman, and all-around meddler in other people's affairs, not to mention discount legal scholar, while you hunt apex predators has depleted my life force.

Vacation Approved: I signed off on my own paid week off. Do not fight me on this; I already booked a cottage in Asbury, where the sun rarely shines and nobody asks about bail collateral.

SURVIVAL INSTRUCTIONS

The coffee is in the skull jar; the filing system is by threat level; and if the police chief calls, tell him you're dead until Monday. Before I walk out the door, let me know if you want me to: (a) Look over the blotter for any of our regulars; (b) Change the hold music from Gregorian chants to Jersey club music; or, (c) Anything else before my sabbatical begins. Oh, wait. You're outta town. Never mind.

PART DEUX

TO: All Staff (and you guys know who you are)
FROM: Areyna Darquenesse, Office Manager & Chief Morale Officer
DATE: July 23, 2026
SUBJECT: Stop touching my skull and other urgent office grievances

OFFICE RULES

My Desk Area: Do not place client files on the velvet altar cloth. It is disrespectful to the spirits and tacky. Use ugly beige plastic trays like normal corporate drones. Also, don't mess up my candles. If you do, I'll know. I've been blessed with an idiotic memory.

The Coffee Maker: Stop using my private dark roast blend. It has notes of chicory and eternal sorrow, not French vanilla. Bring your own toxic positivity juice.

Client Intake: If someone jumps bail because they were "summoned by a blood moon," do not write that on the official court paperwork. Write "prior engagement."

Administrative Updates/Bail Processing: The printer is jammed again because someone tried to feed a laminated prayer card into the tray. Please stop.

Casual Friday: I am instituting mandatory black attire for all days ending in "y." If you wear neon, I will stare at you until you cry.

Absence Coverage: I am taking a much-needed hiatus from this capitalist nightmare next week. My mentor, The Countess (government name Aubrie, but do not call her that), will run the desk. The fluorescent overhead lights must remain off. Use the desk lamps or embrace the dark. The local classic rock radio station is banned. The office soundtrack will be darkwave only. Do not ask her to help with the automated bail software. She communicates via typewriter or psychic dread. She

has been listening to Bauhaus longer than I have been alive. Show her total respect or face her wrath. Also, someone has to make sure the plants are watered. The Countesse doesn't mess with plants unless they're blood lilies, corpse flowers, or fly traps.

The Destination: I am taking a much-needed hiatus from this capitalist nightmare next week to visit Asbury Park. I am checking out the New Jersey Museum of the Paranormal. I will not be soaking up rays on the beach.

Emergency Contact: If the office literally burns down, you can reach me through my boyfriend, Chips. As most of you know, he

is totally wrapped around my finger, so he will make sure I get the message eventually. He is an 18-year-old non-Goth. So, do not judge his pastel hoodies or his cheerful demeanor. He is my work-in-progress. He also thinks our bounty hunter Roscoe is secretly a high-level mob enforcer. Do not ruin this for me.

May your days be as dark as my wardrobe, and may the shadows keep you until my return. And remember: Every day begins in darkness. Do not overvalue the light.

