



Jefferson Bar Association

34th Annual CLE by the Sea: *Farewell Beau Rivage*

March 22-25, 2023

Beau Rivage Resort and Casino

Biloxi, MS

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



JUSTIN E. ALSTERBERG

JJC Law LLC

Justin Alsterberg is a seasoned trial attorney who learned the ropes the old-fashioned way: he began at a large New Orleans area law firm before starting his own firm and becoming its Managing Partner. He has since brought his experience to JJC law to continue focusing more on plaintiff claims, including in the construction arena. Throughout his 15-plus year career he has litigated and tried numerous complex claims, including insurance, construction, personal injury and other complicated litigation disputes. His courtroom experience dwarfs that of many others his age, and he has obtained both multi-million dollar verdicts on the plaintiff's side and verdicts for the defense.

Justin began his hands-on practice early. He had his first significant trial success after his first year out of law school, serving as co-lead counsel in a three-week trial in Federal Court on behalf of one of the world's largest centrifugal pump manufacturers. Justin delivered the closing argument and obtained a multimillion-dollar judgment against the company's former employees for their theft of the company's intellectual property and trade secrets. Since then, he has continued to have success in the courtroom, serving as lead counsel in numerous bench and jury trials in Louisiana state and federal courts, as well as in complex, multi-party arbitration proceedings. In addition, he has handled his own matters on appeal, successfully arguing in front of all but one of the Louisiana Courts of Appeal, the Louisiana Supreme Court, and the Fifth Circuit United States Court of Appeals. Finally, he also currently holds the record for the largest arbitration award to be overturned on appeal in Louisiana – a matter where he successfully argued

that the arbitrators had overstepped their authority in rendering a \$1.4 million breach of contract judgment against his client, a family-owned plumbing company that was faced with the prospect of going out of business if the arbitration award was upheld.

Justin enjoys representing not only individuals, but commercial interests all the way from small-run family business to multinational corporations. He also enjoys taking on what he calls “passion projects,” which included obtaining a verdict against the Baton Rouge Police Department in 2018 for civil rights violations and police brutality, and most recently successfully defending a small, local Baptist church from a hostile takeover attempt by the members of the church’s other location.

Originally hailing from Michigan and graduating from the University of Michigan with Honors, Justin moved to New Orleans after receiving a scholarship to attend Tulane Law School, and quickly determined that New Orleans was home. He was admitted to the Louisiana Bar in 2007, and is admitted to practice in all Louisiana state courts, Louisiana federal district courts and the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Justin’s passion for the City of New Orleans has led him to support many philanthropic endeavors in the city he now calls home. He also previously served as general counsel and co-director of special projects on the Executive Leadership Committee of Evacuteer, a nonprofit whose mission is to recruit and train volunteers to assist the City of New Orleans in the evacuation of its residents who do not have their own transportation in the event a hurricane threatens the city.

EDUCATION

- University of Michigan, BA, with Honors, 2004
- Tulane University Law School, JD, 2007

MICHAEL G. MORALES

Jefferson Parish District Attorney's Office

Michael Morales has served as an assistant district attorney in the metropolitan New Orleans area since 2001. He is currently assigned as the prosecutor in the Economic Crime Unit of the Screening Division at the Jefferson Parish District Attorneys Office.



LORRAINE P. MCINNIS

Berrigan, Litchfield, Schonekas, Mann & Traina LLC

Lorraine Perkins McInnis, born New Orleans, Louisiana; admitted to Louisiana Bar 1991; admitted to Mississippi Bar 2001. Undergraduate education, Louisiana State University – Baton Rouge (B.S., 1984); legal education, Loyola University of the South (J.D., 1991); Judicial Extern, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, 1990-1991; Judicial Clerk to the Hon. Charles V. Cusimano II, 24th Judicial District Court, 1998-2003; Stephens & Grace (Zurich American Insurance Company), 2003-2007; McGlinchey Stafford PLLC, 2007-2013; Deutsch Kerrigan & Stiles, 2013-2015; Berrigan Litchfield, 2015-present. Member, Louisiana and Mississippi Bar Associations, Defense Research Institute, Claims & Litigation Management Alliance, New Orleans Bar Association, Jefferson Bar Association (President, 2010) Practice Areas: Medical Malpractice Defense, representing physicians, hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care providers in the defense of medical malpractice claims and premises liability claims.



