

Indelible impact

CLERKSHIPS LEAVE MARK ON YOUNG LAWYERS AND JURISTS THEY SERVE

William T. Moore Jr. (LL.B.'64) – currently serving as the Senior U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of Georgia – “didn’t have the foggiest idea in [his] mind” that he would one day be a member of the federal judiciary, but after almost 25 years on the bench he has not only presided over numerous cases but also helped shape the legal careers of many young lawyers through judicial clerkships.

The School of Law has for many years been recognized as a leading law school for supplying graduates for judicial clerkships, and the experience is a positive one for both recent graduates and the jurists they serve.

“It’s been a great experience for me as a judge to have these young people in my office, benefitting from their ideas and thoughts,” Moore said. “The most valuable aspect of having clerks is having someone in your office to research the issues, get what we think are the correct answers and then feed that knowledge to the judge.”

When selecting candidates, Moore said he always strives to hire clerks who are “just nice people” and have diverse backgrounds.

“I’ve always been interested in smart young people who are open-minded and willing to work hard,” he said, noting, “I never had a clerk that the University of Georgia sent me that I was sorry that I hired.”

Counted among Moore’s former clerks is current U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of Georgia R. Stan Baker (J.D.’04), who served as one of his judicial clerks from 2004 to 2006.

“I cannot overstate the positive impact the clerkship with Judge Moore had for me, not just professionally but also personally,” Baker said.

Baker initially had not planned to pursue a clerkship, but said he changed his mind after Carter Chair in Tort and Insurance Law Emeritus R. Perry Sentell Jr. (LL.B.’58) “suggested” he consider the option after graduation.

Of his clerkship with Moore, Baker said it “made me a better lawyer and judge today, no doubt. But more importantly, Judge Moore is a man of such integrity, wit, and good humor that my time with him made me a better person.”

The positive, indelible impact a federal judicial clerkship leaves on an individual extends beyond Baker’s experience with Moore to those who now clerk for him.

“The ability to mentor these extremely bright, hard-working people is one of the best aspects of my job,” Baker said, adding that he and his wife, Crystal Chastain Baker (J.D.’03), consider his clerks “members of the family.”

Michelle Tang, a 2016 graduate of the School of Law, currently works as an associate in King & Spalding’s Corporate, Finance and Investments practice in New York, but prior to her move to the Big Apple, she spent two years as a clerk for Baker.

“Those two years were the best job I’ve had,” she said, noting that Baker “showed an interest in helping people succeed” after their time at the court ended.

While clerking, Tang said she learned how to work with others on multiple levels – professionally and personally – while fine-tuning her ability to examine the nuances of the law.

“I never expected my clerkship to have the kind of impact it has had on me,” she said. “Those two years were so amazing. It has been more amazing after leaving it. It keeps paying dividends. It truly, truly is the best experience I’ve had.”

Tang, like Baker, had not initially planned to begin her career with a judicial clerkship, but she encourages others to consider it as an option.

“Be open to the idea of clerking,” she said. “Let go of preconceived notions and realize a clerkship will add value no matter what your area of practice will be.”

MOORE



BAKER



TANG



Both Tang and Moore suggested that students who are interested in clerking focus on their writing skills.

“Major in English,” Moore said, “because the better writer you are, the better lawyer you’re going to be and the better clerk you’re going to be.”

Moore also encouraged aspiring clerks and judges to be active with the School of Law’s journals and to work hard while in law school, a sentiment with which Baker agreed.

“Don’t be afraid to take hard classes that require intellectual rigor and thinking deeply,” Baker said. “Also, have some fun along the way – but don’t do anything that would prevent you from passing an FBI background check.”

Wisconsin judge serves as school's Edenfield Jurist in Residence

The School of Law hosted its fourth Edenfield Jurist in Residence during the spring 2019 semester. In February, U.S. District Court Chief Judge James D. Peterson taught a mini-course titled “Dynamic Trial Evidence: The Law & Tactics of Cross-Examination, Experts and Hearsay Law & Strategy” along with Callaway Chair of Law Emeritus Ronald L. Carlson.

In addition to his time in the classroom, Peterson also held a discussion with students regarding “The Seven Objectives for Every Professional Presentation,” which focused on helping students effectively present material to different audiences and market themselves to potential clients.

Peterson joined the U.S. District Court of the Western District of Wisconsin in 2014, and has been chief judge since 2017. After earning his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin in 1986, he became a faculty member at the University of Notre Dame where he taught film and television history for seven years. He then enrolled in law school at the University of Wisconsin and earned his law degree in 1988 and became a member of the Order of the Coif.



