

Criminal Law Seminar

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

by order of presentation

Dan Goldberg

*Fifth Circuit Solicitor's Office
Columbia, SC
(Course Planner)*

Dan Goldberg is the Chief Deputy Solicitor in the Fifth Circuit Solicitor's Office. After graduating from the University Of South Carolina School of Law, he began his legal career as an Assistant Solicitor in 2005 and has been a Deputy Solicitor since 2011. He has participated in numerous trainings over the years for the South Carolina Bar, the South Carolina Commission on Prosecution Coordination, including the annual Solicitor's Conference and Prosecution Bootcamp, as well as various other organizations such as the South Carolina Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the University of South Carolina School of Law, and the South Carolina Magistrates Advisory Council. Dan was a member of the Leadership Academy, Class IV, of the South Carolina Bar and is currently a member of both the Criminal Law Section Council and the Resolution of Fee Dispute Board of the South Carolina Bar. He is a member of the South Carolina Supreme Court's Committee on Character and Fitness and also serves as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Domestic Abuse Center as well as a member of the John Belton O'Neill Inn of Court. In 2021, Dan was the recipient of the Ernest F. Hollings Award for Excellence in State Prosecution for General Sessions.

The Honorable William McKinnon

S.C. Circuit Court

York, SC

Judge William A. “Bill” McKinnon was born in Raleigh, North Carolina and is the son of Halbert H. and Gail T. McKinnon. His father is a retired dentist and U.S. Army Reserve colonel, and his mother is a retired teacher. He is married to the former Ellen Whitley, a native of Rock Hill, and has two daughters. His wife, Ellen, is a registered nurse.

He grew up in Winston-Salem, North Carolina and attended local public schools. Judge McKinnon graduated from Princeton University, in Princeton, NJ. After graduation, he taught middle school math and Latin. Judge McKinnon graduated magna cum laude from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 2001, and was first in his law school class.

Following his graduation from law school, Judge McKinnon clerked for then Chief Judge Joseph F. Anderson, Jr., in the District of South Carolina. He then moved to the Fairbanks, Alaska area for one year to clerk for the Hon. Andrew J. Kleinfeld on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Judge McKinnon began his private practice of law with Covington & Burling in Washington, DC. He missed South Carolina, and came back in 2004 to join Lewis, Babcock & Hawkins in Columbia. At Lewis, Babcock, Judge McKinnon handled plaintiff’s cases and defended civil cases. He subsequently moved to Rock Hill in 2007 to join McGowan, Hood & Felder, where he spent the majority of his career handling medical malpractice and other plaintiff’s cases. He also occasionally represented other attorneys on ODC matters.

In 2015, Judge McKinnon began work as a part-time assistant solicitor in the Sixteenth Circuit Solicitor’s Office while maintaining his private practice, and in 2016, went to work for the Solicitor’s Office full-time.

Judge McKinnon is admitted to the Bars of South Carolina and Washington, DC, as well as the District of South Carolina, various federal Courts of Appeal, and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Judge McKinnon also serves as an elder in the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). In his spare time, he enjoys reading (both fiction and non-fiction) and is a lifelong movie buff.

Judge McKinnon was elected as Resident Circuit Judge of the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit in February 2018, succeeding the Hon. John C. Hayes, III upon Judge Hayes’ retirement.

Representative Micajah P. “Micah” Caskey

SC House of Representatives/Caskey Law Firm

West Columbia, SC

Micah Caskey is an elected member of the South Carolina House of Representatives and the managing attorney at Caskey Law Firm. Rep. Caskey was first elected in 2016 and has been re-elected since. He serves on the S.C. House Ways & Means Committee and chairs the S.C. House Rules Committee.

Before being elected to legislative office, Micah Caskey worked as a management consultant at an international firm serving Fortune 100 company clients and later served as a state criminal prosecutor.

Caskey served in the United States Marine Corps from 2003 to 2013, where he earned the rank of Captain. His military service included combat deployments in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Micah holds a master’s degree in international business administration from the University of South Carolina, where he also earned his law degree. His bachelor’s degree is from the University of Florida.