MICHAEL S. SEPCICH

Capitelli & Wicker

Michael S. Sepcich practices at the firm of Capitelli & Wicker with a concentration on plaintiff medical malpractice cases. An honors graduate of Loyola Law School, Mike spent the first 12-years of his practice in a defense setting with the New Orleans firm of Lemle & Kelleher. His employment with Lemle began as a court-runner, and he eventually ascended to serving as one of the firm's managing partners. His defense practice included various aspects of health care litigation, and his noteworthy cases include the representation of a major New Orleans health care facility in post-Katrina evacuation litigation; representation of the Louisiana Association of Allergist in its negotiations with Louisiana Blue Cross Blue Shield; Statewide representation of physicians sued as a result of the FDA's market removal of the diabetic drug Rezulin®; representation of Louisiana health care facilities in first statewide Hepatitis C class action; and representation of a forensic odontologist in a civil rights action that was covered nationally by 60 Minutes, Newsweek, and A & E Television.

Since 2010, Mike has also served as a Senior Vice President of a local Jefferson Parish engineering firm where he is a principal, leading the firm's flood protection\coastal restoration division.



HON. HANS J. LILJEBERG

Louisiana Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal, Division F

Judge Liljeberg is a Judge in the Louisiana Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal. His legal career began in the litigation section of the Jefferson Parish Attorney's Office. From there, he became a prosecutor in the Jefferson Parish District Attorney's Office while maintaining a civil law practice. He was elected to the Twenty-Fourth Judicial District Court in 2002 and re-elected without opposition in 2008. While on the district court bench, Judge Liljeberg served in various positions on the court's management committee for many years culminating as Deputy Chief Judge. He was elected without opposition in 2012 to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal, and reelected without opposition in 2022. He serves as an adjunct professor in the Tulane Business School and is a member of the Tulane University Honor Board. He frequently serves on the teaching faculty at the LSU Law School trial advocacy program. He served on the Louisiana Judicial College Board of Governors and has received numerous awards during his judicial career including the Victim and Citizens Against Crime's Outstanding Jurist Award and the Crimefighters' Judicial Award. Judge Liljeberg is a frequent lecturer on various legal topics and was selected to participate in and successfully completed the 2011 inaugural class of the Judicial Leadership Institute. He is a member of many professional associations including the Louisiana State Bar Association, the American Judges Association, the Louisiana Fourth and Fifth Circuit Judges Association and the Louisiana Fifth Circuit Judges Association and serves on the LSBA Medical Legal Inter-professional Committee. Judge Liljeberg earned a Certificate in Judicial Studies from the National Judicial College and both his business degree and Juris Doctorate from Tulane University.



HON. TIFFANY GAUTIER CHASE

Louisiana Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal, Division B

The Honorable Tiffany Gautier Chase received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from Loyola University and her Juris Doctorate from Loyola University School of Law. Judge Chase began her legal career as a Law Clerk at the Louisiana Supreme Court. She served as a Staff Attorney, and then as a Research Attorney to the Honorable Chet D. Traylor. Judge Chase also spent several years as an Associate in the Law Firm of Martzell and Bickford. She previously served as Judge of Division A of Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans. On October 14, 2017, Judge Chase was elected to the Louisiana Court of Appeal, Fourth Circuit where she currently serves as an appellate court judge.



PROF. RAMONA G. FERNANDEZ

Loyola University New Orleans College of Law

She was born in the Dominican Republic and was raised in New York City. She received her Juris Doctorate from Loyola University Law School; her Bachelor of Applied Science form Loyola University New Orleans; and an Associate Degree from Borough of Manhattan Community College, New

York City.

Prof. Fernandez is a Clinic Professor and the Deputy Director of the College of Law. She also heads the Children’s Rights Clinic at Loyola University College of Law. In this clinic, she supervises third year law students who are assigned cases appointed by the court to represent children in highly contested custody disputes and in cases where there have been allegations of abuse and/or neglect, disavowal and avowal of paternity, Special Immigrant Juveniles, intra-family and private adoption, limited interdiction and continuing tutorship. Additionally, Prof. Fernandez taught the Street Law Course at the College of Law for eight years. In this class, second and third year law students go out into the high schools in Orleans, Jefferson, and St. Bernard Parish to teach the students about the law.

In 2010, she was appointed to serve as a Traffic Court Hearing Officer in Jefferson Parish. Since 2003, she has been a volunteer judge, judging the High School Moot Court and the Tulane University Sports Law Moot Court competition.

Prof. Fernandez serves on various boards and is a member of many professional associations including the Louisiana State Bar Association, Jefferson Bar Association, Hispanic Lawyers Association of Louisiana and the National Hispanic Bar Association. She has also received veracious service awards which include: the LSBA Pro Bono Publico and Children’s Law Award, Loyola University of New Orleans Distinguished Alumna of the year, the Gillis W. Long Public Service Award and the Alliance for Good Government Outstanding Service.



JOHN CASEY COWLEY

Casey Cowley LLC

John “Casey” Cowley founded his law firm in 2013. He is passionate about representing his mostly Hispanic clientele, where the firm handles Personal Injury, Immigration and Workers’ Compensation cases.

A native of New Orleans, Casey graduated from Jesuit High School. He has both his undergraduate degree and his Juris Doctorate from Louisiana State University. Casey is fluent in Spanish and studied law for a semester in Argentina at the highly regarded Universidad Austral in Buenos Aires. While there, he developed a deep love for Argentine culture, and went back to Argentina after finishing law school where he lived and worked in Buenos Aires for three years.

Casey has used his knowledge of Spanish to serve thousands of clients since the founding of the firm. He understands what it is to live in a culture in which your language is not the native one and he uses that knowledge to better represent his clients.

Casey is the official sponsor of the Saints broadcasts on Hispanic Radio, and is involved with Catholic Charities in serving the Hispanic community.



JARRED P. BRADLEY

The Bradley Law Firm, PLLC

Jarred Bradley went to Jesuit High School and graduated in 1994, bounced around living in Dallas, Houston, and Boston before returning to New Orleans and continuing his education earning his Bachelor of Arts from UNO in 2006, His Juris Doctor and Graduate Diploma from LSU in 2009, and his MBA from UNO in 2011. Jarred was in-house counsel for All Star Electric out of law school, and currently practices construction, intellectual property, NFT, and crypto law at The Bradley Law firm as a solo practitioner. Jarred and his wife have two boys and live in Metairie.



ABID HUSSAIN
Hussain Law LLC

Abid Hussain has been practicing law for 17 years, focusing on commercial transactions and litigation. Prior to that, he was a tech nerd, working at Internet and software companies for eight years. Abid represents businesses, tech companies, crypto companies, and nonprofits with various business and corporate law matters, including trademarks and copyrights. Abid holds board positions with the Solos and Small Firms and Intellectual Property Sections of the LSBA. He also participates as a hearing committee member at the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board.



HON. STEPHEN C. GREFER
24th Judicial District Court, Division J

Judge Grefer is a Judge of the Twenty-Fourth Judicial District Court, Division “J”. He was a graduate of the University of New Orleans in 1988 where he obtained a B.S. in Business Administration. He received his Juris Doctorate from Loyola Law School in 1991, where he was a member of the National Moot Court Team. He was sworn in as a member of the Louisiana State Bar in 1992, and served as President of the Jefferson Bar Association in 2000 and 2008. He is currently serving on the Twenty-Fourth Judicial District Court having been elected without opposition in February, 2013. Judge Grefer is a frequent speaker at numerous high schools and parent organizations regarding the dangers of drinking and driving as well as presenting at various Louisiana State Bar Association, Jefferson Bar Association and other professional organizations continuing legal education programs. He is a member of the Fourth and Fifth Circuit Judge’s Association, Fifth Circuit Judge’s Association and the John C. Boutall American Inn of Court.



J. BENJAMIN AVIN

Irpino Avin Hawkins

Ben obtained his Juris Doctor and Bachelor of Civil Law degree in 2011 as a graduate of the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center. In 2010, Ben received the Calli Award for his high academic achievement. In addition to his academic achievements, Ben gained practical work experience as a law clerk for the Long Law Firm in Baton Rouge while attending law school. Following law school, Ben gained invaluable experience as a judicial law clerk and staff attorney for Judge June Berry Darensburg of the Twenty-Fourth Judicial District Court in Gretna, Louisiana. Ben is a member of the Louisiana State Bar Association. He was admitted to practice law in Louisiana in 2013.

