SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

FOR THE

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OF THE

STATE BAR OF GEORGIA
COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONALISM

State Bar of Georgia

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Edenfield Trial Law

PAULA FREDERICK
Office of the General Counsel
State Bar of Georgia

CATHY HAMPTON
The Hampton Firm

JUDGE GLENDA HATCHETT (RETIRED)
Stewart Miller Simmons Trial Attorneys

JUDGE ROBERT MCBURNEY
Superior Court of Fulton County

JUDGE ERIC RICHARDSON
State Court of Fulton County

THE STATE BAR OF GEORGIA COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONALISM

(with staff support from the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism)

PRESENTS

CJCP GEORGIA

SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA 1845

ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM DURING CAREER TRANSITIONS

State Bar of Georgia

Thursday, March 28, 2024
Via Zoom Only
8:45 am - 11:15 am

The CLE has been approved for
2 Hours of CLE Credit including
- 1 Professionalism Credit &
- 1 Ethics Credit

Introductions by Ian Reyes
J.D. Candidate '25
GSU College of Law

Moderators

Judge Rhonda Kreuziger
Griffin Circuit Superior Court

Mr. Michael E. Pérez
The Perez Law Firm LLC

https://cjcpga.org/sbg-cop_transitions_cle_03-28-24/

Judge Rhonda Kreuziger

MODERATOR

Superior Court Judge Rhonda Kreuziger has presided over matters for the Griffin Judicial Circuit (which covers Fayette, Pike, Spalding, and Upson counties) since August 17, 2021. Prior to her appointment to this position by Governor Brian Kemp, Judge Kreuziger served as the Associate Juvenile Court Judge for the Griffin Judicial Circuit from August 2020 to August 2021. Judge Kreuziger also served as the Chief Judge for the Fayetteville Municipal Court from July 2018 until August 2020, on a part-time basis. While serving in this capacity, she continued to manage and operate The Kreuziger Law Firm, P.C. that she established in June 2006. From its inception, until August 2020, she represented matters in the following areas of practice: Criminal Law; Domestic Relations/Family Law; Personal Injury; Landlord/Tenant; Breach of Contract; and Criminal and Civil Appeals to both the Georgia Court of Appeals and the Georgia Supreme Court. She was lead counsel in several jury and bench trials, serving as both prosecutor and defense counsel in criminal cases as well as counsel for plaintiffs and defendants in civil matters. She has served as Guardian ad Litem in Family Law cases for the Griffin Judicial Circuit and Coweta County and worked as a conflict attorney for the Georgia Public Defender Council for approximately eleven years. Her firm also served as the part-time Solicitor for two municipalities during the earlier years of her private practice.

Prior to starting the law firm, she served as an Assistant District Attorney for the Griffin Judicial Circuit from approximately 2002 until 2006. As an Assistant District Attorney, she prosecuted felonies and misdemeanors in Superior Court and served as the Juvenile Prosecutor for the Griffin Judicial Circuit.
While working toward a Juris Doctor, she worked as a law clerk in two civil litigation firms, assisting with catastrophic personal injury claims and workers' compensation matters. During the last semester of law school, she interned in the Special Prosecution Division for the Office of the Attorney General for the State of Georgia.

Prior to becoming an attorney, Judge Kreuziger worked as a Forensic Serologist (analyzing rapes, homicides, and burglaries) with the North Louisiana Criminalistics Laboratory, in Shreveport, Louisiana; and subsequently in the field of Forensic Toxicology (working on the identification and analysis of drugs) for SmithKline Beecham Clinical Laboratories in Dallas, Texas.
Judge Kreuziger received a law degree from John Marshall Law School in Atlanta, Georgia, and a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology from Northwestern State University in Louisiana.