Disaffectionately yours,
Areyna Darquenesse

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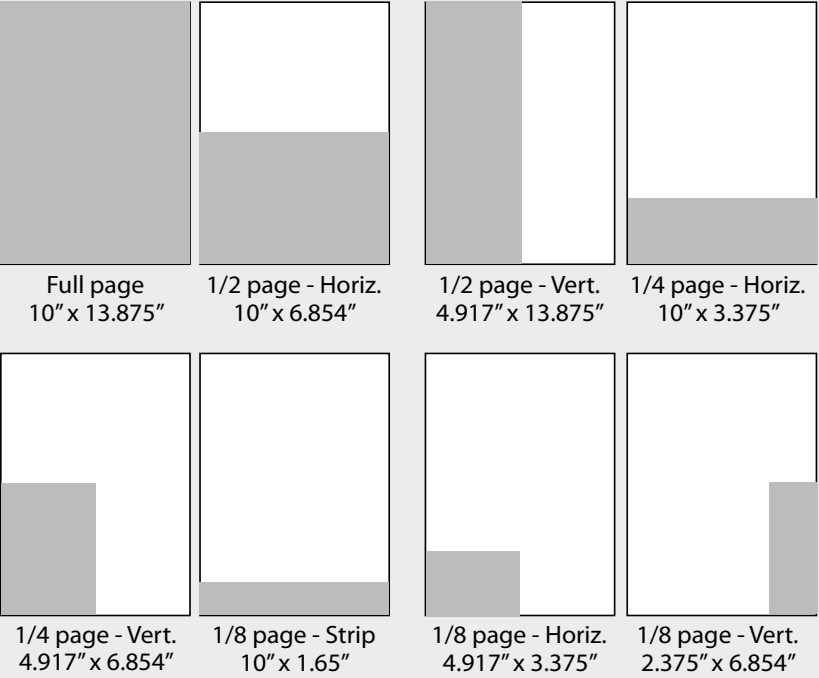
Briefcase

The official monthly journal of the Oklahoma County Bar Association, this dynamic publication keeps Oklahoma County legal professionals up-to-date and in the know.

Distributed to all members of the Oklahoma County Bar Association, Briefcase is an excellent advertising medium for retailers and service companies offering professional market coverage to the upscale legal community.



Sizes



Costs (All ads are full color)

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For advertising information, email: advertising@sharpen-media.com

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The pleasure of your company is cordially requested to honor Bob Burke for his donation of publications to the Oklahoma County Law Library. This presentation will be Thursday, Sept. 10, from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Berry Family Media Center of the Oklahoma County Law Library.

Sandwiches, chips and drinks will be available. Come and visit with Bob and view the collection of books he has donated that are now available to the patrons of the Oklahoma County Law Library.

RSVP via email to Venita Hoover at VenHoo@oklahomacounty.org or by phone at (405) 713-1494.

OBITUARY

James Dan Batchelor of Oklahoma City
died July 31, 2026.

Dan was born in Durant on January 20, 1936. He attended college at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, earning a B.S. with honors in 1958, with a major in mathematics and minors in physics, English, and speech. He served as President of the Oklahoma Intercollegiate Student Association and won several national debate tournaments.

Following college, he enrolled in law school at the University of Oklahoma, where he graduated in 1961. He was President of the American Law Student Association, served on the Board of Editors of the Oklahoma Law Review, and received many honors, including Order of the Coif, Law Graduate of the Year by the Phi Delta Phi International Legal Fraternity, and Outstanding Officer of the American Law Student Association.

Dan joined the newly established Oklahoma City Urban Renewal Authority as its general counsel in 1966. There, he created the legal and financial strategies for the revitalization of downtown Oklahoma City, the creation of the Oklahoma Health Center, and the general improvement of the city he called home.

Multiple published Oklahoma Supreme Court decisions reflect Dan's creative vision and enduring influence. Dan was instrumental in Oklahoma's passage of the Local Development Act, which gave local gov-

ernments vital tools for growth. In 2001, he co-founded the Center for Economic Development Law with his daughter Leslie, through which he helped communities across the state finance countless projects that otherwise would not have been possible.

In 2005, he was honored with the Stanley Draper Award for the lasting impact he made on downtown Oklahoma City. Dan never retired, remaining engaged in professional and community commitments until his passing.



OCBA YLD PRESENTS

Trivia Night

INCLUDING 1 HOUR OF ETHICS CLE CREDIT

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10 5:30 PM	OK Cider 705 W SHERIDAN AVE, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73102
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REGISTER AT

OCBA EVENTS

RAISING THE BAR 2026

SEPT. 24, 2026 | 6 PM-8 PM
HORS D'OEUVRES & OPEN BAR

LEADERSHIP SQ. MEZZANINE
2ND FLOOR, 211 N. ROBINSON AVE

Join us for an evening of celebration as we kick off a new year, honor outgoing leaders Todd Blasdel and Genni Ellis, and welcome 2026 - 2027 officers, Judge Anthony Bonner as OCBA President and Chelsi Bonano as YLD Chair.