Ben was born in New Orleans. Prior to attending law school, Ben earned a B.A. in Mass Communication with the concentration in print journalism from Louisiana State University in 2008.



JAMES R. NIESET, JR.

Porteous, Hainkel & Johnson

Jim Nieset defends insurance companies and their insureds in cases involving personal injury, property damage, coverage, and bad faith. He learned how to handle hurricane damage claims after Katrina and Rita. That has been a substantial component of his practice since 2006. He graduated from Tulane and Tulane Law School. He and his wife have two children.



JONATHAN C. PEDERSEN
Howard, Reed, Pedersen & Doré

Jonathan Pedersen is a partner at Howard, Reed, Pedersen & Doré. Jonathan graduated from Millsaps College in 2004 (B.S., Political Science) and earned his J.D. from Loyola New Orleans College of Law in 2007, where he was a member of the Spring National Moot Court Competition Team and was a Moot Court Teachers Assistant. Jonathan started working with Howard & Reed during his first year of law school in 2005, and began learning early how to properly prepare cases for a judge or jury. He has built a winning trial practice and successfully argued cases before the Louisiana Fourth and Fifth Circuit Courts of Appeal. A well respected trial lawyer in the personal injury, mass tort and medical malpractice arenas, Jonathan also represents lawyers and judges facing allegations of professional misconduct and applicants in bar admission proceedings. Jonathan also serves as a Special Master for the 24th Judicial District Court (Jefferson Parish) for all property damage cases related to Hurricane Ida. From 2017 to 2022, Jonathan was an Adjunct Professor at the University of Holy Cross where he taught Law, Ethics & Policy in Healthcare Administration. Jonathan has served as a JLAP Monitor since 2014 and he currently serves as a Board Member of the Louisiana Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program and the Co Chair of the LSBA Committee on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. Jonathan is a member of many professional associations including the Louisiana State Bar Association, Academy of Court Appointed Neutrals, New Orleans Bar Association, and Jefferson Bar Association.



RICHARD P. LEMMLER, JR.

Louisiana State Bar Association

Richard P. Lemmler, Jr. has been Ethics Counsel for the Louisiana State Bar Association since May 1, 2002. Until mid-September 2011, he and his staff were responsible for the day-to-day operations, administration and on-going promotion of the LSBA's Ethics Advisory Service, providing confidential, informal advice and ethics advisory opinions, as needed, to the nearly 23,000 lawyer members of the Association, including advice and opinions on proposed lawyer advertising. While still regularly involved with offering advice and opinions through the Ethics Advisory Service, Mr. Lemmler now focuses the majority of his time on the day-to-day operation and administration of the LSBA's lawyer advertising filing and evaluation program, including its online, public database—ensuring that Louisiana lawyers have ready access to information, guidance and educational opportunities regarding advertising their legal services ethically within Louisiana. And he continues to work very closely with the LSBA Rules of Professional Conduct Committee.

Mr. Lemmler is frequently called upon to teach and speak about legal ethics (and, occasionally, professionalism), including lawyer advertising, averaging 25 to 40 one-hour presentations per year at CLE seminars all around—and sometimes outside of—the State of Louisiana. In fact, to date, he has given well over 200 one-hour (or longer) CLE presentations focused exclusively on lawyer advertising. And he has been honored, privileged and deeply grateful to be invited to be a speaker at the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board Free (“Road Show”) CLE programs, year after year, since 2010. He is also proud to have been a recipient of an LSBA President's Award in June 2007, given in recognition of his service to the LSBA and the LSBA Rules of Professional Conduct Committee on the Bar's lawyer advertising initiative.

Before joining the LSBA staff, Mr. Lemmler practiced law in New Orleans for 14 years as a solo, general practitioner. He also served two consecutive three-year appointments to the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board, first as a Lawyer Member of a disciplinary hearing committee and then as Chair of a hearing committee.



KENNETH R. BARNES, JR.

