



**Trish McCann Bertram** is the professional development director with the Georgia Public Defender Council where she is responsible for developing and executing a comprehensive training program for all attorneys, investigators and non-lawyer staff. Trish has worked with the agency for most of the years since its inception in 2005, beginning her career as the staff attorney in the Juvenile Advocacy Division of the Council's predecessor, the Georgia Indigent Defense Council. During a four-year hiatus from her work with the Council, Trish worked with Mayor Brown LLP in Chicago in its firm-wide Attorney

Development and Pro Bono Divisions. Trish is a graduate of the University of Florida and Rutgers University School of Law.



**Stephen Bradley**, as District Attorney for the Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit, is proud to serve the people of Baldwin, Morgan, Greene, Jasper, Putnam, Jones, Wilkinson, and Hancock Counties. Bradley received his undergraduate education at Emory University where he was a Hayward Pearce scholar and, more importantly, where he met his future bride, the former Lisa Rowe. While obtaining his law degree at Samford University's Cumberland School of Law, Bradley was honored to be the lead oralist for the Moot Court Team and simultaneously presided on the Mock Trial and Moot Court Boards. Bradley clerked for the late Hon. Edward S. Smith of the Federal Circuit Court. Bradley has been happily married to Lisa for twenty-six (26) years. They have two beautiful daughters, Samantha and Alexandra. Active with youth in the community, Bradley is a founding coach for the Baldwin County High School Mock Trial Team and served as District Chair for the Boy Scouts of America. He has led food drives for the Chard Wray Food Pantry and served on the vestry of St. Stephens' Episcopal Church. Professionally, Bradley has twice served as President of the Milledgeville Bar and the Ocmulgee Circuit Bar. Since joining the District Attorney's Office in 1994, Bradley has personally handled the prosecution of over 12,000 cases, including the most serious cases tried throughout the circuit. For nine years Bradley served as Chief Assistant District Attorney under Fred Bright, the former D.A. Upon Bright's retirement, Gov. Deal appointed Bradley District Attorney in September, 2015. He was elected by the voters and currently serves in that position. As District Attorney for the Ocmulgee Circuit, Bradley serves the largest circuit in Georgia, which comprises eight (8) counties, more than 3000 square miles, and almost 170,000 Georgians. He is proud to lead a (sometimes beleaguered) staff of 35 dedicated public servants who handle cases in the Probate, Juvenile, Magistrate, Accountability and Superior Courts of this Circuit. Focus throughout his administration has been strong advocacy, victim care and community involvement -- key initiatives include starting a circuit-wide domestic violence task force to coordinate services for victims and facilitating the work of drug courts to funnel non-violent offenders towards accountability and productivity. Bradley is proudly leading the criminal justice system towards the thoughtful care of victims of crime and honorable, sensible prosecution of offenders. Most recently, Bradley has been asked to run for Superior Court Judge in the Ocmulgee Judicial Circuit, to succeed the legendary William A. Prior, Jr. He is honored to be running unopposed for that important seat.



**sRebecca Holmes Liles Grist** is the Solicitor-General for Macon-Bibb County. Ms. Grist, a lifelong resident of Macon, was first elected as Solicitor-General in 2013 after working 16 years as an Assistant Solicitor specializing in Domestic Violence Prosecution. She also helped the United States Attorney's Office shut down massage parlors and bring sex trafficking crimes by prosecuting the predicate acts of solicitation and prostitution. She started her career in the District Attorney's Office with Child Support Enforcement. In 2018, Ms. Grist was named Georgia's 2018 Solicitor-General of the Year by Georgia Association

of Solicitors-General at the Prosecuting Attorneys Council Annual Meeting. She has led the Association's Legislative Committee and has previously served as its President. Mrs. Grist has been very involved in the community, having served as President of the Junior League of Macon, Chair of the Board of Crisis Line and Safe House, on her church's Board of Directors, and on the Board of Directors for the Macon Rotary Club and Salvation Army of Central Georgia. At the state level, she has served on the Governor's Probation Subcommittee on Criminal Justice Reform and was recently appointed to the Chief Justice's Committee on Professionalism.

Ms. Grist is a graduate of both Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law and the College of Charleston.