EDUCATION:

B.A., University of Florida, Gainesville, FL (2003)

J.D., University of South Carolina School of Law, Columbia, SC (2011)

I.M.B.A., University of South Carolina Moore School of Business, Columbia, SC (2012)

BAR ADMISSIONS:

South Carolina; District of Columbia Court of Appeals; U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina; U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit; Supreme Court of the United States

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Member, S.C. House of Representatives, Columbia, South Carolina (2016 – Present)

- Chairman, S.C. House Rules Committee (2024 – Present)
- Member, S.C. House Ways & Means Committee (2022 – Present)
 - Interim Chairman, Constitutional Offices Budget Subcommittee
 - Chairman, Economic Development Legislative Subcommittee
- Member, Joint Bond Review Committee (2025 – Present)
 - Member, Fiscal Oversight Subcommittee
- Member, S.C. House Judiciary Committee (2016 – 2022)
 - Chairman, General Laws Subcommittee
- Member, S.C. House Ethics Committee (2020 – 2024)
- Member, S.C. House Legislative Oversight Committee (2018 – 2020)
 - Member, Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Subcommittee

Chairman, S.C. Judicial Merit Selection Commission (2022-Present)

Caskey Law Firm, P.A., West Columbia, South Carolina (2016 – Present)

Assistant Solicitor, Eleventh Circuit Solicitor's Office, Lexington, South Carolina (2014 – 2016)

Special Assistant Attorney General (*pro bono*), S.C. Attorney General's Office, Columbia, South Carolina (2013 – 2016)

Project Manager, RLG International, Prudhoe Bay, Alaska (2012 – 2014)

Captain, United States Marine Corps (2003 – 2013)

- Active Duty (2003-2007, 2009), IRR (2008, 2010-2013)
- Combat deployments: Iraq (2004, 2006), Afghanistan (2009)

MILITARY HONORS

Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal (x3); Iraq Campaign Medal; Afghanistan Campaign Medal; NATO International Security Assistance Force Medal; Global War on Terror Expeditionary Medal; Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Armed Forces Reserve Medal; Presidential Unit Citation; Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon; Sea Service Ribbon (x3); and, Combat Action Ribbon

CURRENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

South Carolina Bar Association; Lexington County Bar Association; South Carolina Association for Justice; South Carolina Access to Justice Commission; South Carolina Judicial Merit Selection Commission

Senator Overture Walker
SC Senate/Stoney and Walker, LLC
Columbia, SC

In 2024, Overture Walker won election to the South Carolina State Senate from Richland County, for Senate District 22.

Overture is a graduate of the University of South Carolina ('02) and the University South Carolina School of Law ('04). During his time in college, he served as an intern to Democratic Governor Jim Hodges. While in law school, he completed summer studies abroad at the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn in London, England.

Upon graduation, Overture began his legal career as a public defender in the Richland County Public Defender's Office. After his stint working in indigent defense, Overture joined the staff at the Office of the City Attorney in Columbia where he served as a city prosecutor and as an assistant city attorney. In 2015, he was appointed to the position of Municipal Court Judge by Columbia City Council. In 2020, Overture was elected to the Richland County Council, District 8, and served as Chairman of Council in 2022 and 2023.

As Richland's junior senator, he currently serves on the following committees in the State Senate: Judiciary; Transportation; Corrections & Penology; and Rules.

Overture is the co-owner and co-founder of Stoney & Walker, LLC, which has law offices in Columbia and Charleston providing a wide range of legal services from personal injury and workers' compensation to criminal defense and probate/estate planning.

Overture is married to Sharon DuPree Walker and they have a daughter who attends Spring Valley High School in Richland School District Two.