Michael E. Pérez

MODERATOR

Michael E. Pérez is an attorney and owner of The Pérez Law Firm, LLC, located in Atlanta, Georgia. Michael represents individuals with catastrophic personal injury cases, including medical malpractice, wrongful death, premises liability and other serious injury cases. Michael also handles business litigation cases. Regardless of the type of case, Michael brings his extensive experience, knowledge of the law, advocacy, and creative problem-solving skills together to obtain the best results for his clients.

Michael received a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Georgia and his law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law in 2000. He is a member of the State Bar of Georgia and is admitted to practice in the State and Superior Courts of Georgia, the Georgia Court of Appeals, Georgia Supreme Court, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, and the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Georgia.

Michael serves as Vice-President of the DeKalb County Bar Association. He is also a member of the State Bar of Georgia's Committee on Professionalism, the Georgia Hispanic Bar Association, the Lawyers Club of Atlanta, the American Association for Justice, and the Georgia Trial Lawyers Association. He is a former board member of the Brighter DeKalb Foundation, an organization supporting the needs of individuals living with mental illness, addiction, and developmental disabilities.

Ian Reyes

Ian is a 2L at the Georgia State University College of Law. He serves as VP of Programming for the Student Health Law Association, Treasurer for the Business and Law Society, and Student Representative on the State Bar of Georgia Committee on Professionalism. As a member of Moot Court, Ian and his partners won Best Oralist Team at the International Trademark Association's Saul Lefkowitz Competition regionals and will pursue the National Title later this March. He also looks forward to competing in the National Health Law Transactional Competition at Loyola University Chicago. Ian is a student law clerk at Rutherford & Christie, LLP. Previously, he clerked for Bucker Rogers Law, LLC, and interned for The Atlanta Legal Aid Society's Health Law Unit. Before law school, Ian earned his BS in Neuroscience at the University of Tennessee

Samantha Beskin-Schemer

Samantha Beskin-Schemer is a partner at Beskin & Beskin P.C. where she practices personal injury and criminal defense alongside her father. Samantha also represents juveniles and adults in Fulton and Dekalb County as appointed counsel through the Georgia Public Defender Council.

Samantha is a volunteer Guardian ad Litem through the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyer Foundation and is a regular Volunteer Supervisor at the Drake Closet Sandy Springs.

Samantha was recently selected to be a part of the newest Leadership Academy class through the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of Georgia. She recently stepped into the Vice Chair position for the Law School Orientations Committee for the Committee of Professionalism for the State Bar of Georgia.

Samantha received her Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Mathematics Education from Miami University of Ohio, her Master of Arts degree in College Student Development from Appalachian State University, and her Juris Doctorate from Atlanta's John Marshall Law School.

Samantha enjoys spending time with her husband (Brian) and dog (Simba), working out, yoga, and connecting with her fellow attorneys at networking events.

V. Sharon “Sharri” Edenfield

V. Sharon “Sharri” Edenfield is the managing partner of Edenfield Trial Law in Statesboro, Georgia. A top-rated attorney with more than 16 years of legal experience, Ms. Edenfield provides exceptional representation to clients across her region who have suffered catastrophic personal injuries or lost loved ones as a result of someone else's negligence. She also handles complex commercial litigation and business disputes for both plaintiff and defendant clients alike. She has successfully handled numerous appeals in both state and federal appellate courts.

Honored for her outstanding professionalism and service, Ms. Edenfield has earned consistent top rankings from her peers as well as recognition from the National Trial Lawyers as a "Top 40 Under 40" and a "Top 100 Civil Plaintiff Attorney". She has also been honored twice with the Signature Service Award from the State Bar of Georgia's Young Lawyers Division, the only attorney who has been honored more than once for commitment to community service, as well as the organization's Award of Achievement, along with various other awards throughout her career.

A 1999 graduate of the University of Georgia, Ms. Edenfield obtained her Juris Doctor with a Certificate in Advanced Legal Writing, Research and Drafting from Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law in 2003. She is admitted to practice before all Georgia trial courts, the Court of Appeals of Georgia, the Supreme Court of Georgia the U.S. District Courts for the Southern, Middle, and Northern Districts of Georgia, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, and the Supreme Court of the United States of America.

A leader in her legal community, Ms. Edenfield has served as president, secretary and treasurer of the State Bar of Georgia's Young Lawyers Division as well as member of the organization's board of governors and board of directors. She has also accepted various appointments by the Georgia Supreme Court to serve on various committees and commissions, including serving as a Special Master and as a Bar Exam Grader. She has also served as chair of the Consumer Assistance Program and state delegate for the American Bar Association, among her many other professional affiliations.

Ms. Edenfield also supports her local community through her involvement with various civic and charitable organizations, having served on the board of directors for the United Way of Southeast Georgia, the Statesboro Arts Council, and the Statesboro-Bulloch Chamber of Commerce. She is a member of the Statesboro Service League, Leadership Bulloch Alumni, and has volunteered her time with multiple organizations, including with Safe Haven domestic violence shelter located in Statesboro.

Paula Frederick

Paula Frederick is General Counsel for the State Bar of Georgia, a unified bar organization with over 53,000 members. As General Counsel Ms. Frederick is responsible for interpreting the ethics rules for lawyers, prosecuting lawyer discipline cases, and providing legal advice to the officers and directors of the organization. She has served in the Office of the General Counsel for 34 years and was Deputy General Counsel for Discipline before becoming General Counsel in 2009.

Ms. Frederick is a 1982 graduate of the Vanderbilt University School of Law and a 1979 graduate of Duke University. Prior to joining the Office of the General Counsel, she spent six years as a staff attorney with the Atlanta Legal Aid Society handling civil legal matters for low-income people.

Ms. Frederick is a Past President of both the Atlanta Bar Association and the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys. She is also an active member of the American Bar Association, where she serves in the House of Delegates. She is Chair of the Coordinating Council of the ABA Center for Professional Responsibility and recently chaired the Standing Committee on Professional Regulation. In the past she served on the Commission on the Future of Legal Services, chaired the Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility and the ABA Diversity Center, and served as a member of the Board of Governors.

Cathy Hampton

Cathy Hampton, a graduate of Spelman College and Harvard Law School, is a nationally recognized sports, entertainment and corporate attorney, NBPA-certified agent and serial entrepreneur. After serving four decades in public and private practice, Cathy launched The Hampton Firm with a thriving roster of elite NBA, NFL, SEC, ACC, MEAC and PAC12 athletes. Cathy's legal career began in the New York and London offices of Sherman & Sterling and continued to positions of increased leadership at the National Basketball Association, Turner Broadcasting System and EarthLink. She led award-winning law departments as Chief Legal Officer for RARE Hospitality and the City of Atlanta before returning to corporate practice at Womble Bond Dickinson. Cathy has served as an Independent Corporate Board Director at Ameritech Facility Services for two decades.

Judge Glenda Hatchett

Judge Glenda A. Hatchett (Retired) is not only a world-renown judge, but she is a prominent attorney with more than 40 years of experience which encompasses a multitude of legal responsibilities. Currently, Hatchett is Of Counsel with the law firm of Stewart Miller Simmons based in Atlanta, Georgia, handling cases throughout the nation, specializing in wrongful deaths, catastrophic injuries, maternal deaths, tractor-trailer accidents, premises liability, products liability, sexual assault, and catastrophic police misconduct cases.

A graduate of Mt. Holyoke College and the Emory University School of Law, where she was an Earl Warren Scholar, Hatchett completed a prestigious federal clerkship in the United States District Court, Northern District of Georgia, where she was the first Black clerk in that federal court. Hatchett then spent nearly 10 years at Delta Air Lines, where she was the airline's highest-ranking woman of color worldwide. As Senior Attorney, she represented Delta Air Lines in labor/personnel, antitrust litigation, and commercial acquisitions. As Public Relations Manager, she supervised global crisis management and handled media relations for 50 U.S. cities, Europe and Asia. Hatchett was appointed to a judgeship in 1990, becoming Georgia's first Black Chief Judge of a State Court in the state's history. There, she presided over Fulton County's Juvenile Court, one of the largest juvenile court systems in the nation. Hatchett gained national recognition for her groundbreaking initiatives for juvenile reform.

