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WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT – LIVING MY LIFE IN A WORLD OF DIVERSITY



Mother and your Grandmother. I do not need to separate who I am or limit who I am."

I was seeking to serve my State as a Circuit Court Judge. South Carolina Statutes mandate that our Senators and Representatives vote and determine who will be our Judges for Circuit Court, Family Court, Administrative Courts, Court of Appeals, and the Supreme Court. Since our legislators vote, judicial candidates need to have someone working for them to get votes and judicial candidates need to meet face-to-face with those legislators to request their vote. I was asking this Senator for his support and vote. This Senator was born in the late 1920s; he was Black. After the South Carolina Black Caucus had walked out following a Judge's election, I wrote an opinion-editorial emphasizing the need for equality on the Bench, particularly for females. The disparity between female attorneys and female Judges was greater than the disparity between Black attorneys and Black Judges. The Black Caucus focused on the lack of Black Judges.

My brown skin and my sex have been and seems to still be an issue for some people – especially some males. Despite their issues with my skin color and sex, I continue to work for equality. I have never let my color or sex define who I am. I see myself as an American, mother, wife, sister, aunt, abuela, attorney, law professor, community volunteer. I do not think of myself in terms of my color or even think that others see me that way. Therefore, when someone confronts me with a statement like I received from the Senator, I am thrown a little off-kilter. Why does a person's skin color matter? We have no control over who our parents or grandparents are. I often tell my husband that I was born 100 years too early. In 2119, people's skin color will not matter; one's sex, however, may still be an issue.

Equality requires that we treat people fairly. That we see people as people – not as a sex, not as a skin color, not as an ethnicity. Females continue to be dismissed, ignored, and overlooked. I am often the only female, or in the minority, sitting in business or board

"You need to decide if you are Black or if you are a woman." I stood in shock; the shock must have shown on my face when a State Senator said those words to me. We stood outside the Statehouse in Columbia. I had never heard those words or even contemplated his ultimatum before he made that bizarre statement. I quickly responded with a smile, "I am a Black female every day, Senator Anderson; just like your

meetings. I have made statements with little or no reactions from the others at the table. Then, a male makes the same statement, and the response is, "Great idea; sounds good; or we can try that." At first, I would not say anything; then, I began to remind the others that I had just made the same statement.

Until we make the effort to work for equality, we will not see change. It does not matter that South Carolina elected its first female Governor 9 years ago. It does not matter that a female candidate was a predominant party's Presidential candidate 3 years ago. It does not matter that the United States Women's Soccer Team won

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1 year ago. Until females are treated the same as males, we will not move forward. Until we use words that are unrelated to a person's sex, we will not move forward. Until females realize their self-worth and refuse to engage in violent relationships, we will not move forward.

I still experience unfair and unequal treatment, even as President of the Charleston Bar and also when I served as President of the Greenville Bar. A friend, who also has been head-butted by inequality because she is female, told me to take slights and unfairness with a positive attitude. "Kill them with kindness." I am naturally an optimistic and kind person. Growing up in the South almost requires kindness and hopefulness.

What will it take for diversity to be accepted? We need to teach our little girls the importance of self-worth, self-confidence, education, fairness. Females will need to run for political offices; they will need to run for judicial seats; they will need to serve on boards and commissions. Females need to be confident, strong, and resilient. We need to stand up when we see someone treated unfairly. As attorneys, we need to make the effort to treat everyone with respect and integrity. We need to reach out to those we

think are different than we because of color, ethnicity, or economic status. Justice Kaye Hearn has spoken about the importance of paying attention to the person in front of you. She said that person should be your focus. Look that person in the eye, shake her hand,

be in that moment. When we see people as people, as fellow human beings, we will move forward in a positive and life-fulfilling direction. This direction will uplift all of us and put us on the path to equality.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bluestein & Douglas, LLC is pleased to announce that **Rachel Katherine Zielinski** has joined the firm as an Associate. Rachel can be reached at 266 West Coleman, Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina, 29464; telephone (843) 769-0311; Email rachel@bluesteinanddouglas.com.