Major Ricky Johnson
SC Senate/Stoney and Walker, LLC
Columbia, SC

EDUCATION

University of South Carolina

- Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice,
2006 *Magna cum Laude*

University of Louisville (Graduate Level Courses)

- Southern Police Institute (SPI) - Administration Officers Graduate School
Course, 2019 *Honor Graduate*

University of Virginia (Graduate Level Courses)

- FBI National Academy Session 295 Graduate, 2025

AWARDS

- Distinguished Graduate Award - SC Criminal Justice Academy, Aug, 2007
- Challenge Run Award – SC Criminal Justice Academy, Aug, 2007
- Deputy of the Quarter – Richland County Sheriff's Department (RCSD), Jan – Mar, 2011
- Deputy of the Quarter – RCSD, April – June, 2016
- Deputy Darrell Lane Drug Enforcement Award – RCSD, Dec, 2016

- Sheriff's Merit Award – RCSD, July 19, 2017
- Deputy of the Quarter – RCSD, July – Sept, 2018
- Narcotics Agent of the Year – RCSD, Dec, 2018
- Dean Scholar Award – University of Louisville – SPI, May 9, 2019
- B. Edward Campbell Service Award – University of Louisville – SPI, May 9, 2019
- Top Forensic Examiner– National Computer Forensics Institute (NCFI | Secret Service) - 2023

LAW ENFORCEMENT EXPERIENCE:

Major, Criminal Investigations Division, Richland County Sheriff's Department

- **Promoted to Major:** Jan 2024

Major of the Criminal Investigations Division, overseeing 100+ investigators, supervisors and civilians

Captain, Technical Services and Narcotics Units, Richland County Sheriff's Department

- **Promoted to Captain:** Sep 2022

Managed and supervised both units with an emphasis on advanced technical investigations and narcotics enforcement.

Lieutenant, Unit Commander of the Narcotics Unit, Richland County Sheriff's Department

- **Promoted to Lieutenant:** 2019

Managed and supervised a team of specialized investigators in narcotics investigations.

Sergeant, Criminal Investigations Division, Richland County Sheriff's Department

- **Promoted to Sergeant:** 2017

Supervised a team of specialized investigators in narcotics investigation

Investigator, Richland County Sheriff's Department

- **Promoted to Investigator:** 2014

Conducted in-depth investigations into various crimes including, property theft and drug trafficking.

Task Force Officer, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)

- **Deputized by the DEA:** 2013

Investigated local, state and national drug trafficking organizations.

Drug Suppression Team (DST) Member, Richland County Sheriff's Department

- **Joined:** 2010

Proactive focus on street-level narcotics activity throughout Richland County.

Regional Burglary Suppression Team Member, Richland County Sheriff's Department

- **Joined:** 2009

Assisted investigations with burglary trends.

Regional Patrol Deputy, Richland County Sheriff's Department

- **Joined:** March 2007
Began law enforcement career with the Richland County Sheriff's Department

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND DIGITAL FORENSIC TRAINING/CONTINUED EDUCATION:

- Street Gang Investigations – Regional Counterdrug Training Academy, 2010
- Prescription Drug Investigations - Regional Counterdrug Training Academy, 2010
- Confidential Informant Training – Richland County Sheriff's Department, 2011
- Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training - HIDTA 2012
- Highway Vehicle Stops and the Drug Trafficker – HIDTA, 2012
- Basic Cellebrite UFED Touch Usage – DEA Digital Evidence Lab, 2014
- Proactive Federal and State Investigations – HIDTA 2015
- The Reid Technique of Investigative Interviewing – John E. Reid, 2015
- Introduction to Cellphone Investigations – NW3C, 2016
- Social Media Research Investigations – HIDTA, 2016
- Techno Security 8z.. Mobile Forensics Investigations Conference, 2016
- Cellebrite Mobile Forensics Fundamentals – Cellebrite, 2016
- Cellebrite Certified Logical Operator – Cellebrite, 2016
- Cellebrite Certified Physical Operator – Cellebrite, 2016
- Cellebrite Certified Mobile Examiner – Cellebrite, 2016
- DEA Basic Narcotics Investigations Class – DEA, 2016
- Certified JTAG (Advanced Mobile Forensics 2.0) Forensic Examiner – Teel Tech, 2017
- Certified BGA Chip-off (Advanced Mobile Forensics 2.0) Forensic Examiner – Teel Tech, 2017
- First Line Supervision and Leadership – RCSD, 2017
- Narcotics Commanders Course – SC CJA / University of SC, 2017
- Interviews and Interrogation – National Center for Credibility Assessment FBI 8z.. Secret Service, 2018
- Administrative Officers Graduate Course – University of Louisville – SPI, 2019
- Cell Phone Evidence: From Seizure to Court Room- Legal and Liability Risk Management, 2020
- Introducing Digital Evidence in Court – NW3C, 2021
- Search Warrants 8z.. Digital Evidence – NW3C, 2021
- Post-Seizure Evidentiary Concerns – NW3C, 2021
- Cellebrite Advanced Smartphone Analysis (CASA) Certified Examiner – Cellebrite, 2021
- SANS FOR585 – Smartphone Forensic Analysis In-Depth - SANS Institute, 2022
- Cellebrite Certified Logical Operator – Cellebrite, 2022
- Cellebrite Certified Physical Operator – Cellebrite, 2022
- Global Information Assurance Certification in Advanced Smartphone Forensics (GASF), 2022
- Writing Forensics Report – Cyber5W, 2022
- HEX 110 and 111 Mobile Forensics Fundamentals– Hexordia / Cyber5W, 2022
- HEX 130 SIM Card Analysis – Hexordia / Cyber5W,