Hatchett served as Co-Counsel in the civil wrongful death case of Bobbi Kristina Brown in 2016, resulting in the judgement of $36M in damages to Brown's estate. She gained global attention while representing the family of Philando Castille following his death in 2016. Philando Castille's death marked the first time in the history of the state of Minnesota that a police officer was indicted for killing a citizen. During that time, Hatchett strongly advocated that a special prosecutor be appointed to seek an indictment against the police officer who killed Castille. She was also instrumental in having the U.S. Attorney open an investigation for racial profiling at traffic stops for the entire state of Minneapolis.

She founded Hatchett Consulting Group, specializing with over 40 years of combined experience as an attorney, judge, crisis management expert, mediator, and television talent in legal issues and consulting in the areas of crisis communications and risk management. She also presided over the two-time Emmy-nominated show Judge Hatchett, which is in its 23rd season of national syndication (Sony Pictures Television). She continues to provide legal commentary on networks such as CNN, MSNBC and FOX. Most recently, Hatchett has returned to TV with her new television court series, The Verdict With Judge Hatchett. She presides over the series as a follow-up to Sony's long-running Judge Hatchett. Hatchett is also the author of the National Best Sellers, Say What You Mean and Mean What You Say (Harper Collins, 2003) and Dare to Take Charge (Center Street / Hachette Book Group, 2010).

Hatchett has served on various nonprofit boards, including the National Board of Governors of the Boys and Girl Club of America, the Leadership Circle for the After School Alliance, and the Advisory Board for the Women's Resource Center at Spelman College. She formerly served on the Board of Advisors for Play Pumps International. Presently, Hatchett serves as the national spokesperson for CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), a nonprofit volunteer organization that trains volunteers to represent abused and neglected children.

Judge Robert McBurney

Judge McBurney has served on the Superior Court of Fulton County since April 2012. He survived a stint as Chief Judge from 2018 to 2020. He is also one of the Court's two drug court judges -- a role which allows him to help people rebuild lives harmed by addiction.

Before joining the bench, Judge McBurney served as an Assistant United States Attorney in Atlanta. As a federal prosecutor, he focused on cases involving public corruption, terrorism, and child exploitation.

Judge McBurney received his B.A. and J.D. from Harvard. Prior to his time in public service, he worked as a management consultant for McKinsey & Company. Judge McBurney lives in Atlanta with his wife, who is the head of leadership development at McDonald's, two wonderful (and exhausting) boys, and two equally troublesome dogs.

Judge Eric Richardson

Governor Nathan Deal appointed Judge Eric Richardson to the Fulton County State Court in August 2013. In May 2022, Judge Richardson was elected without opposition to a third four-year term. As a State Court Judge, he presides over misdemeanor criminal cases, including DUI and domestic violence offenses. Judge Richardson also presides over a wide variety of civil cases, including medical malpractice, products liability, fraud, complex business disputes, and personal injury actions.

Judge Richardson earned his Bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of Rochester. He earned his law degree, cum laude, from Cornell Law School. Judge Richardson began his legal career as a litigator at Latham & Watkins in New York City in 1994. In 1998, he relocated to Troutman Sanders in Atlanta, where he spent 11 years, including 7 as a litigation partner. In 2009, he moved to the public sector, joining the city of Atlanta as a Senior Assistant City Attorney. He was promoted in 2011 to Deputy City Attorney, where he managed all litigation for the City until his appointment to the bench.

Judge Richardson lives in Johns Creek with his wife of 34 years, Karen, and has three adult children.