

Children's Law Committee Seminar

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

by order of presentation

Tena Hardee

*S.C. Department of Children's Advocacy
Columbia, SC
(Course Planner)*

Tena Hardee has served as General Counsel for the South Carolina Department of Children's Advocacy since May, 2025, and previously served as General Counsel for the Cass Elias McCarter Guardian ad Litem Program. Tena was previously employed by the Children's Law Center, University of South Carolina School of Law, where she served as a part time resource attorney for 14 years. As part of her Law Center duties, she regularly developed and provided training for volunteer guardians ad litem, their contract attorneys, and other child serving professionals. She also maintained a private family law practice. Tena earned her JD from the University of South Carolina School of Law and BA in Political Science from the University of South Carolina. She is a member of the Children's Law Committee of the SC Bar, the South Carolina Family Court Bench-Bar Committee, and the SC Children's Justice Act Task Force.

Taron Davis

*S.C. Department of Social Services
Columbia, SC*

Taron Brown Davis, is Senior Counsel for Child Welfare in the Office of General Counsel at the South Carolina Department of Social Services. From 2015-2019, Ms. Davis has served as Deputy State Director in the Child Welfare Services Division of the department under State Director Susan Alford and as Interim Deputy State Director of Child the Child Welfare Services Division under State Director Michael Leach. For eight years, Ms. Davis was an Assistant General Counsel in the Office of General Counsel. Ms. Davis has also served as a Senior Resource Attorney at the University of South Carolina School of Law, Children's Law Center, has practiced exclusively in the family court while working with Davis & Davis, LLC, and served as Managing Attorney at Richland County Department of Social Services. Upon completion of a judicial clerkship in the Ninth Judicial Circuit in 1995, Ms. Davis became a Public Defender in Richland County, ultimately serving as Family Court team leader for juvenile defense. Ms. Davis received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of South Carolina in 1991. She also received her Juris Doctorate degree from the Joseph F. Rice School of Law at the University of South Carolina in 1994 and was admitted to the South Carolina Bar later that same year. Ms. Davis is a member of and past chair of the South Carolina Bar Children's Law Committee, has served as an instructor for "Bridge the Gap," an instructor for New Family Court Judges' orientation, a member of the National Association of Counsel for Children, and is a member of the Family Court Bench Bar Committee. She is also a member of Brookland Baptist Church, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and is the proud mother of one daughter who is a student at the University of Georgia.

Margaret Bodman
S.C. Department of Children's Advocacy
Columbia, SC

MARGARET FENT BODMAN, JD currently serves as the Interim Director and State Child Advocate of the Department of Children's Advocacy. She was appointed by Governor Henry McMaster in July of 2025. After obtaining her law degree from St. Mary's University School of Law in 1991, she began her career in prosecution with the Bexar County Criminal District Attorney's Office in San Antonio, Texas. During her eight years in that office, she prosecuted a wide variety of offenses ranging from DUI cases to murder. She also had the opportunity to handle cases at the appellate level and served for several years in the juvenile division of the office. In 1999, Ms. Bodman came to South Carolina and joined the National College of District Attorneys at the National Advocacy Center. In her capacity as an Assistant Director of Programs, she developed and implemented trial advocacy programs and other continuing legal education classes for state and local prosecutors who were working in offices around the United States. In 2005, she rejoined the ranks of frontline prosecutors in Richland County, South Carolina. There she prosecuted hundreds of violent crime cases, specializing in the prosecution of sexual assaults involving both child and adult victims. From 2016 until her appointment to the Department of Children's Advocacy, she served as the Prosecution and Law Enforcement Senior Resource Attorney at the Children's Law Center, University of South Carolina School of Law. In 2013, Ms. Bodman received the Criminal Justice Award from the South Carolina Victim's Assistance Network recognizing her advocacy on behalf of victims.

Senator Jason Elliott
Jason Elliott, Attorney at Law, LLC
Greenville, SC

A proud South Carolina native, Jason attended Wren High School in Anderson County, graduated with a B.A. in Political Science from Clemson University and received his Juris Doctorate from the University of South Carolina School of Law. Since opening his law practice in 2004, Jason has represented hundreds of clients throughout the Upstate of South Carolina.

After law school, Jason served as an Assistant Solicitor for the Tenth Judicial Circuit, prosecuting misdemeanors and felonies in Anderson and Oconee Counties.

Further serving residents of the Upstate, he worked for then-Congressman Jim DeMint from 1999-2003 as DeMint's District Director.

In 2004, Jason opened his own practice, Jason Elliott, Attorney at Law, LLC. During the first year, he regularly prosecuted DUI and other criminal matters in Greenville County for the Thirteenth Circuit Solicitor. The firm primarily represents clients in family law and criminal matters. In private practice, Jason has represented hundreds of clients throughout Upstate South Carolina.

Cody Lidge, MPA

Children's Law Center

Columbia, SC

Cody Lidge, the Courts Program Director at the Children's Law Center, Joseph F. Rice School of Law at the University of South Carolina, leads the Court Liaison Program, a twenty-member team that works closely with each of the 46 DSS county legal teams to improve the handling of child protection cases, and the Court Improvement Program, a federal program funded through the South Carolina Judicial Branch, that seeks to improve collaboration between child serving systems, data collection and evaluation, and training opportunities for child protection professionals. Prior to joining the Children's Law Center, Lidge worked as a Management Analyst in the Office of Agency Performance, a unit that helped to end federal monitoring of the Child and Family Services Agency in Washington, D.C., and as the Family Court Representative with the South Carolina Judicial Branch. Lidge earned an M.P.A. and a B.A. (Phi Beta Kappa) in Political Science from the University of South Carolina.