

Elder Law Committee

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

by order of presentation

Andrew J. Atkins

Millender Elder Law LLC

Columbia, SC

Course Planner

Andrew J. Atkins is an attorney-at-law with Millender Elder Law LLC. He is admitted to practice in South Carolina. He is a member of the Richland County Bar Association, the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA), and the South Carolina Chapter of NAELA (SC NAELA). Mr. Atkins is the Chair of the Elder Law Committee of the South Carolina Bar and is the current President of SC NAELA. In 2013, he was selected as Outstanding Chapter Member of SC NAELA. Mr. Atkins earned his B.A. degree from Furman University and his J.D. degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law.

Sarah G. St. Onge

Protection & Advocacy for People with Disabilities

Columbia, SC

Since 2008, Mrs. St. Onge has been an attorney at Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc., (P&A) advocating for the civil, legal, and human rights of people with disabilities. While at P&A, Mrs. St. Onge has brought federal litigation to enforce the rights guaranteed by the Americans with Disabilities Act, drafted amicus briefs in both state and federal court, and investigated allegations of abuse and neglect at facilities throughout South Carolina. Mrs. St. Onge's experience includes work in estate planning, probate, elder law, administrative law, mental health law, litigation, appellate practice, and affirmative litigation. She received her J.D. from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1991 with high honors. Her law school honors include Order of the Coif, the American Jurisprudence Award in Professional Responsibility and Constitutional Law, Executive Research Editor of the Tennessee Law Review, and recipient of the John W. Green Scholarship. She received her B.A. degree in philosophy in 1987 from Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia. At the University of South Carolina School of Law, she taught Legal Writing for five years and has also taught Advanced Legal Writing. She is active in the South Carolina Bar, serving on the Elder Law Committee; a member of SC Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, serving on the Board of Directors; and has taught continuing legal education classes on guardianship, Medicaid, estate planning, ethics, and advanced directives. She is a contributing author to *A Practical Guide to Elder Law and Special Needs Law in South Carolina* by Franchelle Millender.

The Honorable Jaqueline D. Belton

*South Carolina Probate Court
Columbia, SC*

Jacqueline D. Belton has served as an Associate Probate Judge for the Richland County Probate Court since 1999. The majority of the cases Judge Belton hears at the Court are guardianship and conservatorship cases, along with estate and commitment cases, and she is currently the primary judge for the Richland County Mental Health Court.

Before coming to the Probate Court, Judge Belton was staff counsel in the Office of General Counsel, S.C. Department of Mental Health. Her areas of practice there were primarily in the areas of employment law, probate law, and administrative law. Judge Belton also rotated with other SCDMH attorneys in serving as a Clinical Instructor for the U.S.C. School of Medicine, leading a seminar covering landmark legal cases in the area of mental health law for fellows in the Medical School's Forensic Psychiatry Program.

Judge Belton was also an Assistant Clinical Professor at the USC School of Law, and a legal services attorney. She and her husband, David E. Belton, were honored as the S.C. Bar Young Lawyers of the Year in 1991, the only husband and wife to have jointly received that honor. She has made numerous CLE and Bridge the Gap presentations, has presented several times at the School for New Probate Judges, and was a member of the faculty of the National Judicial College from 2005 to 2008. Judge Belton is a member of the S.C. Association of Probate Judges (SCAPJ) and the National College of Probate Judges, and previously co-chaired the Mental Health Committee of the SCAPJ. She is also a member of the S.C. Bar's Elder Law Committee and was a member of the S.C. Bar Article 5 Task Force and is a member of the SCAPJ Article 5 Workgroup, which worked on revisions to Article 5 of the Probate Code.

Judge Belton also presents several times a year in an advanced course at the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy entitled, "Law Enforcement Awareness for the Mentally Ill" and teaches a segment on mental health commitments at Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) seminars sponsored by S.C. NAMI for law enforcement officers. She is from a military family, and proudly describes herself as an "Army Brat." Judge Belton graduated from Würzburg American High School, in Würzburg, Germany, and received her A.B. degree in Sociology from Duke University and her J.D. from Antioch School of Law, in Washington, D.C.

Michael S. Large

*South Carolina Legal Services
Conway, SC*

Michael Large is an attorney and the elder law unit head at South Carolina Legal Services. SCLS is an independent non-profit law firm representing low income South Carolina residents in a wide range of civil legal matters. Mr. Large's practice focuses on helping seniors and people with disabilities understand their rights and navigate roadblocks that impede those rights. He has litigated cases on behalf of vulnerable adults in the areas of guardianship/conservatorship, abuse and neglect, probate, public benefits appeals, and long term care matters. He works

collaboratively with local community, state, and national aging organizations to protect the rights of vulnerable adults. Mr. Large is a member of the South Carolina Bar Elder Law Committee and serves as Co-Chair of the Guardianship/Conservatorship sub-committee. He is also a member of the Vulnerable Adult Task Force and serves on the Board of Directors for the Champion Autism Network. Mr. Large graduated from Temple University School of Law in 1991 and received his B.A. in Criminal Justice from Richard Stockton College in 1987.

The Honorable Ashley H. Amundson

South Carolina Probate Court

Walterboro, SC

Ashley H. Amundson was born in 1978 in Raleigh, North Carolina to James E. and Charlotte R. Heaton. Amundson attended public schools in Colleton County. She then went on to graduate magna cum laude from the University of South Carolina with a B.S. in Business Administration. Upon graduation, she went on to earn her law degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Amundson began her legal career as an assistant city attorney for Charlotte, North Carolina, where she focused primarily on contracts and procurement. She then moved back to her hometown of Walterboro in early 2008. From 2008 until December 2010, Amundson worked an associate in the law firm McLeod, Fraser & Cone, where she practiced general civil law. In November 2010, Amundson was elected Colleton County Probate Judge.

Amundson is the former Chair of the Walterboro-Colleton County Chamber of Commerce, former Campaign Co-Chair of the Colleton Center, and a graduate of Leadership Colleton. She is a member of Bethel Presbyterian Church and is married to Henry (“Hank”) Amundson.

The Honorable Carolyn W. Rogers

South Carolina Probate Court

York, SC

Carolyn Woodruff Rogers graduated from Mary Washington College of the University of Virginia with a degree in studio art, and from the University of Georgia School of Law. She is admitted to the South Carolina Bar, the State Bar of Georgia, the Virginia State Bar, and the York County Bar Association. She practiced law in Virginia and then in Pickens from 1983-1986. After moving to Rock Hill in 1986, she concentrated in the areas of estates and trusts, probate litigation, land use regulation, and commercial and residential real estate. She was often appointed as an attorney or guardian ad litem in family court DSS cases, and represented many children in foster care on a pro bono basis. She was elected probate judge in 2010 and again in 2014.

While a practicing attorney, Judge Rogers was Council chair of the Probate, Estates and Trusts Section of the South Carolina Bar. She was a member of the study committee for the adoption of the S. C. Trust Code and then co-chair of its technical corrections committee. When the probate

code underwent revisions from 2009 through 2013, she participated as a lawyer and then as a judge. She chairs an ad hoc committee of the S. C. Association of Probate Judges which is working with elder law attorneys on the Article 5 Task Force to revise guardianship and conservatorship statutes.

Other activities prior to her service on the Bench included chairing the York County Zoning Board of Appeals and participating as president or board member of various community organizations. As probate judge, she speaks often to churches and other community groups and businesses about advance planning and the role of the probate court, to law enforcement in regard to mental health commitments, and to members of the SC Bar as to practice tips in the probate court.

Judge Rogers has two sons, a daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren.