



Chief Justice Harold D. Melton

CHAIR, CHIEF JUSTICE'S COMMISSION ON PROFESSIONALISM

Chief Justice Harold Melton was appointed to the Georgia Supreme Court by Governor Sonny Perdue on July 1, 2005. Prior to joining the Court, Justice Melton served as Executive Counsel to Governor Perdue. Before that, he spent 11 years in the Georgia Department of Law under two Attorneys General where he dealt with issues ranging from the creation of the Georgia Lottery Corporation to the administration of Georgia's tobacco settlement.

Justice Melton received a Bachelor of Science degree from Auburn University and his Juris Doctorate from the University of Georgia in 1991. He serves on the Board of Atlanta Youth Academies and is on the local and national board for Young Life youth ministry. A native of Washington, D.C., Justice Melton currently resides in Atlanta with his wife, Kimberly, and their three children.



Judge Shawn Ellen LaGrua

PROGRAM CHAIR

Judge Shawn Ellen LaGrua was appointed to the Superior Court of the Atlanta Judicial Circuit in December 2009, sworn in on June 29, 2010, and reelected in 2012 and 2016. Prior to her appointment to the bench, she served as Inspector General for the Georgia Secretary of State, overseeing investigations in the Elections, Securities, Charities and Licensing Divisions. In 2004, she served as the Solicitor General for DeKalb County where she expanded the Domestic Violence Unit. While serving as DeKalb's Solicitor, she also founded the "Rise Up and Attend" truancy initiative. Judge LaGrua has over 20 years of trial

experience, including her work as Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney in DeKalb and Fulton Counties and as Chief Assistant District Attorney in the Tallapoosa Circuit. Judge LaGrua serves on the Fulton County Superior Court's Executive Committee and Co-chairs its Magistrate Committee. She presides over "My Journey Matters," a pilot probation program designed to divert young offenders from a lifetime of incarceration, as well as the Court's first Re-Entry Court, which works to integrate prior offenders back into the community using close supervision, substance abuse counseling, job-training, and advancing education.

Judge LaGrua was appointed by Governor Deal to the Georgia Child Support Commission in 2016. Judge LaGrua also serves as (1) Chair of the Judicial Council's Process Servers Committee; (2) Secretary-elect for the Council of Superior Court Judges, where she also serves on the Legislative Support Team; (3) Vice-chair for the Access to Fairness and Justice Committee; and (4) a Member of the Accountability Court and Bench and Bar Committees.

Judge LaGrua is a Master of the Logan E. Bleckley Inn of Court and Lamar Inn of Court. She is also a founding member and past Chair of the Georgia Association of Women Lawyers, Judicial Application Review Committee. She currently serves as the Chair of the Judicial Section of the State Bar of Georgia and is a member at large of the Atlanta Bar's CLE committee and Celebrating Service Committee. She is an alumna member of Leadership Atlanta, Class of 2012, and served as the Vice Chair of the Criminal Justice Day for 2014-2015.

Judge LaGrua received her undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia and received her Juris Doctorate from Georgia State University College of Law, where she later taught Advanced Evidence and Litigation. Judge LaGrua is married to Chris Beanland. She has two step-sons, Daniel and Ben, and two fur-children, Grizzly and Riley.



Judge Melanie Bell

Judge Melanie Bell serves as the Newton County Probate Judge and Chief Magistrate Court Judge of Newton County. While Melanie didn't grow up in Newton County, she spent her childhood making visits to Covington and Oxford with her family to visit her grandmother, Anne Martin, and her uncle, Terry Clark. Judge Bell graduated with degrees in History and Sociology from Duke University in 1997. She received a juris doctor degree from Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law in 2000, graduating number two in her class.

Melanie moved to Newton County following law school and served as a judicial law clerk to Chief Judge John M. Ott until April 2003. She was then hired as an assistant district attorney in the Alcovy Judicial Circuit. In her thirteen years in the D.A.'s office Melanie has served as the as the Crimes against Women and Children prosecutor, Senior Assistant District Attorney, and most recently, the Chief Assistant District Attorney. Melanie has prosecuted thousands of cases and has tried over 100 jury trials.

Melanie has been married to James Travis Bell since October 2008. They are long time members of the Covington Campus of Eastridge Community Church.



Judge Lindsay Hunter Burton

Judge Lindsay Hunter Burton was appointed as Juvenile Court Judge for the Northeastern Judicial Circuit (Hall and Dawson County) in October of 2013 and was appointed Chief Judge in January of 2015. As the Chief Juvenile Court Judge, she continues to preside over dependency, CHINS, and delinquent cases in both Hall and Dawson Counties. In addition in Hall County, she manages a staff of more than twenty. Judge Burton supports some of the agencies Juvenile Court partners with such as DFCS and CASA by doing regular trainings for both organizations. She also represents the circuit at the Court Improvement Initiative Conferences and she serves on the Justice for Children committee. In addition, in 2019 she was appointed to the executive committee for the Council of Juvenile Court Judges.

Prior to joining the bench, Judge Burton worked as an Assistant District Attorney in the Northeastern District Attorney's Office for thirteen years, earning the title of Chief Assistant District Attorney for the Circuit. She took on many of the most challenging cases involving juveniles as victims of sexual and physical abuse. During her thirteen years within the District Attorney's Office, Judge Burton tried more than one hundred jury trials.

Judge Burton received her undergraduate degree from Penn State University and received her Juris Doctorate from Villanova University Law School. Judge Burton has been married to her husband Bonner, for more than seventeen years and they have made Gainesville their home. They have two boys, ages twelve and nine. The entire household are avid baseball fans, whether watching the boy's travel and school baseball teams or MLB – Go Braves!



Elizabeth L. Fite

Elizabeth L. Fite of Rogers & Fite, LLC is a trial lawyer whose law practice is focused on civil litigation related to wrongful death and catastrophic injuries, tractor-trailer collisions, automobile collisions, negligent security claims, hazing claims and sexual assault. She previously served as a senior assistant county attorney for DeKalb County and, prior to that, practiced complex products liability litigation at a large law firm in Atlanta.

Fite currently serves as the President-elect of the State Bar of Georgia and will be sworn in as the 59th president of the State Bar of Georgia in June 2021.

Fite graduated from Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas, with a degree in mathematics and earned her law degree from Emory University School of Law.



Lynn S. Garson

Lynn S. Garson serves as Counsel in the Atlanta office of Baker Hostetler. Lynn has extensive experience with physician practice acquisitions, employment and related agreements and regulatory research. She has taken primary responsibility in managing acquisitions by a multi-hospital system of small medical practices, including negotiating and drafting documents from letter-of-intent stage through final documentation. She also advises a multi-hospital system on physician service agreements, consulting and employment contracts, leases, vendor contracts and clinical trial agreements. In addition, Lynn is a mental health advocate and author. In July 2012, she published *Southern Vapors*, a memoir

describing her journey from major clinical depression to recovery, and she has since spoken widely, including for a TEDx Emory talk: “Reforming the Approach to Mental Health in the U.S.” and made numerous presentations to private and public organizations. As Chair of the Lawyers Assistance Committee of the State Bar of Georgia, she is one of the principal architects of the “Lawyers Helping Lawyers” program which launched in November 2017, a program which connects peer volunteers with colleagues who have challenges in mental health, substance use or general stress-related issues. She has also participated in two podcasts and a video for the American Bar Association describing both the challenges she has faced and the support she has received from her colleagues as a practicing attorney who has struggled with mental health issues. On December 8, 2013, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* published an article on her experience and mental health advocacy in a “Personal Journeys” segment, described by the paper as a feature that "spotlights the lives of extraordinary individuals and the stories that define our region and connect our community."