The Law Office of Kenn Barnes

Kenn Barnes, Jr. serves as the founder of the Law Office of Kenn Barnes, specializing in criminal law and personal injury. Previously Kenn served as Special Counsel- Criminal Justice and Specialty Courts to the Louisiana Supreme Court. Mr. Barnes's duties included spearheading many of the Court's criminal justice and specialty court initiatives, such as the Court's pretrial services, specialty court programs across Louisiana, serving as liaison between the Louisiana Supreme Court and the Felony Class System Task Force, Louisiana Public Defender Board, Louisiana State Law Institute, and was appointed by Louisiana's Governor John Bel Edwards to the Justice Reinvestment Oversight Committee on behalf of the Louisiana Supreme Court. Mr. Barnes has served as the Court's appointee to the Louisiana Drug and Specialty Court Commission and Clean Slate Committee.

In addition to his legal involvement, Mr. Barnes is a 2020 Gambit "40 under 40" and 2019 American Bar Association "Rising Star: 40 under 40", 2020-2021 New Orleans Regional Leadership Institute cohort, 2019-2020 Loyola Institute of Politics cohort, and 2019 New Orleans Business Alliance Economic Development Ambassador. Kenn is an initiate and member of the Nu Psi Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha, Fraternity Inc. Kenn also serves his community as a member of the Louisiana New Leader's Council Advisory Board and wrestling coach at Xavier University. Kenn received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Louisiana State University in 2011 and his Juris Doctorate and Diploma of Comparative Law from the Paul M. Hebert Law Center at Louisiana State University, where he served as Executive President of the Student Bar Association in 2015.



HON. JAY B. MCCALLUM

Louisiana Supreme Court, Fourth District

Justice Jay B. McCallum, known to many as simply “Judge Jay”, is a much sought after motivational and inspirational speaker for various religious, civic, business and trade groups. He is best known for using humor to instruct, inspire, and motivate his audiences. Justice McCallum earned his Juris Doctorate from LSU’s Paul M. Hebert Law Center in 1985 and returned home to Union Parish where he has served the people of North Louisiana for over thirty-five years. During his time as a public servant, he served as an Assistant District Attorney, a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives for eleven years, a trial court judge for fifteen years, and an appellant judge for three years. In 2020, Justice McCallum was elected to represent District 4 as an Associate Justice on the Louisiana Supreme Court.

Jay is a strong supporter of local programs that foster honesty and integrity in our State’s youth, as they are our future. He is actively involved in various church ministries, enjoy the outdoors, and is an avid gardener. He is most proud of being the husband of Deanna Dunham McCallum, the father of John and Sarah Katherine, and grandfather of Cato Theodore McCallum.



RENEE L. SWANSON

Renee Swanson, LLC

Renee L. Swanson has been a solo practitioner since 2011. Since that time, her practice has focused primarily on representing clients in complex and highly contested family law litigation in Jefferson, Plaquemines, and Orleans Parishes at both the trial court and appellate court level. Renee obtained her Juris Doctor from Loyola University College of Law in 2010. During law school, Renee worked as a full-time law clerk for Leo J. Palazzo at the Palazzo Law Firm, she worked as a student practitioner in Loyola Law School’s Criminal Defense Clinic and Tulane Law School’s Legislative Law Clinic, she served as an editor on the Loyola Journal of Public Interest Law, and her article, *Are We Safe at Home from the Prying Dog Sniff*, was published in the Loyola Journal of Public Interest Law. Upon graduating law school, Renee continued working for the Palazzo Law Firm as an associate attorney focusing on personal injury litigation and sat second chair in several jury trials. Renee has served on the Family Law Council of the Louisiana State Bar Association for three years, and she is currently Vice-Chair. She is a member of many professional associations including the Louisiana State Bar Association, Jefferson Bar Association, and New Orleans Bar Association. Most notably, while serving on the Board of the Young Lawyers Division of the Jefferson Bar Association, Renee started the JBA’s monthly Wine Down Wednesday socials.



HON. AMANDA C. CALOGERO
Jefferson Parish Juvenile Court, Section B

Judge Amanda C. Calogero was elected first in 2018 then without opposition in 2020 to Section B of the Jefferson Parish Juvenile Court. For the seven years prior to being elected, Judge Calogero was the Chief Prosecutor of the District Attorney's Office supervising juvenile delinquency, child dependency, and child support cases. In her tenure with the District Attorney, Judge Calogero worked primarily in screening and prosecution of child abuse and homicide.