- Digital Investigations Pro Digital Forensic Course, 2022
- HEX 140 Creating Mobile Test Data - Hexordia / Cyber5W, 2022
- Intro. To Digital Forensics – Hexordia / Cyber5W, 2023
- Intro. To File Systems and Data Carving - Hexordia / Cyber5W, 2023
- Intro. To Evidence Acquisition - Hexordia / Cyber5W, 2023
- HEX 150 Mobile Device Preservation - Hexordia / Cyber5W, 2023
- HEX 250 Mobile Analysis Methodology and 3rd Party App Analysis Hexordia / Cyber5W, 2023
- HEX 320 Plist Forensics - Hexordia / Cyber5W, 2023
- Intro. To Mobile Device Repair – National Computer Forensics Institute (NCFI), 2023
- GrayShift GrayKey Certified Operator – GrayShift, 2023
- DF205 Intermediate Digital Forensic Analysis: SQLite Primer - NW3C (Live), 2023
- Digital Investigations Supervisors Course - National Computer Forensics Institute (NCFI), 2023
- HEX – 210 Android Analysis - Hexordia / Cyber5W, 2023
- Principles of Leadership and Management - Excellence in Policing & Public Safety (EPPS) – USC School of Law, 2023
- Collaborative Communication – EPPS – USC School of Law, 2023
- Cellebrite Certified Operator Recertification, 2024
- Cellebrite Certified Physical Analyst Recertification, 2024
- Hexordia Mobile Data Structures - Hexordia / Cyber5W, 2024
- Evidence-Based Policing – EPPS – USC School of Law, 2024
- Civil Rights for Public Safety Leaders – EPPS - USC School of Law, 2024
- Advanced Mobile Device Forensics (AMDF) – IACIS, 2025
- FBI National Academy Session 296 – University of Virginia - 2025

**** Major Johnson frequently attends the Techno Security and Mobile Forensics Investigations Conference The purpose of the conference is to raise international awareness of developments, teaching, training, responsibilities and ethics in the field of IT security and digital forensics. Additionally, Major Johnson reads digital forensic books, blog post and attends both vendor and non-vendor webinars consistently as new updates arise in the field.*

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- GIAC Advisory-Board Member, SANS Institute
- Member, High Technology Crime Investigation Association (HTCIA)
- Member, South Carolina Cyber Fraud Task Force (SCCFTF)
- Member, The International Association of Computer Investigative Specialists (IACIS)
- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
- FBI National Academy Associates (FBINAA)

PRESENTATIONS

- **Co-Author:** Hyde, J. & Johnson R. - Peer Review for Mobile Forensics Checklist, 2022
- **Presenter:** Hyde, J. & Johnson R "Peering Behind the Curtain of Mobile Forensics: A Practical Approach to Peer Review," Magnet Virtual Summit, Feb 2023; Techno Security and Mobile Forensics Investigations Conference, Jun 2023