Memberships

- American Health Lawyers Association
- American Bar Association (ABA Pledge Subcommittee Member)
- Georgia Bar
 - Lawyers Assistance Committee ((Chairperson)
 - Suicide Awareness and Prevention Committee
 - Mental Health Subcommittee of the Wellness Committee



Rebecca Holmes Liles Grist

Rebecca Holmes Liles **Grist** is the Solicitor-General for Macon-Bibb County. 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, 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. 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 on the Chief Justice's Committee on Professionalism. She also currently serves as the Vice-Chair of the Prosecuting Attorneys Council of Georgia.

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



R. Javoyne Hicks

R. Javoyne Hicks serves as Chair of the State Bar of Georgia Wellness Committee and as a member of the Executive Committee for Georgia State Bar's Board of Governors. Over the last several years Ms. Hicks has been committed to promoting the importance of wellness on all levels--physical, mental, social and financial. She has served as a speaker for several organizations, as a panel member and presenter for numerous continuing legal education classes. She helped develop the State Bar of Georgia's first Wellness and Practical Skills 12 hour Continuing Legal Education Seminar.

In her regular capacity, she serves as the DeKalb County State and Magistrate Courts Clerk. As such, she is responsible for the management of public records for Civil Law Suits, Garnishments, Eviction Proceedings, Personal Property Foreclosures, Domestic Violence Hearings, Traffic Violations, Ordinance Violations and Criminal Misdemeanor cases in DeKalb County, Georgia. Prior to coming to the Clerk's Office, Ms. Hicks served DeKalb County as the Deputy Chief Assistant Solicitor-General in charge of the Diversion Programs for the Solicitor-General's Office. She supervised and expanded the operations of several Diversion Programs designed to give first time and youthful offenders and those with special circumstances a second chance at opportunities to avoid criminal prosecution.

Ms. Hicks returned to DeKalb County after serving the federal government as the Chief of Staff of the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4. She oversaw the different offices in the 8 states of the southeast including Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida. As the Chief of Staff, Ms. Hicks implemented high level policy decisions, community engagement initiatives and executed organizational processes to help facilitate the Region's high-caliber technical, financial, legal and administrative performance. Ms. Hicks focused on Environmental Justice and Sustainability and led the Region in its ability to meet critical deadlines while managing the overall health and maintenance of the organization and its people.

Prior to embarking on her environmental career, Ms. Hicks worked as a prosecutor for more than 17 years. She served as the Acting District Attorney and the Chief Assistant District Attorney in DeKalb County, Georgia. She managed the office's domestic violence/sexual assault units, elder abuse, white collar crime division, drug court, a pre-trial diversion program, the grand jury and the office's juvenile court unit. She also supervised the child support unit, support staff and oversaw the development and implementation of office policies and procedures, human resources and the budget.

Ms. Hicks also served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Georgia Attorney General's Office and as an Associate Magistrate in DeKalb County. She served as an Assistant District Attorney in three judicial circuits in Georgia. Ms. Hicks is a past president of the DeKalb Bar Association and served on the boards of Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys and Leadership Georgia. She presently serves as a member of the State Bar of Georgia's Board of Governors.

Ms. Hicks is a native of Raleigh, North Carolina and graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she earned her undergraduate and law degrees. She is also the proud mom of two daughters, Victoria and Sydney.



Bert Hummel

Bert Hummel currently serves as the 74th President of the Young Lawyers Division (“YLD”) of the State Bar of Georgia (“Bar”). Hummel previously served as Secretary, Treasurer, and President-Elect of the YLD. Prior to his terms as an Officer of the Bar, in 2016-2017 Hummel served as President of the Cobb County Bar Associations Young Lawyer Division, as well as the Cobb County Bar’s Board of Trustees. During Hummel’s term as President of the Cobb County YLD, the organization increased community service within Cobb County by raising funds and volunteering time with Habitat for Humanity, Georgia Legal Services, Cobb Legal Aid, the Children’s Emergency Fund, the Men’s Extension, and local schools.