Judge Calogero achieved her Juris Doctorate from Loyola University School of Law in 1997. Judge Calogero holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, having graduated in 1991 with Honors from Nicholls State University. While attending Loyola at night, Judge Calogero held a full-time position as a Registered Nurse, primarily in the Emergency Department and as a weekend hospital administrator.

Judge Calogero represented Jefferson Parish on the Louisiana District Attorneys Association and served on the Louisiana Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Board, as well as the Commission on Human Trafficking. Judge Calogero holds the national distinction as a Child Welfare Specialist through the National Association of Counsel for Children. Additionally, Judge Calogero completed a fellowship with The Early Childhood Policy Leadership Institute through Tulane Medical School.

Currently, Judge Calogero oversees juvenile delinquency and child welfare cases and serves on the board of the Fifth Circuit Judges Association as well as a liaison to the Department of Children and Family Services and the National Child and Family Court Judge Organization, on behalf of the Louisiana Juvenile and Family Court Judges.



HON. JUNE BERRY DARENSBURG

24th Judicial District Court, Division C

On April 1, 2006, the Honorable June Berry Darensburg was elected Judge to the Twenty-Fourth Judicial District Court, Division C, for the Parish of Jefferson, State of Louisiana. She was re-elected without opposition in July 2008, August 2014, and July 2020. Judge Darensburg is the first African-

American female elected to a judgeship in Jefferson Parish.

Judge Darensburg is a 1980 graduate of Grace King High School. Pursuing her first career ambition, she enrolled at Xavier University of Louisiana where she majored in Pharmacy. She received her Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from Xavier in 1985. While working as a Pharmacist, Judge Darensburg developed an interest in the law. She attended Loyola University College of Law full time, while working part time as a Pharmacist. In December, 1994, Judge Darensburg graduated from Loyola. She worked in private practice, and was employed by the Jefferson Parish Indigent Defender Board providing legal services to those unable to afford representation. She was also employed as an Associate Attorney by The LeBlanc Butler Law Firm where she was a litigator in the areas of Products Liability and Insurance Defense.

She is a member of the National Bar Association, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, National Association of Women Judges, American Bar Association, Louisiana State Bar Association, Louisiana Judicial Council-NBA, Louisiana District Judges Association, Fifth Circuit Judges Association, Fourth and Fifth Circuit Judges Association, Jefferson Bar Association, Louis A. Martinet Society and Louisiana Pharmacy Association.

She is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the Westwego Rotary Club, the Xavier University Investigational Review Board, Leadership Jefferson Task Force, Academy of Our Lady Board, and Loyola Law Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Judge Darensburg presides over civil, criminal and domestic cases, and volunteers as an Intensive Probation Drug Court Judge. She serves on the Management Committee for the 24th JDC, where she chairs the Specialty Treatment Court Committee. She also serves as Treasurer of LJCF/NBA. She served as Chief Judge of the 24th Judicial District Court from January 1, 2014 until December 31, 2015.



SOWMYA MANDAVA

24th Judicial District Court, Division C

Sowmya Mandava is the Judicial Staff Attorney for the Honorable June Berry Darensburg at the Twenty Fourth Judicial District Court for the Parish of Jefferson, Louisiana.

Sowmya is a member of the Louisiana State Bar Association, where she serves as a member on the House of Delegates for the 24th District. Sowmya also serves on the LSBA Diversity Committee, the LSBA Children’s Law Committee, and the LSBA Continuing Legal Education Committee. Sowmya is the Co-Chair of LSBA Outreach Committee and was a member of the 2019-2020 Leadership LSBA class. Sowmya is also a member of the New Orleans Bar Association the St. Thomas More Inn of Court, and the Jefferson Bar Association, where she is the current chair of the Jefferson Bar Association, Young Lawyers Division. Prior to joining the 24th JDC, Sowmya clerked for the Honorable Bernadette D’Souza at Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans; and, interned with the Honorable Lee V. Faulkner, Jr. at the Twenty Fourth Judicial District Court for the Parish of Jefferson, Louisiana and the Honorable Fredericka Homberg Wicker at the Louisiana Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal. Prior to law school, Sowmya was a litigation assistant at Fishman Haygood, LLP in New Orleans.

