WOMEN'S SECTION

OF THE ALABAMA STATE BAR

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Message from Allison Skinner



Chair of the Women's Section

Welcome to the Alabama State Bar Women's Section! As a section member you are receiving our first issue of our electronic quarterly newsletter. The purpose of the newsletter is to share important dates, special events, CLE programming and highlights about our membership. Currently, our section membership is 421 members and growing. We want to continue to grow our section and encourage our section members to network with one another. I want to thank Leigh Forstman of Pittman, Dutton & Hellums, P.C. (Birmingham) for serving as the Editor of this publication.

What You Need To Know

The Women's Section of the Alabama State Bar is currently 421 members strong, but we want to grow our section and need your participation!

Highlights of the Section Activities

- CLE Opportunities
- Judicial Brunch in January
- Mentoring Programs
- Silent Auction to fund the Janie Shores Scholarship
- Maud McLure Kelly Award Luncheon
- Susan Bevill Livingston Leadership Award Reception
- Committee work
- Networking opportunities

New Initiatives

- A quarterly e-newsletter to highlight section members and professional opportunities
- An electronic Directory of our members listing names, counties and practice areas to help us network statewide
- Membership lapel pins available to order

Our new initiatives are designed to help us communicate with one another. We want to highlight our legal achievements and promote a strong network of women in the legal profession. The more section members we have, the more robust our Directory will be! We also need volunteers by county to help with this monumental project. Please join us! We have lots of fun when we get together!

2015-16 Officers and Board of Directors

Allison O'Neal Skinner

Chair

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Chair-Elect and SBLLA Chair

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Kimberly C. Waldrop

Silent Auction Co-Chair

Members at Large:

Celia Collins

Karen Laneaux

Apsilah (Appie) Millsap

Alyson Hood Raines

Melody Zeidan

Leigh King Forstman (BBA WLS Liaison)

Elizabeth Smithart (Judicial Liaison)



Judge Caryl Privett

2015 Maud McLure Kelly Award Recipient

Judge (Ret.) Caryl Privett received the Maud McLure Kelly Award during the Annual Meeting of the Alabama State Bar on July 17, 2015.

In a very moving and meaningful acceptance speech, Judge Privett shared some of the following excerpts:

I actually started practicing law in Mobile in 1973. These were exciting, if not remunerative times for civil rights advocates...but there weren't many of us. There weren't many female or minority lawyers in Alabama, period. Networking was essential. I began networking with women lawyers and women with interests in politics all over the state. We were a small but vocal bunch.

After about six months in Mobile, I moved home to Birmingham to work with Adams, Baker & Clemon. At work, I was focused on the rights of black workers to equal treatment. My personal interests were focused on the rights of women.

Remember the Equal Rights Amendment? In 1972 I believed its passage was inevitable. When I went to Montgomery to lobby the Alabama legislature, I realized what an uphill, and eventually futile effort we faced.

I left private practice in 1976 to become an Assistant U. S. Attorney. I thought I might stay there a couple of years, if politics allowed. Little did I think I'd be there 22 years.

While I was in the U. S. Attorney's office, the federal Hatch Act limited my politicking somewhat, but membership in the Birmingham Bar Association, the Junior League, the Alabama Women's Political Caucus, the Downtown Democrat Club, all these memberships allowed me to participate in some manner in the political process. And membership in the Birmingham Bar Association and in the Junior League allowed me to work on

women's rights in the form of advocating for the victims of domestic violence...which wasn't considered a crime at the time.

There were efforts to organize women lawyers in Alabama as early as the late 1970's, but it wasn't until about 21 years ago that those efforts resulted in the Women Lawyers Section of the Birmingham Bar Association and the Women's Section of the Alabama State Bar. Just like young lawyers or personal injury lawyers or other professional affinity groups or even golfing buddies, women lawyers continue to need the support that a recognized bar group provides. We all need the affirmation that belonging to a group of likeminded or likegendered individuals can give us.

In 1992, I became a supervisory attorney, and in 1995 was appointed by the United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama to be United States Attorney, the first woman in Alabama to serve in that position. After 2 1/2 years, I stepped down as U. S. Attorney and left the Department of Justice because President Clinton had nominated my friend Doug Jones to the position. I finally realized that I would never attain my goal of becoming a judge as long as I was a federal employee. I needed more networking with my politicking. Five years later, with a lot of help from my friends, I became a judge. This was clearly the pinnacle of my career. I really loved the position, even if I didn't really love campaigning for elected office that much. The job was just The Best.



I've been blessed to have had a fabulous career, a close and warm family, wonderful friends, and my faith.

You have honored me with an award that means more than I can say. By the way, when we started this section and created this award, it was not with the idea that one day I'd be the recipient.

No one reaches the mountain top alone. I have no idea what the next challenge is I'll face in retirement. But I'm excited about it.

- Remarks of Judge Caryl Privett on July 17, 2015

Judge Caryl Privett served as the Founding Chair of the Women's Section of the Alabama State Bar.