Additionally, Hummel served as the Chairman and Director for the New York Bar Association’s National Moot Court Competition Region V in collaboration with the American

College of Trial Lawyers and YLD from 2013-2018. Hummel is a routine volunteer in statewide moot court and mock trial competitions, and is a member of the Order of the Barristers. Hummel has served on numerous panels as a speaker on professionalism, ethics, trial tactics, workers compensation, and general litigation strategies. Hummel currently serves on the Bar’s Executive Committee and previously served on the State Disciplinary Board.

Hummel is a partner at Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith (“LBBS”) in the general liability, premises liability, and workers compensation practice groups. Hummel has extensive experience in complex litigation matters and has handled hundreds of claims in his practice for a variety of small businesses, Fortune 500 companies, and self-insurers, as well as TPA's, PEO's, and staffing companies. He has served on the Kid’s Chance Committee for the State Board of Workers’ Compensation’s Annual CLE and a speaker at several conferences.

Hummel earned an undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia’s School of Public & International Affairs and his law degree from Mercer University’s Walter F. George School of Law. At Mercer, Hummel served as President of the Phi Delta Phi Legal Honor Society Fraternity, Executive Director and Founder of the Mercer Law Speaker’s Bureau, Mercer Advocacy Council’s Executive Committee, & Treasurer and Vice President of the Student Bar Association. Hummel competed in several moot court competitions including the ABA National Competition.

Hummel lives in the City of Atlanta with his wife, Christina, and their daughter Mary Olivia, Great Dane Ponce, and are expecting their second child. Hummel spends time playing basketball, softball, golf, and is a four (4) time Atlanta Bar Lawyer League Basketball Champion. Hummel also spends time volunteering in local charities including the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Hummel and his family are members of Sacred Heart Basilica. The family also spends time cheering on the Hawks, Braves, Falcons, ATL United, and, perhaps above all, the Georgia Bulldogs.



Dawn M. Jones

Dawn M. Jones worked in various urban hospital ICU settings as a critical care registered nurse in her first career, gaining fourteen years of critical care experience before pursuing a law degree. After practicing law for 15 years on the defense side, Dawn established The Firm of Dawn M. Jones, LLC in May of 2014 to obtain justice for clients and their families for injuries resulting from malpractice, trucking collisions, slip/trip and falls, nursing home negligence, wrongful death and other serious tort-related matters. Additionally, Dawn has served as court-appointed Receiver for a multi-million dollar joint venture to ensure the continued functioning of the JV company during the pendency of the litigation. Further information about The Firm of Dawn M. Jones, LLC can be found at www.dawnjoneslaw.com.

Dawn is highly active in local bar, state bar and non-profit activities, currently serving as President of the State Bar of Georgia. She is a frequent speaker on expert witness, product liability, nursing and physician malpractice, professionalism, and other law-related topics throughout the State of Georgia. In addition to speaking at various events and seminars annually, Dawn has received numerous awards and honors recognizing her service and dedication to the legal profession and to the community at large. Such recognition includes the 2018 Alumni Achievement Award from the University of Virginia School of Nursing, the 2017 Commitment to Equality Award from the State Bar of Georgia Committee to Promote Inclusion in the Profession, the 2015 Thomas R. Burnside Excellence in Bar Leadership Award from the State Bar of Georgia, the 2012 Attorney A. T. Walden Legacy Award from the Gate City Bar Association Judicial Section, the 2012 Leadership Award from the Atlanta Bar Association, the 2010 Barbara A. Harris Award for Service to the Community from the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys, the 2010 R. Pruden Herndon Service Award from the Gate City Bar Association, and the 2010 Seth D. Kirschenbaum Diversity Award from the Multi-Bar Leadership Council, among others.

Dawn received a Law degree from Georgia State University College of Law, a Master of Science degree in Critical Care Nursing from Georgetown University, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from the University of Virginia. She is admitted to practice law in the State of Georgia and has one dog, Jack Jones. Dawn's other fur babies, Meadow Jones and Cleopatra Jones, have crossed the rainbow bridge.



Judge T. Russell McClelland III

Judge McClelland is the Chief Judge of the State Court of Forsyth County. He has served as a Judge of the State Court since December 2003, and as Chief Judge since January 2013.

Judge McClelland was born and raised in Savannah, Georgia. He graduated from Armstrong State College (now part of Georgia Southern University) in 1979 with a B.S. in Political Science and obtained his law degree from the University of Georgia in 1982.

Judge McClelland began practicing law in Forsyth County in 1984 as Assistant District Attorney, and later served as Chief Assistant District Attorney for the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit. In 1992, he opened his own law practice, then eventually co-founded the law firm of Dreger & McClelland.

Judge McClelland is the Immediate Past President Council of State Court Judges and served on the Judicial Council for the past two years. He also is a member of the Judicial Council COVID-19 Task Force where he serves as the Chair of the Civil Subcommittee. Judge McClelland also was an inaugural member of the Executive Committee of the Council of Accountability Court Judges and has presided over the Forsyth County DUI County DUI since it began operation in 2006. He has been a long-time active member of many community organizations, including the Cumming-Forsyth County Optimist Club, Cumming-Forsyth County Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Forsyth. The Judge and his family are actively involved at The Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit, where he currently serves on the Vestry. Judge McClelland is also an active adult leader with Sea Scout Ship 2222 and Venture Crew 39 in Cumming.

Judge McClelland and his wife, Janice, have been married for 31 years. They have one son, Matthew, who in May of this year graduated from the United States Naval Academy and was commissioned as an Ensign in the United States Navy.



Mark A. Swancutt, MD, PhD, DTM&H

Dr. Mark A. Swancutt is currently a staff physician for the Fulton County Board of Health Respiratory (Tuberculosis) Clinic. He is the Deputy Area Commander and also the Safety Officer for the Unified Atlanta Fulton County Emergency Management Agency (AFCEMA) COVID-19 Pandemic Response.

A native of Dallas, Texas, he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Cell and Molecular Biology from the University of Michigan in 1982. It was at an undergraduate course in 1980 that he realized that he wanted to be a microbiologist and infectious disease physician. He has been reading and studying about the

history of plagues and pandemics ever since. He went on to attend the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center where he earned his MD and also earned his PhD in Microbiology in 1991. Dr. Swancutt moved to San Diego to do his residency in Internal Medicine and his fellowship in Infectious Diseases at the University of California, San Diego. After completion of training, he served on the faculty at UCSD and the San Diego VA as a clinician, researcher and teacher until 2005 and was the associate director of the clinical microbiology laboratory, the medical director of antibiotic stewardship, and the director of the infectious disease clinic.

He moved back to Dallas in 2005 to University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center where he was the course director for medical microbiology for medical students, an infectious disease faculty member, and the infectious disease clinic director. He has extensive experience treating tuberculosis and related conditions, fungal infections, HIV, transplant infectious diseases, antibiotic use, and other general infectious diseases. He was Interim Director of the Division of Infectious Disease for 3.5 years.

He is board-certified in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases. He received his Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (DTM&H) from the Gorgas Course in Clinical Tropical Medicine in Lima, Perú. He has further certifications in Travel and Tropical Medicine. Dr. Swancutt has worked as a clinician, researcher, and teacher with US and international students and colleagues in Perú, Bolivia, and Haiti. He was invited to teach international students in the Gorgas Course in Clinical Tropical Medicine. He split time living in Dallas and Lima in this period. He has active medical licenses in California, Texas, and Georgia.

His interest in emergency preparedness is long-term. He worked in hospital-based emergency preparedness at UCSD and the San Diego VA after the 2011 anthrax attacks and in emergency preparedness for Ebola in Dallas in 2014. In Atlanta, he has been involved in emergency preparedness at the Fulton County Board of Health and is on the steering committee of the Fulton Medical Reserve Corps since 2018.

Dr. Swancutt moved to Atlanta in 2016 when his wife, Dr. Jessica Ricaldi, received a position at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She works in tuberculosis research; she has worked on Zika outbreak response and has now been detailed to work on COVID-19 response.