YCRLAW Welcomes Three New Associates: **Michael Loignon** practices primarily in the firm's Commercial Litigation and Appeals practice group. Prior to joining **YCRLAW**, Michael worked as an attorney for the South Carolina Department of Social Services and the Charleston County Public Defender's Office where he tried numerous cases to jury verdict. **Mallory Molony** practices primarily in the firm's Trucking & Transportation practice group. Mallory served as a law clerk for the Charleston County Public Defender's Office and as a legal intern for One 80 Place. Prior to law school, Mallory worked as a realtor for Carolina One Real Estate. **Zachery Kern** practices primarily in the firm's Employment & Labor Law practice group. Prior to joining **YCRLAW**, Zach served as law clerk to the Honorable Daniel D. Hall, 16th Judicial Circuit.

Womble Bond Dickinson's Charleston office placed 29 attorneys on the 2020 Woodward/White Inc.'s *The Best Lawyers in America* rankings: **J. Marshall Allen**, Healthcare Law; **Charles J. Baker III**, Construction Litigation, Bet-the-Company Litigation, Commercial Litigation, Ethics & Professional Responsibility Law; **Laurel R.S. Blair**, Trusts & Estates Litigation, Trusts & Estates; **David M. Collins**, Admiralty & Maritime Law, Product Liability Litigation (Defendants); **David H. Crawford**, Real Estate Law, Banking & Finance Law, Corporate Law; **Morris A. Ellison**, Commercial Litigation, Banking & Finance Litigation, Real Estate Law, Real Estate Litigation; **Shawn M. Flanagan**, Tax Law, Trusts & Estates, Closely Held Companies and Family Businesses Law; **F. Cordes Ford IV**, Construction Law, Construction Litigation; **W. Foster Gaillard**, Real Estate Law, Land Use & Zoning Law, Commercial Finance Law; **C. Allen Gibson Jr.**, Construction Law, Construction Litigation, Commercial Litigation; **Henry E. Grimball**, Commercial Litigation, Insurance Law, Personal Injury Litigation (Defendants), Product Liability Litigation (Defendants); **Thomas L. Harper Jr.**, Real Estate Litigation, Real Estate Law, Banking & Finance Law; **Greg Horton**, Product Liability Litigation (Defendants), Labor & Employment Litigation, Construction Litigation, Commercial Litigation, Construction Law; **John Hawk IV**, Banking & Finance Litigation; **Sean D. Houseal**, Environmental Litigation,

Personal Injury Litigation (Defendants); **Dana W. Lang**, Product Liability Litigation (Defendants); **Cynthia Spieth Morton**, Real Estate Law, Banking & Finance Law, Commercial Finance Law, Corporate Law; **James D. Myrick**, Commercial Litigation, Insurance Law, Insurance Litigation, Personal Injury Litigation (Defendants); **Daniel Q. Orvin**, Real Estate Law; **Graeme F. Philp**, Closely Held Companies & Family Business Law, Corporate Law, Tax Law; **Elizabeth W. Settle**, Real Estate Law, Banking & Finance Law, Corporate Law; **Kenneth F. Smith**, Trusts & Estates, Tax Law; **Henry B. Smythe, Jr.**, Personal Injury Litigation (Defendants), Product Liability Litigation (Defendants); **Susan M. Smythe**, Corporate Law, Real Estate Law, Banking & Finance Law; **Matthew E. Tillman**, Product Liability Litigation (Defendants); **John H. Warren III**, Banking & Finance Law, Corporate Law, Financial Services Regulation Law, Real Estate Law, Securities/Capital Markets Law, Securities Regulation; **James E. Weatherholtz**, Construction Law, Construction Litigation, Product Liability Litigation (Defendants); **James M. Wilson**, Banking & Finance Law, Real Estate Law; **Stephanie L. Yarbrough**, Economic Development Law.