The B. Avant Edenfield Jurist in Residence Program was created in 2015 to honor the late federal judge, who served on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia and was a graduate of the School of Law. The program exemplifies the law school's ongoing commitment to connect its students with leaders of the judiciary throughout the state and nation.

Previous Edenfield Jurists in Residence have included:

- U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the Sixth Circuit Bernice B. Donald
- U.S. Court of Appeals Senior Judge for the District of Columbia David B. Sentelle
- U.S. District Court Chief Judge for the Southern District of Georgia Lisa Godbey Wood (J.D.'90)

Jurists connect with students through on-campus visits

Connecting students with jurists – who are pillars of the legal profession – is an essential part of a first-rate legal education and allows students to see the benefits of public service. During the 2018–19 academic year judges from across the nation visited campus, during which they taught classes, led small groups and judged moot court and mock trial competitions. Among them were:

- Former Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces James E. Baker
- U.S. District Court Judge for the Middle District of Florida Timothy J. Corrigan
- Chief Judge of the Superior Courts for Georgia's Northern Judicial Circuit Jeffery S. Malcom
- Senior Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania Eduardo C. Robreno
- U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the First Circuit David J. Barron
- Chief Judge of the Georgia Court of Appeals Stephen Louis A. Dillard
- Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia Harold D. Melton (J.D.'91)
- U.S. District Court Judge for the Northern District of Georgia Eleanor Louise Ross
- U.S. District Court Judge for the Northern District of Mississippi Michael P. Mills
- U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of West Virginia Joseph Robert Goodwin
- Presiding Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia David E. Nahmias
- Senior Judge of the U.S. District Court for Georgia's Middle District C. Ashley Royal (J.D.'74)
- U.S. District Court Judge for the Western District of Missouri Stephen R. Bough
- Colorado Supreme Court Justice Melissa Hart
- Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin James D. Peterson
- U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the Sixth Circuit Jeffrey S. Sutton
- U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the Eleventh Circuit Elizabeth L. Branch
- State Court of DeKalb County Judge Michael J. “Mike” Jacobs (J.D.'03)
- U.S. District Court Judge for the Northern District of Georgia William M. “Billy” Ray (J.D.'90)
- U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas

School is leader in judicial clerkship placements

The School of Law continues to be a leader in supplying graduates and students to the courts to serve as judicial clerks. These elite opportunities provide a unique chance for graduates to learn from jurists and serve state and society while honing their legal skills.

According to a recent article by *Law.com*, employment statistics for the Class of 2018 place the School of Law at 13th in the nation for federal clerkships, which are considered among the most prestigious positions.

Over the past five years, the School of Law has more than 135 of its graduates secure judicial clerkships at federal, state and local levels. Approximately 20% of the Class of 2018 are working as clerks – 16 hold federal judicial clerkships and 22 are clerks in state or local courts.

These positions include placements as far away as Kodiak, Alaska; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Washington, D.C.; Brooklyn, New York; Greeley, Colorado; and Austin, Texas, in addition to many courts in Atlanta and throughout the state of Georgia.

Additionally, the School of Law awarded 21 judicial fellowships during the summer of 2019.

These students worked in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit, U.S. District Courts in the Northern and Southern Districts of Georgia, as well as in State Courts, Superior Courts and Probate Courts within the state.

This fellowship program ensures that students learn the value of working for judges at a variety of levels – by gaining understanding of the country's legal system, witnessing public service firsthand, developing critical thinking and writing skills, and making valuable connections.

13th

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—*Law.com*



Former summer interns celebrate swearing-in with Justice Bethel

When Charlie Bethel (J.D.'01) was sworn in as a justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia in October 2018, several of his summer interns – who are former and current School of Law students – attended to mark the occasion with him. Celebrating with Bethel (third from left) were (l. to r.) Abbie Frye (J.D.'19), Dan Philyaw (J.D.'18), and second-year students David Ian, Will Ortiz and Erin McGonigle.

Batten continues service as Atlanta instructor-in-residence

Judge Timothy C. Batten Sr. (J.D.'84) of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia will continue to serve as an instructor-in-residence at the school's facility in Atlanta for the 2019–20 academic year.