TICKET PRICING

Guests must be accompanied by active OCBA Member

REGULAR MEMBERS	- \$75
YLD & SENIOR MEMBERS	- \$55
JUDICIAL & GOVT MEMBERS	- \$45
OCBA MEMBER GUEST	- \$25
KIDS (15 and under)	- FREE

CLICK HERE, VISIT
OKCBAR.ORG, OR
CALL OCBA STAFF
AT 405-236-8421 TO
PURCHASE TICKETS!

Guest tickets must have accompanying member ticket. Parking available in underground Leadership Parking Garage.

Like many OCBA events, Raising the Bar is made possible through the generous support of our members and community partners. Sponsorships and ticket sales help us bring this annual celebration to life while supporting the OCBA and its mission. To become a sponsor of this year's event, please contact Christi Chandler or visit okcbar.org to learn more about sponsorship opportunities and ways to support the OCBA.

GOLD SPONSOR - \$1,200

10 Member Tickets & 5 Member Guest Tickets
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1 Member Tickets & 1 Member Guest Tickets
Recognition as a Bronze Level Sponsor on event signage

OCBA, YLD member elected to Oklahoma House of Representatives

By Christi Chandler
OCBA Executive Director

Congratulations to Sam Wargin Grimaldo, OCBA member and member of the Young Lawyers Division Board of Directors, on his recent swearing-in as the Oklahoma State Representative for House District 92. Wargin Grimaldo was sworn in this summer following his election to represent District 92 in the Oklahoma House of Representatives. In addition to beginning this new chapter in public service, he has been an active member of Oklahoma County’s legal community and currently serves in a leadership role with the OCBA Young Lawyers Division. Reflecting on the opportunity to serve his district, Wargin Grimaldo shared: “I’m

honored that the voters of House District 92 have entrusted me with representing our district, and I look forward to carrying their voices and concerns with me as I do the peo-

ple’s work at the State Capitol!” The OCBA and YLD congratulate Sam on this exciting achievement and wish him the very best as he begins his service in the

Oklahoma Legislature. We are always proud to see members of our legal community step into new opportunities for leadership and public service.





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■ BAR OBSERVER

McAfee & Taft grows to more than 190 attorneys firmwide with addition of six experienced lawyers

McAfee & Taft, one of the region's largest law firms, has expanded to more than 190 attorneys firmwide with the recent addition of Oklahoma City-based attorneys Jared D. Giddens, Kiran A. Phansalkar, J. Dillon Curran, Preston M. Sullivan, Elizabeth H. Attaway, and Matthew A. Peace.

Together, they bring more than 120 years of collective broad-based experience to the firm, much of which is focused in the areas of complex business and commercial litigation, business and real estate transactions and finance, bankruptcy and business restructurings, and banking matters.

One of Oklahoma's most versatile business lawyers, Jared Giddens is a unique combination of accomplished commercial litigator, respected business and legal advisor, and seasoned transactional attorney whose practice encompasses a broad range of industries, including banking, energy, and construction.

Giddens is a Senior Fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America and a member of its Order of the Veritas. His achievements have earned him inclusion in the Chambers USA Guide to America's Leading Lawyers for Business, Oklahoma Super Lawyers and The Best Lawyers in America.

Giddens earned his Juris Doctor from the University of Oklahoma College of Law and graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in accounting from Central State University. He is admitted to practice in all state and federal courts in Oklahoma and Texas, the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Fifth and Tenth Circuits, and the U.S. Tax Court, and has nearly two dozen reported decisions in various federal and state courts.

Now in his 41st year of practice, veteran lawyer Kiran Phansalkar's broad-based litigation and commercial law practice encom-

passes the areas of complex business litigation, bankruptcy and creditor rights, and business transactions.

Phansalkar is a Senior Fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America and a Barrister of the LCA's Order of Veritas. His achievements have earned him recognition in the Chambers USA Guide to America's Leading Lawyers for Business, The Best Lawyers in America, and Oklahoma Super Lawyers, where he has been named to its list of "Top 50 Oklahoma Lawyers" every year since 2022.