Butler Snow attorney **Kurt G. Rademacher** has been listed in Legal Week's Private Client Global Elite 2019. Rademacher is an experienced professional in international wealth transfer planning. He represents ultra-high net worth families and family-controlled businesses throughout the world on U.S. federal income, gift and estate tax issues and is regularly called upon by media outlets such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *CNBC*, the *Financial Times* and the *Economist* for expert U.S. tax commentary.

Barnwell Whaley Patterson & Helms is pleased to announce that seven attorneys: **M. Dawes Cooke, Jr.**, **B.C. Killough**, **Randell C. Stoney, Jr.**, **K. Michael Barfield**, **Christopher M. Hinnant**, **Marvin D. Infinger** and **Ernest B. Lipscomb** have been named to the 2020 "The Best Lawyers in America" list and **Dawes Cooke** is named by *Best Lawyers* as the 2020 *Bet-the-Company Litigation Lawyer of the Year*.

Seven partners from the Charleston, South Carolina office of global law firm **K&L Gates LLP** have been recognized in the 2020 edition of *Best Lawyers in America*, with one of the partners, **Mark Sharpe**, also recognized as Charleston's Lawyer of the Year in Corporate Law. The lawyers and the categories in which *Best Lawyers* recognizes them are: **James S.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS, CON'T

Bruce (Corporate Law); **Ernie L. Cochran** (Corporate Law); **J. Walker Coleman IV** (Employment Law - Management, Litigation - Labor and Employment); **Matthew J. Norton** (Real Estate Law); **Mark S. Sharpe** (Banking and Finance Law, Corporate Law-Lawyer of the Year, Litigation - Banking and Finance, Real Estate Law); **Jennifer Thiem** (Insurance Law); **Bryan L. Walpole III** (Banking and Finance Law, Litigation - Banking and Finance).

McAngus Goudelock & Courie, a regional insurance defense firm, is pleased to announce the inclusion of 5 of its Charleston attorneys in the 2020 edition of The Best Lawyers in America: **Mark Davis** (Workers' Compensation Law - Employers); **Carl Edwards** (Insurance; Personal Injury Litigation-Defendants); Amy Jenkins (Employment Law - Individuals; Employment Law - Management; Litigation - ERISA; Litigation - Labor & Employment); Allison Nussbaum (Workers' Compensation Law - Employers); **JD Smith** (Product Liability Litigation - Defendants).

Womble Bond Dickinson attorney **Dan Orvin** has been elected as a Fellow in the American College of Mortgage Attorneys (ACMA). Formed in 1974, the American College of Mortgage Attorneys (ACMA) is comprised of more than 400 lawyers in North America who are authorities in mortgage law. Capital Markets and Financial Institutions sector attorney **Kiff El Jebbari** has joined **Womble Bond Dickinson's** Charleston Office. El Jebbari focuses her practice on domestic and international leveraged finance transactions. She guides both borrowers and lenders in syndicated and single-lender facilities and other secured and unsecured credit facilities for public and private companies.

McAngus Goudelock & Courie has opened an office as part of its real estate practice in Summerville, SC. This is the firm's second location in Charleston and eighth location in SC. Attorney **Chris Digby**, who previously practiced in MGC's Charleston office, joins the firm's real estate practice in Summerville. **Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP** is pleased to announce that **Nicholas C. Soffile** ("Nick") and **Katie**

Hinson Lewis have joined the firm's Charleston office as partners. Nick and Katie practiced with the local firm of Soffile, Hopkins & Lewis, LLC prior to the move. Nick's practice emphasizes business formations, corporate transactions, and real estate transactions. Katie's practice emphasizes real estate and corporate transactions.

Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd is proud to announce that *Best Lawyers* has selected 12 attorneys for inclusion in *The 2020 Best Lawyers in America* and two attorneys as "Lawyer of the Year" for Charleston. **David M. Swanson** (Litigation - Real Estate) and **John R. Chase** (Trusts and Estates) have been recognized as "Lawyer of the Year" for their respective practice areas. The following Charleston attorneys are listed for the specific practice areas: **Scott Y. Barnes** (Business Organizations including LLCs and Partnerships; Corporate Law; Tax Law); **John R. Chase** (Tax Law; Trusts and Estates); **Jeremy L. Cook** (Public Finance Law); **Stephen E. Darling** (Personal Injury Litigation - Defendants; Product Liability Litigation - Defendants); **Charlton deSaussure, Jr.** (Public Finance Law); **Stafford J. McQuillin III** (Commercial Litigation); **Julie O. Medich** (Corporate Law; Mergers and Acquisitions Law); **Wm. Howell Morrison** (Commercial Litigation; Professional Malpractice Law - Defendants); **James H. Suddeth III** (Real Estate Law); **David M. Swanson** (Litigation - Real Estate; Real Estate Law); **John H. Tiller** (Personal Injury Litigation - Defendants; Product Liability Litigation - Defendants); **John Paul Trouche** (Public Finance Law).

Butler Snow has added **Charles R. Scarminach** to the firm's Charleston office. Scarminach will practice with the firm's commercial litigation practice group. Scarminach regularly represents clients in a wide range of complex disputes in state and federal courts, including matters involving business torts, real estate disputes, product liability, complex contractual disputes and construction law. He also has expertise in general appellate litigation.

IN MEMORIAM

Frederick William Riesen, Jr. - November 9, 2019

HAVE YOU RECENTLY MOVED OR CHANGED FIRMS?

Take a few minutes to log in to the Charleston County Bar website (www.charlestoncountybar.org) to make sure your contact information is correct. Having your correct information ensures that you will receive Charleston Bar news.

DAVID SAVAGE

Attorney at Law

Interview by Johnathan Rice, J.D. Candidate 2020



Attorney David Savage shares the military skills that help him most as a litigator. Plus, he shares the unique pastime he now shares with several other attorneys.

You served in the military. Debra Gammons said that your words at the Charleston Bar's Veterans Celebration in November were moving. How did your military service with the USMC enable you to become a National Trial Lawyers Top 100 Trial Lawyer?

First, one should not allow recognitions from legal societies to go to one's head as there are quite a few attorneys in Charleston much more capable than myself. Litigation is simply socially acceptable "legal combat," and the military taught me to first identify the objective at every step, be it the end result or in a deposition. Once the objective is clearly defined, the method to achieve it becomes self-evident. Military service stresses that planning is the key to every successful effort, and I often refrain from filing suit until I have the details nailed down to pursue the case successfully.

You make a promise to your clients on your website. Does your "I-will-never-be-outworked" promise stem

from the USMC's core values such as honor, courage, and commitment?

No, I think the promise stems from me understanding who I am. I can readily admit I'm not always the sharpest tool in the shed. So, to overcome this deficiency, I must make sure I am not outworked. In litigation, the attorneys do not make the facts; they discover and present them. When clients hire me, they have the right to expect my due diligence in all aspects of their case.

I understand, "know your objective, plan your course of action, and execute the plan timely." When practicing law, what's your objective for the client? How do you plan your course of action?

When I conduct my initial client interview, I ask clients what it is that they want me to do for them. This causes them to have to articulate their goal and allows me an opportunity to set realistic expectations. So, my objective is defined by the client's goal. It's my job to explain to them whether I can truly achieve what they want, as the only medium of exchange in personal injury litigation is money. I explain to the client the required proof, so that the client understands what I will need in the course of representation. By letting clients know their participation is an integral part of the litigation process, it assists in establishing the claim and achieving the client's objective.

When it is all said and done, you want people, specifically your peers, to say Mr. Savage's work as an attorney was [blank]?

I would want my peers to say, 'Mr. Savage's work advanced the way law was practiced based upon available technological developments.' When I started practicing, digital imaging did not exist. Complaints were always word allegations. I did not want to become incestuous in the way that I practice law; I began adding images to settlement packages, complaints, and legal memorandums. I wanted to try different approaches to be persuasive. If people were to say that my mantra was 'you don't get it unless you ask for it,' I'll be satisfied.

Any advice on how to develop and maintain a well-earned reputation?

First, attorneys must accept their humanity and that they will make mistakes. I am no exception. When we make mistakes, promptly admit it. Then, reflect upon what it was about ourselves that caused the mistake and resolve not to repeat it while attempting to make amends for the conduct. Second, attorneys should know the Rules of Civil Procedure and Criminal Procedure. Mastery of the Rules will make the practice of law much more efficient and rewarding. Third, if involved in civil litigation, answer opposing counsel's discovery entirely to avoid a motion to compel. Lastly, learn to laugh at yourself; it's stressful trying to portray oneself as being perfect.

Most attorneys share the "wins" as a parable for their advice, do you have a "loss" that can teach a lesson to new attorneys?

Any attorney can try a "slam-dunk" case, but often we must try cases where the outcome is uncertain. I have more than my fair share of losses, and I was most touched when a client thanked me even in defeat. We must remember that clients are often appreciative because the attorney advocated for them, despite a verdict for the defense or a judgment not in the client's expected range.

Do you have any trial tactics you would like to share with new attorneys?

I emphasize at trial that jurors should remember and accordingly value each of the Judge's Jury Instructions on the various elements of damages in my closing argument. I often start a closing by stating, 'To do justice by halves is an injustice.' Then you remind the jurors of the testimony as it applies to each element of damages and end by stating, 'Today you have the ability to do justice. When you leave the courtroom, make sure that you say to yourself, today I did justice and not justice by halves.'

So, these questions are designed to draw out who Mr. Savage is within the community and your family's impact on your success.

Let's start with how you found yourself.

I can remember envisioning myself as an attorney at age 12. I was raised by a single mother, and we were not a family of means in my youth. Occasionally, we were exposed to various inequities, and I could see it even though I was young. I always envisioned being an attorney to assist others in making things right. At that age I never thought that I would have the ability

to become an attorney. I should just stop there because I am becoming emotional.

Your son's name is Jonathan like mine. How did you decide on that name?

Yes. My youngest child is my son, and he is adopted. During his adoption, my sister-in-law came to me when we were considering names and told me the meaning of Jonathan – gift from God, son of Saul, and most loyal friend of David. When I heard the name, I realized my wife and I were fortunate because we were older in life. Our ability to adopt him was a gift from God. Therefore, his name had to be Jonathan.

Do you have any hobbies?

People would be surprised to learn that I have a competitive barbecue team. Membership, however, is not exclusive because we have to order a minimum of 15 shirts. So, the first 15 fellow lawyers who turn in their money are on the team. In our four years of existence we have become a competitive force to be reckoned with, and most of the team members are opposing attorneys that I have dealt with over the years. It is an excellent opportunity to get together and smell like hickory.

South Carolina Victim Assistance Network Needs YOUR Help!

The South Carolina Victim Assistance Network's (SCVAN) Legal Department provides no-cost legal services to hundreds of crime victims annually through consultations and representation in immigration, family, criminal, and civil courts. The Legal Department is seeking attorneys who are willing to provide pro bono and low bono (reduced cost) representation to victims of violent crime for a variety of issues including: temporary restraining orders for harassment and stalking in magistrate's court; orders of protection from domestic abuse in family court; permanent restraining orders in circuit court; changes of immigration status; divorce and custody; employment discrimination; and on-campus issues involving Title IX. The Legal Department supports volunteer attorneys through its new website attorney portal, which provides access to templates; best practices; and education about legal issues common to victims of violent crime.