EXPERT WITNESS TESTIMONY

- **State of South Carolina vs. Charles Carmichael**, Dec 2022 (Mobile Device Analysis)

- **State of South Carolina vs. James Toatley**, Jun 2023 (Mobile Device Analysis)
- **State of South Carolina vs. Troy Stevenson**, Jun 2024 (Digital Forensic Analysis)
- **State of South Carolina vs. Darius Foster**, Sept 2024 (Digital Forensic Analysis)
- **State of South Carolina vs. Ontario Staley**, Nov 2024 (Mobile Device Analysis)
- **State of South Carolina vs. Breonte Glasgow**, May 2025 (Mobile Device Analysis)

The Honorable Heath P. Taylor

S.C. Circuit Court

Orangeburg, SC

Judge Taylor was born in Columbia, South Carolina and is a lifelong resident of Calhoun County. He resides in Sandy Run, South Carolina along with his wife and two sons.

Judge Taylor graduated from Calhoun Academy in Saint

Matthews, South Carolina. He attended Newberry College and graduated in 1995, Summa Cum Laude, with a B.A. in History. He received a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1998. At the time of his election to the bench, Judge Taylor was a partner in the Taylor Law Firm LLC located in West Columbia, South Carolina.

Judge Taylor formerly served as an Assistant Prosecutor for the Town of Irmo and as Associate Municipal Judge for the City of West Columbia. He is admitted to practice in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina, and all state courts in South Carolina.

Judge Taylor is a member of the South Carolina Bar where he served as the Criminal Law Council section delegate to the House of Delegates and Chair of the Criminal Law Council. He is a former member of the South Carolina Association for Justice, where he served as the Criminal Section Chair, the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the South Carolina Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, where he served two

terms as President and as chair of the Legislative Committee, the National College for DUI Defense, and the DUI Defense Lawyers Association.

Judge Taylor served as the South Carolina Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman's designee to the South Carolina Sentencing Reform Oversight Committee from 2017 to 2019. In 2012, he was named to the Super Lawyers Rising Stars list for DUI and named to the South Carolina Super Lawyers list for DUI in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

He was elected by the South Carolina General Assembly on February 2, 2022 to fill the seat of the Honorable Edgar W. Dickson, resident judge for the First Judicial Circuit, Seat 1, upon his retirement.

The Honorable Letitia H. Verdin

*Associate Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court
Columbia, SC*

Justice Letitia Hamilton Verdin—the daughter of Harry and Angela Hamilton—was born in Seneca, South Carolina. Her mother taught at her junior high school, and her father was her high school principal. She has two sisters, Felicia LeRoy and Blythe Hamilton.

Justice Verdin graduated from Furman University in 1992 with a Bachelor of Science in Biology. She also attended Clemson University for graduate school, studying Biochemistry. She received her Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina in 1997. While in law school, she was selected to be a member of the Moot Court Bar and National Moot Court competition team. She was also named the Outstanding Student Volunteer at the University of South Carolina School of Law for her work with domestic violence victims.

After graduating from law school, she served as an Assistant Solicitor in the Office of the 13th Circuit Solicitor and, later, the Office of the 8th Circuit Solicitor. In this position, Justice Verdin prosecuted domestic violence cases and crimes against children. She also acted as the head of the Family Court unit for juvenile prosecution in both circuits. In 2000, she became an Associate Attorney with Clarkson, Walsh, Rheney, & Turner, P.A. in Greenville, South Carolina. In this position, she practiced in governmental and general civil liability defense, criminal defense, and family law. In 2005, she returned to prosecution at the Office of the 13th Circuit Solicitor.

In 2008, Justice Verdin was elected to the Family Court as a resident judge in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. Then, in 2011, the South Carolina Legislature elected her to the Circuit Court for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. As a Circuit Court judge, she served as President of the Circuit Judges' Association, Chairperson of Judicial Standards, member of the Circuit Judges' Advisory Council, and member of the Commission on Continuing Legal Education.

In 2023, she was elected to the Court of Appeals, and in 2024, the South Carolina Legislature elected her to be an Associate Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court.