Batten teaches the required introductory course on the American legal system for the school's Master in the Study of Law degree. The M.S.L. program offers students a greater understanding of the legal system and legal expertise in a particular area as it relates to an individual's professional interests but does not allow one to sit for the bar. It can be completed at the School of Law's main campus in Athens, its facility in Atlanta or a combination of the two locations.

Batten has served as a federal judge since 2006 and previously worked in private practice for more than 20 years.



Graduates assume key judicial positions

Several School of Law graduates were elevated to judicial positions or were promoted on their courts recently. Among them are:

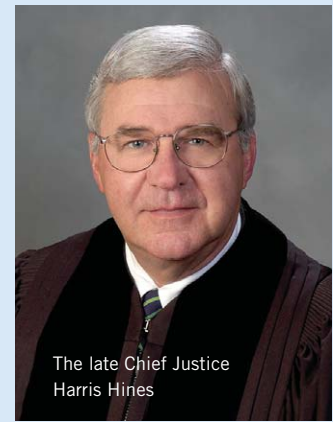
- R. Stan Baker (J.D.'04), U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of Georgia
- Charles J. "Charlie" Bethel (J.D.'01), Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia
- Jean-Paul "J.P." Boulee (J.D.'96), U.S. District Court Judge for the Northern District of Georgia
- Benjamin W. Cheesbro (J.D.'10), U.S. Magistrate Judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia
- Christian A. Coomer (J.D.'99), Judge for the Georgia Court of Appeals
- John J. Ellington (J.D.'85), Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia
- H. Elizabeth Gobeil (J.D.'95), Judge for the Georgia Court of Appeals
- Christopher J. McFadden (J.D.'85), Chief Judge for the Georgia Court of Appeals
- Harold D. Melton (J.D.'91), Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia
- William M. "Billy" Ray (J.D.'90), U.S. District Court Judge for the Northern District of Georgia



At his investiture ceremony, Harold Melton (J.D.'91) (center) was sworn in before his wife, Kimberly, by his predecessor, the late Chief Justice Harris Hines.

Melton becomes chief justice of Supreme Court of Georgia

Harold D. Melton, a 1991 graduate of the School of Law, became the chief justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia in Sept. 2018. Melton was appointed to the Georgia Supreme Court by Gov. Sonny Perdue in 2005 and served as presiding justice from Jan. 2017 to Sept. 2018. Prior to joining the court, he served as executive counsel to Perdue, representing the governor on legal issues covering the entire scope of state government. Before serving as executive counsel, Melton spent 11 years in the Georgia Department of Law under two attorneys general.



The late Chief Justice Harris Hines

Be Kind Fund established in memory of Hines

The School of Law has established the Be Kind Fund in memory of the late Georgia Supreme Court Chief Justice P. Harris Hines, who passed away in December 2018.

The title of the fund is based on a frequent mantra of the late justice – “Be Kind” – and was initiated by the law school’s Board of Visitors – of which Hines was a longtime member – in consultation with his family and Dean Peter B. “Bo” Rutledge.

The fund will sponsor a Georgia Jurist-in-Residence, which will allow a judge or justice to spend a period in residence at the School of Law teaching and interacting with students each year.

It will also support semester/summer fellowships for students, with preference given to those who will work or serve as judicial interns at the Supreme Court of Georgia. This past summer, rising second-year student M. Paige Finley was able to learn about the inner workings of the state’s highest court as the inaugural Be Kind Fellow.

Additionally, the fund has the potential to offer scholarship aid to law students, if it achieves the endowment minimum.

While Hines did not attend UGA, he often joked he was a “Bulldog by proxy.” He regularly attended School of Law events and activities and had served as a member of the law school’s Board of Visitors since 2009.

The late justice was appointed to the Georgia Supreme Court in 1995 by then-Gov. Zell Miller. Hines became presiding justice in 2013 and chief justice in 2017, and retired from the state’s highest court in August 2018.



U.S. District Court Judge Steve Jones (J.D.'87) (fourth from right) poses at his portrait unveiling with a group of his former clerks who attended the reception honoring the jurist.

Portrait unveiled and scholarship named in honor of Jones

Last fall, the School of Law unveiled the portrait of U.S. District Court Judge Steve C. Jones, a 1987 graduate of the law school. At the event, Dean Peter B. “Bo” Rutledge noted that Jones embodies the three words that make up the school’s mission – Prepare. Connect. Lead. – through his many professional and personal accomplishments and through his commitment to the legal profession and UGA. Additionally, a group of anonymous donors created a scholarship in Jones’ honor, and the first Jones Scholar will be named in the fall of 2019.