We ask all attorneys to complete this survey about background and areas of practice. Victimization affects many facets of a person's life so it is impossible to list all of the legal needs a survivor may have. All types of attorneys and experience levels are needed!

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdx-2E2widJ-7zPiZIVhuOwQB53e1hfiZbEJJKRaXVThXNXEQ/viewform>





JULIE J. ARMSTRONG

CLERK OF COURT

Interview by Beverly Bolyard and Shantel Middleton, Charleston School of Law, J.D. Candidates 2020

Charleston County Clerk of Court since 1992, Julie Armstrong still refuses to say she's made it. Find out the question she is always asking instead.

When did you know that the court system would be a part of your life?

In 1986, I came to work for the Charleston County 9th Circuit Solicitor's Office. I stepped out of the corporate world. I worked for Marriott Corporation as the Deputy Human Resources Director. I wanted to get back to Charleston. I'm a tenth generation Charlestonian. I'm a pluff mud girl. I took a big pay cut and came back. I went to work in the Solicitor's Office as a Victim Witness Coordinator. That's how I started. Then I got quickly promoted to the Administrator for the 9th Circuit Solicitor which

means you run Charleston and Berkeley offices.

How would you describe your being a Victim Witness Coordinator?

It was rewarding but sad. Like most court experiences, you see the good and the bad. If you can make a difference and help people, that's what we're here for. It's what we should be here for. I still keep up with my victims many years later. You just bond.

Speaking of close bonds, you come from a military family. Tell us about how that motivated you.

Well, there are four children: three boys and me. As the only girl with three strong brothers, I'm a strong-willed person with strong opinions. I was brought up in a family that was very gregarious. I had a military father, and I was raised in a military environment.

Did your military connection direct you to the court system?

It did, and my family was involved in the courts. My uncle was undersheriff for Charleston County. My other uncle was the mayor of Mount Pleasant. Our family has always been community-minded and service-oriented. I never thought about going into politics. I voted and was active, but I never thought about politics.

Clerk of Court Buck Taylor, who, God bless him, just passed away was a sweet man. He was the longest serving clerk until my term. He served for 24 years, and he retired. There was an open seat. A

group of lawyers from the Charleston County Bar approached me and said, 'Would you consider running?' The rest is history. Three ran on the Republican ticket, and three ran on the Democratic ticket.

I got my (Republican) party's nomination, and an employee from the Clerk's Office got the other (Democratic) nomination so we faced each other. I won in the general election, and that employee who ran against me stayed with me for 15 years. When you talk about why people stay, I think it's just how you treat them.

Who encouraged you to keep walking on the path that brought you here? How did you cultivate those relationships that moved you from corporate America back to Charleston?

It was strange. I wanted to get back to Charleston. I wanted to get back home. There wasn't a lot of corporate America in Charleston at the time. In the 80s this was a depressed area, believe it or not. It wasn't the number one destination then. It was in my heart. The shipyard was getting ready to close. I used to campaign at the gate every morning at shift change. That's how I know it wasn't closed yet. When I want something, I focus on it. I have collected wonderful people throughout my life that influence me. I had a lot of strong women in my life. My mother, my grandmother, aunts, lots of strong women lawyers who guided me. You let that influence you, and you go with it.

Is that a lot of just saying yes sometimes when maybe you would rather say no? Is it saying yes to new opportunities?

Oh, yes. You just have to be flexible and go with it. I took a huge pay cut when I moved. You make those adjustments; but it paid off down the road because I'm home and happy. I married my high school sweetheart, had three wonderful children, and still contribute to the community.

When you graduated from the College of Charleston in 1982, did you have any idea that this is where you would be today?

No, I had no clue. In fact, I was unemployed at that time because there was a recession and jobs were tough to get. I got a job offer two weeks before graduation. I was glad to have it. I graduated one day. I moved to Savannah, Georgia the next day. I worked there, then I got transferred to a Charleston property. I was getting promoted at the Marriott, and I did not want to move to Palm Beach. I was going to be assigned a property down there for work. I thought this might be the time to come home.