Justice Verdin is a member of Liberty Fellowship and has taught as an adjunct professor at the Charleston School of Law. She is married to Chuck Verdin, a probate, estate, and corporate attorney at Gallivan, White, and Boyd, P.A. in Greenville, South Carolina. They have twin sons, Zack and Eli. The Verdins are members of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Travelers Rest, South Carolina.

Derek Bush

*Second Circuit Public Defender's Office
Aiken, SC*

Derek Bush was born in Summerville, South Carolina and grew up in North Charleston, South Carolina. He graduated from Fort Dorchester High School in 2007. Upon graduation, he attended the University of South Carolina, where he graduated magna cum laude in 2011 with a B.A. in Sociology with a Minor in Religious Studies.

After graduating from the University of South Carolina he attended the Charleston School of Law where he received his Juris Doctor in 2014. While attending the Charleston School of Law he was the Associate Editor-in-Chief of the Federal Courts Law Review, the President of the Trial Advocacy Competition Board, a Member of the James L. Petigru American Inn of Court, and the recipient of the Arthur Gasque Howe Trial Advocacy Award upon graduation. After graduating from law school, he worked at Cain & Williams, LLC in Seneca, South Carolina practicing workers compensation, car accident, medical malpractice, and probate matters. In June of 2016 he left private practice and moved to Aiken, SC to pursue his calling as a Public Defender in the Second Judicial Circuit (Aiken, Barnwell, and Bamberg Counties).

In 2019, he was named one of the *Aiken Standard's* Young Professionals to Follow. Also in 2019, he graduated from the National Criminal Defense College Trial Practice Institute. He recently graduated from the inaugural South Carolina Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers Trial Practice Institute in 2024. In 2021, he graduated from the South Carolina Bar Association Leadership Academy, where he has served as an Alumni Session Planner and is now Co-Chair of the Academy. He has served as the South Carolina Bar Association House of Delegates Representative for the Second Circuit since 2019. He has served as a Member for the South Carolina Bar Association Criminal Law Section Council since 2018 and currently serves as Secretary. He is a past Secretary, Vice President and President of the Aiken County Bar Association. He serves as the recruitment coordinator and the internship liaison for his office by conducting OCIs at both SC law schools and supervising interns in his office. He has mentored every new lawyer in his office since 2022. He is also a member of the SC Bar Lawyers Mentoring Program where he volunteers his time mentoring young lawyers across the state. Derek was introduced to Treatment Courts in 2019 when he became the defense lawyer for Aiken County's Adult Drug Court. Since that day, he has emerged himself in all things treatment court. He serves as the defense lawyer for the Aiken County Adult Drug Court, the Aiken County Mental Health Court, and the Aiken County Veteran's Treatment Court – every diversionary court in the Second Circuit while maintaining a full caseload. Treatment Courts are Derek's favorite aspect of his job. He sees it as a true calling to serve the least of these in Treatment Courts and to watch many lives change for the better.

He has a real passion for mentally ill defendants and laid the foundation upon which the Aiken Jail Based Restoration Program has been built – the first South Carolina Office of Mental Health Jail Based Restoration Unit in the State. He has been instrumental in the continuing success of the Jail Based Restoration program in the Aiken County Detention Center and is the point-of-contact for all things Office of Mental Health in his office. He created the first collaborative tracking system in the state for tracking mentally ill defendants in the Aiken jail between the South Carolina Office of Mental Health, Solicitor's Office, Aiken Barnwell Mental Health, Judges, and his office. He has led the pilot programs for the South Carolina Office of Mental Health's prescreening and Jail Based Restorations – all of which were piloted in Aiken. He was invited to speak at the Policy Research Associates South Carolina Statewide Summit on Competence to Stand Trial to discuss his work. Derek routinely speaks and coordinates with

Judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and jail staffs in other judicial circuits who are trying to model their mental health treatment of incarcerated defendants after Aiken County.

When Derek is not in the office he gives back to his state and community in multiple ways. He is an annual presenter at the South Carolina Commission on Indigent Defense Public Defender 101 Training Program. He has been a presenter at the Charleston School of Law Summer Honors Advance Access to Justice Alumni Practice Series; Professionalism Series; and Career Series. He has also presented to the SCACDL organizations at the University of South Carolina School of Law and the Charleston School of Law on a yearly basis. He is an annual panel speaker at Aiken County schools for “Law Days”. He created, manages, and serves as a mentor for the Lawyer-Student Mentoring Program for At-Risk Middle School Students in middle schools across Aiken County. In this role he coordinates with the Aiken County School District annually to identify and target schools with the most at-risk students and pair them with lawyers in the Aiken County Bar who volunteer to mentor them. He mentors at his assigned middle school at least once a month. He also volunteers his time as a board member for the Family and Marriage Coalition of Aiken (FAMCO) and serves his Church in many ways.

Derek’s true joy in life is being married to his wife Brooke and raising their children, ages 4 and 2. Together he and his wife own a health and wellness company focused on changing healthcare to well care. When he’s not in the office he enjoys spending time with his wife and children, exercise, Gamecock football, and his Tuesday Night Bible Study Group.

The Honorable Robert E. Hood

*S.C. Circuit Court
Columbia, SC*

Judge Robert E. Hood was born in Atlanta, Georgia. He is the son of Herman C. and Brenda B. Hood. His father is retired Southern Baptist minister, and his mother is a retired preschool teacher. Judge Hood attended the public schools of Cobb County, Georgia. Upon graduation from high school, he attended The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina, where he graduated with a B.A. in political science with a focus on criminal justice. While at The Citadel, he was on the Dean’s List, the Commandant’s List, and the President’s List.

After The Citadel, he attended the University Of South Carolina School Of Law and received his Juris Doctor. While in law school, he was a member of the Moot Court Bar, the Order of Barristers, and served as a law clerk for the 5th Circuit Solicitor’s Office. After graduating from law school, he worked as an Assistant Solicitor for the 5th Circuit Solicitor’s Office. In 2003, Judge Hood accepted a position with the Attorney General’s office as an Assistant Attorney General for the State Grand Jury. In 2005, he accepted a position with the Strom Law Firm, LLC in Columbia and worked until his election to the bench.

Judge Hood is a member of the South Carolina Bar and admitted to practice in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, the U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina, and all South Carolina State Courts. He is also a member of the Richland County Bar Association and a former member of the South Carolina Association for Justice and the South Carolina Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

Judge Hood was elected by the South Carolina General Assembly on February 1, 2012, to fill the unexpired term of the Honorable G. Thomas Cooper, Jr., Resident Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit, Seat 3.

The Honorable Debra McCaslin

*S.C. Circuit Court
Lexington, SC*

Judge Debra R. McCaslin was born in Tampa, Florida, but is a life-long resident of Chapin, South Carolina. She is married to Michael W. McCaslin, a retired engineer with the South Carolina Department of Transportation, and together they have two children.

After graduating from Chapin High School, Judge McCaslin was employed by Senator Strom Thurmond before attending the College of Charleston and graduating in 1990 with a degree in Political Science. Judge McCaslin earned her Juris Doctorate from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1993 and was subsequently admitted to the South Carolina Bar the same year. She was also admitted to the U. S. District Court in November 1993; the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in November 1993; and the United States Supreme Court in April 1999.

Following law school, Judge McCaslin worked as a law clerk for J. Preston Strom, Jr., Attorney-at-law. In 1993, Judge McCaslin began working at the Leventis Law Firm as an Associate, before ultimately starting her own legal practice in 1995, where she remained until her election to the judiciary.

Judge McCaslin was elected by the South Carolina General Assembly to the Circuit Court, At-Large Seat-13 on February 5, 2020.

Judge McCaslin and her family attend St. Thomas Lutheran Church in Chapin, S.C.

Josh Kendrick

*Kendrick & Leonard, P.C.
Greenville, SC*

Josh graduated from Clemson University in 1999 and the University of South Carolina School of Law in 2002. He has been in private practice since 2002 handling criminal and civil litigation in state and federal courts across South Carolina. He also handles appeals and has argued numerous times in the South Carolina Court of Appeals, the South Carolina Supreme Court, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Josh also handles a number of capital cases in both state and federal court.