Sowmya received her Juris Doctor from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, where she was the President of the Asian Pacific American Law Student Association and a Student Practitioner in the Family Law Clinic.

Sowmya received her Master of Science in Criminal Justice Administration from Loyola University New Orleans and her Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Kennesaw State University.

Sowmya is married to Sree Harsha Mandava, an attorney at Caraway LeBlanc. They are the proud parents of two rambunctious children Saheli (5) and Veer (10 months old).



KRISTEN D. AMOND

Mills Amond, LLP

Kristen Amond is an attorney at Mills & Amond LLP. Kristen practices in federal courts in Louisiana and Mississippi and in state courts in Louisiana. She represents businesses of all sizes in all forms of business disputes, and enjoys serving as outside general counsel to small businesses and start-ups. She has represented bankruptcy trustees, plan administrators, and receivers in complex litigation and investors in securities fraud lawsuits.

Kristen has a special commitment to Louisiana's economic development, its culture, and, in particular, its underserved communities. As a member of the civil pro bono panels for the Eastern and Middle Districts of Louisiana, she regularly volunteers her professional time to the representation of plaintiffs in civil rights cases.

She served as a clerk to the Honorable Judge Susie Morgan of the United States District Court of the Eastern District of Louisiana. In law school, she served as an intern for the Honorable Judge Brian A. Jackson of the United States District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana.

Kristen graduated magna cum laude from the Paul M. Hebert Law Center at Louisiana State University in 2016. In law school, she served as the Editor-in-Chief of the Louisiana Law Review, Chair of the SBA's Ethics Board, 3L Representative of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and team member of the greatest LSU Law Powderpuff Football team to grace PMH's halls.

Before law school, Kristen taught second and third grades in New Orleans charter schools and has been an advocate for public education ever since.

Amond was elected to two terms as the District 1 representative for the Louisiana State Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division and now serves as the Council's secretary. She also serves on the board of the New Orleans Federal Bar Association Younger Lawyers Division, and is an alumna of the New Orleans Regional Leadership Institute and a Council for a Better Louisiana's Leadership Louisiana program.



SCOTT STERNBERG
Sternberg, Naccari & White, LLC

Scott Sternberg is the managing partner of Sternberg, Naccari, and White, a firm he founded six years ago. In those six years, the firm has grown to 16 lawyers across Southeast Louisiana. In addition to business and commercial litigation, Scott is best known for his media and First Amendment practice throughout Louisiana and Mississippi. Scott has his dream job, starting pro bono with the New Orleans non-profit newsroom The Lens and student papers, like The Hullaballo and The Daily Reveille, he now represents The Times Picayune, The Advocate, WVUE Fox 8, and national publications like USA Today and The Wall Street Journal

Scott attended LSU and obtained a degree in journalism. After a stint in Washington DC, Scott returned to attend LSU Law, where he did some freelancing at the legislature for the Times-Picayune, was selected for the Louisiana Law Review and Moot Court Board, and was elected Student Bar Association President and the LSU Board of Supervisors as its lone student member.

After law school, he joined the storied New Orleans law firm of Baldwin Haspel, where he cut his teeth in admiralty, business and succession work--and learned Media Law by doing pro bono work, slowly building a media practice. Scott's dream job is eclipsed only by his brilliant, patient wife, Breland, and their four (!) screaming children.



STEPHEN M. GELÉ

Smith & Fawer, LLC

Born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana, Stephen M. Gelé earned a degree in Political Science from Loyola University, and then a law degree at Loyola School of Law. He has litigated a great variety of disputes in multiple forums throughout his almost thirty years of practicing law, including such diverse issues as internal business disputes, injuries to person and property, construction defect, campaign challenges and intellectual property. He has also consulted with multiple clients regarding legislation, public policy, campaigns, and public interest organizations.

He revels in his civic engagement, including: acting as Chairman of the Board of a think tank focused on improving Louisiana law and government; serving as an elected member of the Orleans Parish Republican Executive Committee; and enjoying D.C. Mardi Gras as a member of the Mystick Krewe of Louisianians. Visit: <https://smithfawer.com/attorneys#stephen-m-gele> to see Mr. Gelé's biography.