Now you run a Clerk system that is huge.

It is. It's hard to describe it. People say, 'Oh, you are the record keeper for the civil, criminal, and family courts? Wow.' A lot of people think that just sounds like a file cabinet. There is so much more. You really are the face of the courts. By statute you are in charge of the courthouse, and, in fact, county council had so much confidence in us they expanded

that authority and gave us the whole complex. I not only have the two courthouses by law, but they've given me the tax side of the house which is where the Auditor, Treasurer, Solicitor, and Chief Public Defender -- all are located.

How has your role changed over time? How has your role expanded?

We've broadened it quite a bit because we're big on access to justice. We want people to be able to sit home and look at what they need to see with access 24/7. I think that was showcased more than ever when we were doing the Michael Slager and Dylan Roof trials.

We took over the cameras in the courtroom, and we ran the view so we could control it. We worked with sixty private media outlets to do live feeds for those cases. You could sit at home and watch it. You did not have to come down here. We had additional spaces to open up for seating, but we never had to open up more than that one courtroom because so many people were able to sit and watch it online.

How did you maintain a demanding job and the demands of motherhood?

My babies are grown. I have a phenomenal husband, my high school sweetheart. He's the Deputy County Administrator for Charleston County. I have a terrific family. What's the saying? Give it to a busy person, and it'll get done.

You take your moment and just get yourself together. You never show them weakness because the weakness is when they take advantage. I was campaigning when one lady said to me, 'You need to be home with your young children. How dare you?' I said, 'Do you think my children need to eat and have a home?' She said, 'Yes.' I said, 'Well, that's what I'm trying to do.' She said, 'You don't have a husband?' I said, 'Well yes, but...' We've come a long way. That's where we started. That's where I was 28 years ago. Now, you don't hear that. Now, it's 'How did you do that with three kids?' and 'Wow, great on you!' My story is not unique. There are many wonderful women out there that do phenomenal things everyday who just aren't in the public eye. You know women like that that lift you up. There is no glass ceiling among them. They pull together.

Have you made it?

I don't consider that. You did your job today. What are you doing tomorrow? I come from a very competitive family. When I was raised, my dad used to put you in a room and tell you to walk up to a stranger. You'd have to talk to that person for two minutes. He would time you. When I was at the College of Charleston, I held down three jobs while going to college. Going to college for my family was a big deal. We didn't have funding for that, so you paid your way. It's just the little things in life. You wonder, 'How is this going to help me?' You don't see it then, but later on you realize and learn how to fend for yourself. I did my job today. I am always thinking what will I do tomorrow.

JURY VERDICTS

CHARLESTON COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

(Information supplied by Clerk of Court's Office)

2017-CP-10-06343: Andrew J. Crotty and Joseph W. Crotty v. Thomas P. Jermyn

Attorneys: Plaintiff: Brandon C. Belger
Defendant: Thomas O. Sanders, IV

Cause of Action: Violation of Property Disclosure Act

Verdict: For the Plaintiff

2017-CP-10-04456: Progressive Northern Insurance Company v. Ginger Rodriguez

Attorneys: Plaintiff: Bradley Lewis Lanford and Mariel Denise Norton
Defendant: Joseph Louis Cortopassi, Timothy Alan Domin, and C. Tyson Nettles

Cause of Action: Declaratory Judgment

Verdict: Case is stayed until after the underlying tort case, *Rodriguez v. Wright et. al.*, 2017-CP-10-3278

Simply click the links below to be taken to the respective roster. Please note that court schedules are changing constantly; please verify current information through S.C. Court Administration or by checking the South Carolina Judicial Department website at https://www.sccourts.org/clerks/roster_map.cfm.