**Todd Hayes** is an Atlantananative, and a graduate of Marietta's Lassiter High School. Todd attended the University of Georgia in Athens, where he obtained his undergraduate degree in history (1998), his M.B.A. (1999), and his law degree (2002). Following graduation from law school, Todd began his career as a prosecutor in the Forsyth County District Attorney's Office. In January 2004, he began working in the Forsyth County Solicitor-General's Office and there discovered his affinity for traffic prosecution. In 2007, he moved to Cherokee County after being offered the opportunity to prosecute in the Cobb County Solicitor-General's Office. While working in Cobb, Todd began serving as an instructor for the Prosecuting

Attorneys' Council's Basic Litigation course and was selected by his peers as Cobb's 2008 Assistant Solicitor-General of the Year. Deeply committed to protecting Georgia's roadways, Todd went to work for the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia in February 2011 as Georgia's Senior Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor because of the opportunity it afforded to improve the quality of traffic prosecution across the State. Shortly after he began working at the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council, he was selected by the Georgia Association of Solicitors-General as the 2011 Assistant Solicitor-General of the Year for the State of Georgia. In 2014, he was recognized by the Governor's Office of Highway Safety and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) for his efforts in training and equipping prosecutors and officers to combat impaired driving. In November 2015, after five years as Georgia's Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor, Todd accepted the opportunity to serve the community in which he lives by returning to front-line prosecution as the Chief Assistant Solicitor-General for Cherokee County. Since that time, Todd has again been recognized by MADD as the 2016 DUI Prosecutor of the Year and named as a "Top 10 in 10" Young Professional by the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce. In November 2018, Todd was elected as Cherokee's Solicitor-General and has served in that capacity since January 2019. In June of 2019, he was awarded the Thompson-Jones Outstanding Faculty award by the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council for his continued dedication to the Council's Basic Litigation program. He lives in Canton with his wife, Sara, and his five children, Clark, Alex, Ella, Walker, and Olivia



### **Leisa Green Johnson**

On Monday, April 6, 2020, Chief Judge Willie E. Lockette of the Dougherty County Judicial Circuit, appointed Leisa Green Johnson as the new probate judge in Dougherty County. Johnson pioneered the first statewide Public Defender's Office in the Dougherty Judicial Circuit in 2004. A native of Washington, D.C., Johnson holds a bachelor's degree, magna cum laude, from the University of Maryland at College Park. She received her Juris Doctorate from The George Washington University National Law Center in Washington, D.C., and was admitted to the Maryland Bar in 1988, the District of Columbia Bar in 1989, and the Georgia Bar in 1992. In 2008, she was admitted to

practice before the United States Supreme Court. Prior to relocating to her mother's hometown of Albany, Georgia in 1999, Johnson practiced civil law as an assistant county attorney and worked as a public defender in Maryland. After relocating to Albany, she served for four years as an assistant district attorney under the leadership of Kenneth B. Hodges, III. She later started a successful private law practice, focusing primarily on criminal defense work throughout Southwest Georgia. Pioneering the first statewide Public Defender's Office in the Dougherty Judicial Circuit in July of 2004, Johnson was tasked with the constitutional mandate to provide competent, effective and zealous legal counsel for indigent individuals. In addition to serving as an experienced trial lawyer, Johnson managed an annual operating budget of \$1.5 million, as well as a staff comprised of lawyers, paralegals, legal secretaries, and investigators. A former vice president of the Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, Johnson is also a graduate of the National Criminal Defense College in Macon, Georgia, a published author, and a member of New Birth Fellowship Church in Albany, Georgia.



**Jennifer “Jen” Lewis** is the Circuit Public Defender for the Flint Judicial Circuit (Henry County). She graduated from Golden Gate University School of Law with a specialization in Litigation in 2006. She started out at a national law firm, but came running back to do what she loves -Public Defense. Being a Public Defender is Jen’s calling in life; she is incredibly proud of the work her office does. She has extensive experience with mental health cases, has tried all level of charges and is fluent in Spanish. In addition to her love of public defense, Jen has a passion for teaching young

lawyers our craft. Speaking at engagements such as this one is a highlight of her career. Finally, Jen is lucky to go home to her husband, two children, two dogs...and a fantastic collection of shoes!