Phansalkar graduated with distinction from the University of Oklahoma College of Law in 1985 and earned his bachelor's degree from Oklahoma State University in 1982. He is admitted in both Oklahoma and Texas, as well as multiple federal district and bankruptcy courts in Oklahoma and the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Fifth and Tenth Circuits.

Dillon Curran is a seasoned attorney and advisor whose broad-based practice encompasses the areas of commercial litigation and commercial transactions. He also devotes a portion of his practice to representing regulated utilities in a broad range of matters, including practicing before the Oklahoma Corporation Commission.

Curran's achievements have earned him inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America.

Curran graduated with highest honors from the University of Oklahoma College of Law in 2002 and magna cum laude with his bachelor's degree in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources from Oklahoma State University in 1999. He is admitted in all state and federal courts in Oklahoma, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Ninth and Tenth Circuits, and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Preston Sullivan is a trial and appellate lawyer whose state and federal practice spans the entire litigation lifecycle and encompasses a broad range of civil litigation, including contract disputes, tortious interference claims, construction defect

claims, commercial foreclosures and receiverships, unlawful detainer actions, and other complex business and commercial litigation. His career experience also includes representing clients in commercial real estate transactions, estate planning, and related probate and trust administration matters.

Sullivan's achievements have earned him inclusion in Oklahoma Super Lawyers' list of "Oklahoma Rising Stars," which recognizes the state's up-and-coming attorneys.

Sullivan earned his bachelor's degree in international business from Rhodes College in 2015 and his Juris Doctor from the University of Oklahoma College of Law in 2018. He is admitted in Oklahoma state courts as well as the U.S. District Courts for the Western and Northern Districts of Oklahoma and the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Oklahoma.

Associate Beth Attaway is a trial and appellate lawyer whose practice is focused on the resolution of a broad range of civil litigation matters, including complex commercial and business disputes, real estate and construction disputes, banking litigation, and business torts, in state and federal courts, mediations, and arbitration proceedings.

Attaway graduated summa cum laude with her undergraduate degree in strategic communications from Oklahoma State University in 2012 and her Juris Doctor from University of Oklahoma College of Law in 2023. Prior to entering law school, Beth worked in the marketing and non-profit industries for nearly nine years. She is admitted in both Oklahoma and Texas, as well as the U.S. District Courts for the Western and Northern Districts of Oklahoma.

Associate Matt Peace is a civil litigator who represents financial institutions, businesses and property owners in a wide range of commercial disputes. His practice includes banking litigation, bankruptcy and creditor rights, eminent domain, probate matters and related business litigation.

An Oklahoma City native, Peace earned his bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Oklahoma in 2019 and graduated with distinction from the University of Oklahoma College of Law in 2023. He is admitted in Oklahoma state courts and the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma.

In additional firm news, for the ninth consecutive year, McAfee & Taft tax and family wealth lawyer Susan Shields received a top Band 1 individual ranking in Oklahoma in the Private Wealth Law category in the 2026 edition of Chambers High Net Worth.

Energy and regulatory attorney Matthew J. Allen has also joined the law firm of McAfee & Taft, where his practice is focused on oil and gas conservation matters before the Oklahoma Corporation Commission, including legislative proceedings, uncontested and contested adjudicative proceedings, and appeals to the Oklahoma Supreme Court. Allen is 2007 graduate of the University of Oklahoma College of Law.

Phillips Murrah welcomes new attorneys in OKC office

Phillips Murrah is pleased to welcome Madison Botizan to the Firm's Oklahoma City office. Botizan is a litigation associate, focusing her practice on construction and utilities litigation, insurance coverage and bad faith disputes, business litigation, personal injury, and premises

liability. She represents companies and municipalities across Oklahoma and has established herself as a trusted defense attorney for municipalities and their contractors involved in utility lawsuits. Botizan has been recognized as a Super Lawyers Rising Star for 2025 and 2026.