COURT ROSTERS

CIRCUIT COURT ROSTERS

[CHARLESTON](#)

[BERKELEY](#)

[DORCHESTER](#)

FAMILY COURT ROSTERS

[CHARLESTON](#)

[BERKELEY](#)

[DORCHESTER](#)

PRO BONO MOMENTS

By: Alissa C. Lietzow, Esq.
Rachel Stewart, Charleston School of Law
Charleston Pro Bono Legal Services

This a reprint of the November 2019 Newsletter with updates on the Housing Court expansion.

For the 7th consecutive year Travel + Leisure named Charleston the #1 city in the United States. While we celebrate this award, just next door, the City of North Charleston was ranked #1 for number of evictions filed based on a multiyear study by Princeton University's Eviction Lab. What does that mean for our community? Evictions lead to increased likelihood of homelessness, instability for children, and lives disrupted.

Legal aid services for many low-income residents of Charleston County, including those who are facing eviction, can be difficult to find. Navigating the system, including eligibility determination, for services at any number of nonprofits can be overwhelming, especially when facing the prospect of losing one's home.

This excerpt from Matthew Desmond's Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City, is especially pertinent to showing the impact of legal aid on achieving financial stability, specifically in regards to obtaining affordable housing: "Legal aid to the poor has been steadily diminishing since the Reagan years and was decimated during the Great Recession ... Low-income families on the edge of eviction have no right to counsel. But when tenants have lawyers, their chances of keeping their homes increase dramatically. Establishing publicly funded legal services for low-income families in housing court would be a cost-effective measure that would prevent homelessness, decrease evictions, and give poor families a fair shake."

Tackling this epidemic head-on, a new Housing Court Pilot Project started October 3, 2019, to provide representation to low-income residents who are facing an eviction in Charleston County. Charleston Pro Bono Legal Services, along with other non-profit legal service agencies, magistrate court judges, and *pro bono* advocates including law firms like Nelson Mullins and the Charleston School of Law, formulated a program that would provide legal representation to qualifying tenants facing eviction.

As quoted in the Administrative Order signed by Chief Justice of South Carolina, Donald W. Beatty, on May 24, 2019—

The South Carolina Access to Justice Commission has petitioned the Supreme Court of South Carolina to create a pilot program establishing a Housing Court in the County of Charleston Magistrate Court to create an eviction docket on specific days in three specific Magistrate Courts in Charleston County. There is significant need to provide access to legal representation to tenants in Charleston County facing eviction. Increased representation can ensure that the eviction is lawful, defenses are effectively asserted, and secure other relief that may help prevent homelessness.

This Pilot Program is truly the result of collaborative efforts, including Charleston County Magistrate Courts, One80 Place Legal Services, Charleston Legal Access, Charleston Pro Bono Legal Services, South Carolina Legal Services, Charleston School of Law, S.C. 211 Hotline, Trident Urban League, and local law firms. We are all hopeful and optimistic that the Housing Court Pilot Project will provide a lasting impact and extend legal representation to a variety of individuals in Charleston County who are facing eviction. But, we need your help!

The initial rollout of Housing Court occurred on October 2, 2019, in North Area 1 Magistrate Court, and occurs weekly, every Wednesday. Every session includes *pro bono* attorneys and a supporting attorney from one of the four legal aid organizations who helps ensure court runs smoothly and answers any questions. [Click here](#) to read about the experience from the perspective of one participating *pro bono* attorney. The Housing Court Committee has plans for the Program's expansion starting on January 9, 2020, when we will begin holding court in North Area 3, every Thursday. With the additional court coverage, there is a need for more *pro bono* attorney involvement.

If you'd like to learn more or become involved in the Housing Court Pilot Project, please let us know. **We will provide all necessary training, materials, and on-site support.** There are not many opportunities where utilizing your legal knowledge three hours a month could mean the difference between a family going back home or ending up on the streets. Will you help? **E-mail ALietzow@charlestonprobono.org for more information.**



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