**Omeeka P. Loggins** has lived in Augusta, Georgia for over 15 years, with her husband and son. She attends Green Grove Baptist Church in Augusta. She graduated from the University of Georgia in 2000 and obtained her Master's degree from Troy University in 2002. In 2009, she received her Juris Doctorate from the University of South Carolina School of Law. She then joined the Fulcher Hagler Law Firm where she concentrated on litigation matters, including professional liability, insurance defense, and family law. In 2012, she became an Assistant Public Defender for the Augusta Judicial Circuit, where she continued to practice until going back into private practice in 2014 with the Law Offices of Tanya D. Jeffords. She began her solo practice as the

Law Office of Omeeka P. Loggins in 2015 where she practiced criminal defense, family law, juvenile law and probate law. She has tried both civil and criminal cases and practiced in State Court, Superior Court and Federal Court. Prior to practicing law, Omeeka worked for the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice as a Training Coordinator and counselor. She also served as a Juvenile Arbitrator for the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice, a program designed to divert first-time non-violent offenders from the formal justice system. In 2008, she received the Lawyers Selected Profession Fellowship from the American Association of University Women. In January of 2016, Omeeka was installed as the first African-American President of the Augusta Bar Association. She has also held several other offices of the Augusta Bar Association, including Law Day Chair. She is a member of the National Bar Association and the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys. Outside of her professional career, Omeeka has been actively involved in the community. She serves on several boards, including Dream Builders of America's Youth, Inc., Golden Harvest Food Bank, and Kiwanis Club of Augusta. She is also a sustaining member of the Junior League of Augusta, Georgia, Inc. and is a proud member of the Zeta Xi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She was installed as the Solicitor General for Richmond County in December 2016, and her first term began January 1, 2017. During her tenure as the Solicitor-General, she has had a positive impact on the community. She has worked hard to introduce new programs, such as the Traffic Violators Impact Program for young drivers, and the first Augusta-Richmond County Record Restriction Summit in 2018. She is currently the President-Elect of the Georgia Solicitors-General Association and serves as the Legislative Chair for that organization. She is honored to serve as the Richmond County Solicitor-General



**Claudia Saari** is the Circuit Public Defender for DeKalb County, Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit. Ms. Saari received a bachelor's degree from Brown University in 1984 and a law degree from Emory University School of Law in 1987. She joined the DeKalb County Public Defender's Office in 1987 and over the next three decades tried a wide variety of cases ranging from DUI to death penalty cases, and the first criminal trial in Georgia that featured DNA evidence. Ms. Saari now leads an office of 100 people who represent clients in Juvenile Court, State Court, Superior Court, Magistrate Court, Appellate Courts, and all Accountability Courts and diversion programs. Ms. Saari is a Fellow with the American College of Trial Lawyers and previously chaired its national Public Defender Committee. She is a 1999 graduate of Leadership DeKalb, a Master with the Lumpkin Inns of Court, a member of the State Bar Board of Governors, a member of the Commission on Continuing Lawyer Competency, and a member of the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism. Ms. Saari also serves on a number of committees and boards including the Indigent Defense committee for both the State Bar and the Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, an Advisory Board member for the Emory University School of Law Public Interest Law Committee, an officer with the Clyde Shepherd Nature preserve and served on the Board of Directors for Gideon's Promise. In 2009, Ms. Saari was the recipient of the Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers Indigent Defense Award, a 2018 and a 2019 recipient of the GACDL President's Commitment to GACDL Award, in 2016 she was honored by the American Constitution Society with its Legal Legend Award, and in 2020 she received the Gideon's Promise John Lewis Lifetime Achievement Award.



**Lawrence Zimmerman** has been representing those accused of serious crimes for 22 years in both the state and federal courts. He has won acquittals and appeals for his clients. He attended the University of Florida undergraduate school and then went to law school at Roger Williams University in Rhode Island. After law school, he moved to Atlanta and opened up his own firm within one year of passing the bar exam. In addition to his work as a lawyer, he is a trusted legal analyst for several Atlanta news stations and a regular on CourtTV. He has been quoted in many newspapers including the New York Times, Washington Post, Atlanta Journal Constitution, and the Miami Herald to name just a few. He has been on the AJC's "Breakdown" Series podcast several times. He has been featured in the Daily Report on numerous occasions. He has appeared on Good Morning America, The Today Show, Anderson Cooper, CBS Morning News, CNN, HLN, and he is mentioned in ABC news anchor Amy Robach's book "Better." He is the Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (GACDL) current President and a life member. He is also past chair for both the GACDL Lawyer Assistance and Media Relations committees. He also worked as a legal consultant with the Atlanta Falcons security team for the 2015, 2016, 2017 seasons. Also, in June 2017 the Georgia Bar Journal published his article "How Not to Get Thrown In Jail," which discussed contempt of court issues. In 2018, he received the prestigious Gideon's Promise Award from the Southern Center for Human Rights for his pro bono work for the man accused of setting the I-85 fire. He is also a Georgia Super Lawyer. Most importantly, he is married to an amazing and patient woman, and he has two young children. He has an office in Marietta and Atlanta.