Botizan has a trial-focused approach. She approaches every matter with the assumption that it will go to trial, keeping a sharp focus on the story that will ultimately be told to a jury. This mindset drives the clarity and precision she brings to every case from the outset.

Botizan earned her bachelor's degree in public relations from the University of Oklahoma in 2017 and her law degree from Oklahoma City University School of Law. Prior to joining Phillips Murrah, she represented policyholders in insurance bad faith lawsuits and personal injury matters at a plaintiffs' firm.

An active member of the legal community, Botizan serves as the 2026 Chair of the Oklahoma Bar Association's Women in Law Section and is involved with the Oklahoma County Bar Association.

"I am thrilled to join an experienced team of powerful, fearless litigators and trial attorneys who go above and beyond for their clients," said Botizan.

Outside the office, Botizan enjoys exploring state and national parks with her husband and their daughter, cheering on the OKC Thunder, and cooking for friends and family.

Phillips Murrah is pleased to welcome Jeff C. Grotta to the Firm's Oklahoma City office. Grotta serves as Of Counsel at Phillips Murrah, concentrating his practice in litigation in federal and state courts and the drafting of warranties, terms and conditions of sale and purchase, and acquisition contracts. He represents clients in the insurance and manufacturing industries, bringing over 32 years of litigation experience across Oklahoma, 23 other state courts, 10 federal district courts, and 4 federal courts of appeal.

Grotta earned both his Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor from the University of Oklahoma. Prior to joining Phillips Murrah, he served as a judicial law clerk for the Honorable Magistrate Judge Bana Blasdel of the Western District of Oklahoma, the Honorable Judge Reta M. Strubhar of the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals, and as a Student Law Clerk for the Honorable Justice Marian P. Opala of the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

Outside the office, Grotta is involved with the Curbside Chronicle and the City Rescue Mission. A student of Russian language and history, he has traveled to the Soviet Union and Russia and served as an Adjunct Professor of Russian History at Oklahoma City University. He enjoys ice hockey, travel, and reading, and shares his life with his three adult children and three dogs.

"I am excited to join a vibrant and growing firm where I can grow my practice and be able to walk to work," said Grotta.



Botizan



Grotta



OKLAHOMA COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONNECT. CELEBRATE. GIVE BACK.

YLD "BACK TO SCHOOL TRIVIA"

(1 HR ETHICS CLE)

SEPTEMBER 10, 2026

6:00 PM

OK CIDER

Join the YLD for a fun and competitive night of trivia, networking, and CLE credit!

RAISING THE BAR

Join us for an evening of celebration as we kick off a new year, honor outgoing leaders Todd Blasdel and Genni Ellis, and welcome Judge Anthony Bonner as OCBA President and Chelsi Chaffin Bonano as YLD Chair.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 | 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

LEADERSHIP SQUARE

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MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2026

1:00 PM

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From left, PM Director and Executive Committee member Lyndon Whitmire, PM President and Managing Partner Dawn Rahme, and incoming Director and BBHS co-founder Nate Blackburn.

Phillips Murrah welcomes new attorneys in OKC office Phillips Murrah Expands Dallas Office as Attorneys from Blackwell, Blackburn, Herring & Singer Join the Firm

Phillips Murrah P.C. is pleased to announce that a group of attorneys and staff from Blackwell, Blackburn, Herring & Singer, LLP are joining Phillips Murrah in its Dallas office. The addition nearly doubles Phillips Murrah's Dallas presence, adding to the firm's Texas-based capabilities in real estate and corporate transactions, commercial lending, and a broad range of litigation, including complex commercial, healthcare, medical device, real estate, construction, and employment matters.

"The addition of this exceptional group represents a milestone in Phillips Murrah's continued growth in Dallas," said Dawn Rahme, Phillips Murrah's President and Managing Partner. "This expansion of talent in Dallas reinforces our commitment to delivering comprehensive, high-quality legal solutions to clients across Texas and the broader region."