Congratulations to Amber Busby

Justice Janie L. Shores Scholarship Recipient

Amber Busby was awarded $4,750 as the 2015 winner of the Justice Janie L. Shores Scholarship at the Maud McLure Kelly Luncheon on July 17, 2015. As Allison Skinner, Chair of the Scholarship Committee, explains, "In 2006, the Women's Section of the Alabama State Bar, along with the Alabama Law Foundation, established the Janie L. Shores Scholarship to support a female Alabama resident attending an Alabama law school." The scholarship is named in honor of the first female Alabama Supreme Court Justice.

Amber Busby graduated from the University of Alabama with a Bachelor of Arts and Sciences degree and a double major in Spanish and history. She was a member of the University Honors and International Honors College, named as an Honors College Innovator, and served as Vice President of Alpha Gamma Delta and as a Student Government Association Senate assistant. Amber Busby is the first scholarship recipient whose mother, Ginger Busby, is an attorney.



Allison Skinner, Amber Busby and Ginger Busby

"With my mother as an attorney, I am even more appreciative of women in the practice of law. I am honored to be the recipient of this prestigious scholarship that recognizes the contribution of women in the profession, particularly Justice Shores. I am so grateful for this financial assistance, and with it, I will do my best to make the members of this profession proud."

— Amber Busby, Law Student

WOMEN'S SECTION SILENT AUCTION RAISES OVER $12,000 FOR FUTURE SCHOLARSHIPS!

Thanks to all who helped with the Women's Section Silent Auction held at the Alabama State Bar Annual Meeting, and especially to our Silent Auction Co-Chairs, Sherrie Phillips and Kimberly Waldrop, for their tireless efforts and amazing talent.

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



KIM BESSIERE MARTIN started her law practice with Bradley Arant in Huntsville, Alabama over 20 years ago when she moved there after law school. Her practice has evolved over the years from work in the areas of First Amendment and employment law to her current focus on medical device and pharmaceutical products liability litigation. She has represented multi-national pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers in litigation across the country. Kim also has experience in representing companies in white collar matters including False Claims Act litigation. She serves as the managing partner of the Huntsville office of Bradley Arant and also sits on the firm's Board. When not practicing law, Kim enjoys spending time with her husband, Clay, who is also a lawyer in Huntsville and with their two girls, Bess (14) and Cate (11).



JANA RUSSELL GARNER graduated from Cumberland School of Law and was admitted to the Alabama State Bar in 1997. For the entirety of her legal career she has maintained her principal office in the 4th Judicial Circuit which includes Bibb, Dallas, Hale, Perry and Wilcox Counties. Since 2008, she has practiced law with the firm of Reeves & Stewart, P.C. located in downtown Selma. Her primary practice areas include plaintiff and defense litigation, family law and alternative dispute resolution. She is listed on the Alabama Center for Dispute Resolution Roster of Mediators and received the Pro Bono Mediator's Award in 2015. Jana is currently serving her second term on the Alabama State Bar Board of Bar Commissioners representing the 4th Judicial Circuit and she received the Alabama State Bar President's Award for exemplary service to her profession. She is married to Paul Garner and they have two children Sam (9) and Fairchild (8).



GINGER L. HARRELSON is a native of Fairhope, Alabama. She received her Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, in History and Political Science from the University of Alabama in 2011. Ginger received her Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, from the University of Mississippi School of Law in 2014. While in law school, Ginger served on the Moot Court Executive Board as the Business Director. She was named a Regional Semi-Finalist in the American Bar Association's National Appellate Advocacy Competition in the Spring of 2014. After graduating from law school, Ginger clerked for the Honorable Michael A. Youngpeter, Circuit Judge for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit of Alabama. In March of 2015, Ginger joined the law firm of Starnes, Davis, and Florie, LLP in Mobile, Alabama as an associate. Ginger's practice focuses on civil ligation and the defense of personal injury cases with a concentration in defense of premises liability, motor vehicle accidents, bad faith, tort of outrage, and wrongful death claims.

- SAVE THE DATE -

Annual Judicial Brunch

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2016
10:30 A.M.
(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

ROSS BRIDGE RESORT
BIRMINGHAM

Section Members invited, but will need to RSVP to secure a seat! Please watch for the invitation via email.



2015 ASB Annual Meeting Women's Section CLE

Inauguration of Susan B. Livingston Leadership Award: Activating Leadership with a Growth Mindset

The Women's Section gratefully acknowledges the CLE Presenters:

Martha D. Roby, U. S. Representative, Second District of Alabama, Montgomery

Hon. Sue Bell Cobb, Former Chief Justice, Alabama Supreme Court, Montgomery

Alyce M. Spruell, Rosen Harwood PA, Tuscaloosa, Past President Alabama State Bar

Panel moderated by:

Teresa G. Minor, Balch & Bingham LLP, Birmingham

Leigh King Forstman is the Editor of the Women's Section of the Alabama State Bar Newsletter. To contact her, email leighf@pittmandutton.com or call (205) 322-8880 or (205) 999-9962.