The attorneys joining Phillips Murrah include:

Bob Blackwell as a Director. Bob represents a diverse clientele in complex commercial disputes, healthcare and medical device litigation, real estate litigation and receivership actions, and employment matters. He began his legal career at Fulbright & Jaworski, LLP, and also serves as outside general counsel to numerous small and mid-sized businesses. Bob is an active member of the Defense Research Institute (DRI) and has also been recognized by D

Magazine as one of the "Best Lawyers Under 40 in Dallas." He earned his J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law.

Nate Blackburn as a Director. Nate focuses his practice on corporate and commercial real estate transactions. He represents local and national real estate developers, lenders, borrowers, investors, landlords, tenants, receivers, and other corporate clients across a variety of asset classes. Nate's transaction track record includes representing national retail chain operators in the acquisition, leasing, and due diligence review of more than 100 locations, negotiating triple net leases for national restaurant brands, and structuring preferred equity and mezzanine loan documentation for complex real estate capitalization stacks. He earned his J.D. from the University of Oklahoma School of Law.

Rebecca "Becky" Siegel Singer as Of Counsel. Becky principally practices employment and labor law, bringing forty years of elite experience spanning both the public and private sectors. Becky began her career in the Solicitor's Office of the U.S. Department of Labor in Dallas before entering private practice, where she served as a Partner in the Employment Law Section of Fulbright & Jaworski. Her distinguished career includes successfully defending multiple federal court lawsuits affirmed by the Fifth Circuit, including arguing a multi-plaintiff federal whistleblower case before the Fifth Circuit, which were subsequently denied review by the U.S. Supreme Court. She earned her J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law.

Lindsey L. Reinhardt as Of Counsel. Lindsey represents and advises clients ranging from emerging startups to major financial institutions and healthcare providers in state and federal courts as well as arbitrations. Lindsey focuses her practice on commercial, healthcare, construction, real estate, and financial institutions litigation. She is an active member of the Dallas Bar Association and serves as an Attorney Advisor for the Mock Trial Program at Thomas Jefferson High School. Lindsey graduated with Honors from the University of Texas School of Law.

Sayuri Shimoda as Of Counsel. Sayuri focuses her practice on complex commercial litigation, representing corporations and individuals in high-stakes disputes and regulatory matters. A former associate at prominent international law firms Jones Day and Shearman & Sterling, Sayuri has extensive experience handling complex contract disputes and tort claims in state and federal courts. She earned her J.D., cum laude, from Fordham University School of Law, where she served as an Associate Editor for the Fordham Urban Law Journal. Sayuri is also named to the Texas list of "Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch."

This expansion combines two exceptional legal teams, uniting the proven track record of Phillips Murrah's Dallas office with the deep transactional and litigation expertise of its incoming colleagues to deliver an enhanced level of service across the region.

"Joining Phillips Murrah marks an exciting new chapter for our team and our clients," Nate Blackburn said. "This move provides our transactions and litigation groups with access to a large group of talented attorneys with experience spanning almost every legal practice area. Phillips Murrah's full-service resources align perfectly with our goals of delivering more support to our clients while allowing for expansion that benefits our team and the firm."

The guiding priority for both teams is a seamless experience for the clients they serve. The transitioning attorneys will relocate to Phillips Murrah's Uptown Dallas office in Regency Plaza at 3710 Rawlins St., Suite 900, ensuring that client matters continue to be managed by the same trusted counselors with the same personalized attention. By uniting these two highly compatible, client-first cultures under one roof, this integration ensures that clients' goals are job one on day one.

The addition of the BBHS lawyers will lead to further growth with the Firm's Dallas office actively engaged in searches for a general litigation partner or counsel, a trusts and estates partner or counsel, and a transactional real estate partner, counsel, or senior associate to join its client service team.

Bryan King sworn in as a Special Judge in Oklahoma County District Court by Chief Justice Dustin Rowe on Aug. 3.



Special Judge Bryan King and wife Madison King.



Judge Don Andrews and Judge Bryan King.



Judge King being sworn in by Chief Justice Dustin Rowe.



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