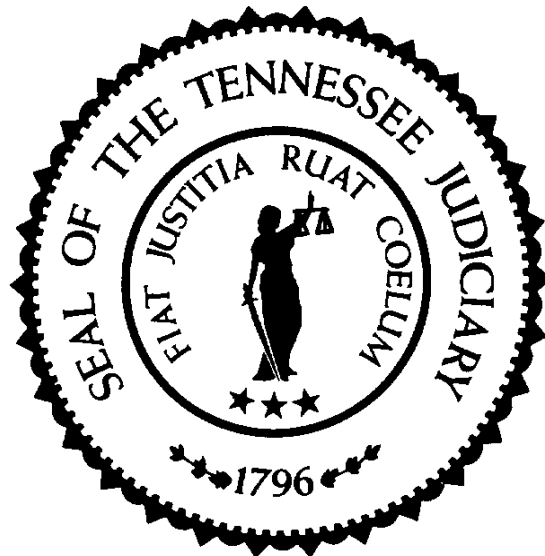
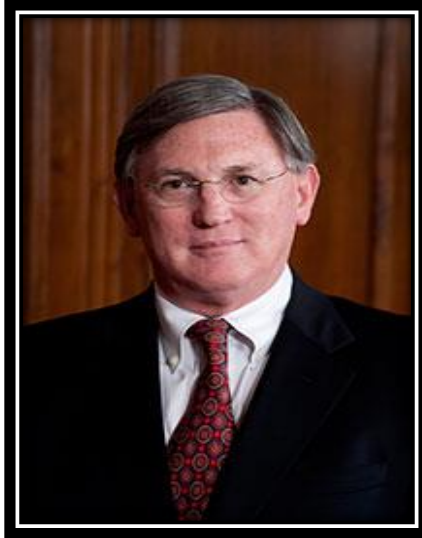


# MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES



*Supreme Court of Tennessee*  
**INDIGENT REPRESENTATION  
TASK FORCE**



**William C. Koch, Jr. – Task Force Chairperson  
President and Dean – Nashville School of Law**

William C. Koch, Jr. is a well-respected champion for education and judicial leadership. He is the President and Dean of the Nashville School of Law. Dean Koch received his B.A. in English from Trinity College (Hartford, CT), his J.D. from Vanderbilt University School of Law, and his LL. M. in Judicial Process from the University of Virginia School of Law (Charlottesville, VA). He has served in the Tennessee judicial system as a former Tennessee Supreme Court Justice, a past Presiding Judge for the Middle Section of the Tennessee Court of Appeals, and as a former judge for the Tennessee Court of Appeals, Middle Section. He was appointed Counsel to Governor Lamar Alexander and Commissioner of Personnel for the State of Tennessee. Within the Office of the Tennessee Attorney General and Reporter, Dean Koch served as Assistant Attorney General, Senior Assistant Attorney General, and Deputy Attorney General. Currently, he is a

member of the American Bar Association, the Tennessee Bar Association, and serves on the Board of the Directors for the Nashville Bar Association. He is also a member of the Lawyers Association for Women, the Napier-Looby Bar Association, Tennessee Association for Justice, Tennessee Bar Foundation, Nashville Bar Foundation, the United States Supreme Court Historical Society, and the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society. For the past 35 years, he has served on the Board of Trustees for the United Way of Metropolitan Nashville. In the academic arena, Dean Koch has been appointed as Instructor in Constitutional Law at the Nashville School of Law, an Adjunct Instructor and Professor in State Constitutional Law for Vanderbilt University School of Law, and Adjunct Professor for Belmont University School of Law. Dean Koch will continue his legacy of leadership and service as Chair of the Indigent Representation Task Force.

**Lela Hollabaugh**

**Partner – Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP**

Lela M. Hollabaugh has served as the lead trial lawyer in more than a dozen jury trials, as well as more than two dozen bench trials, arbitrations and administrative hearings. Hollabaugh has served in several leadership positions in legal, industry, and government organizations. She currently heads the firm's business litigation group. She is general counsel to the Nashville Bar Association and a trustee of the Nashville Bar Foundation. She is a past-president of the Nashville Bar Association and is a past member of the International Association of Defense Counsel's Board of Directors. Lela is a past Chair of the Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility. Hollabaugh is also listed on the American Arbitration Association's (AAA) Roster of Neutrals for Commercial Litigation. She holds a J.D. and B.S. (with honors) from the University of Tennessee. Her distinctions include: Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*<sup>®</sup>; Commercial Litigation, 2015-2016; Eminent Domain and Condemnation Law, 2014-2016; Energy Law, 2010-2016; Mass Tort Litigation/Class Actions-Defendants, 2016; Product Liability Litigation-Defendants, 2016; "Lawyer of the Year," Nashville, Energy Law, 2014; Listed in *Benchmark Litigation*, "Future Star," Tennessee, 2015; Listed in *The International Who's Who Legal*; Products Liability Defense Lawyers, 2012-2015; Listed in *Nashville Business Journal*, "Best of the Bar," 2013-2015.





**Judge Deanna Bell Johnson**  
**Circuit Court Judge – 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial District**

In nearly 25 years of private practice, Deanna Johnson honed her experience in both civil and criminal matters. Over the course of her career, she represented large and small corporations, family businesses, insurance companies and government entities, and across a spectrum of industries - communications, transportation, entertainment, distribution, media, retail and manufacturing, to name a few. Governor Bill Haslam pointed to that depth of experience in November 2014, when he appointed Johnson to the Circuit Court bench in Tennessee's 21st District, which includes Williamson, Hickman, Lewis, and Perry counties. Since that time, Judge Johnson has become known as a fair jurist, compassionate yet tough, reasonable yet relentlessly focused on enforcing the laws of our state. Prior to her appointment, Johnson was in private practice in Franklin, having previously served as an associate at the law firms of Spicer, Flynn & Rudstrom and King & Ballow, respectively, both located in Nashville. She received her law degree from DePaul University in Chicago in 1991 and a bachelor's degree in political science at the University of Illinois in 1988. She has practiced in state courts in more than 20 counties throughout Tennessee as well as in federal court, including the Middle District of Tennessee and the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. Johnson has been a small business owner, including the Leiper's Fork Market in Franklin, the Duck River Market in Duck River, Tenn., and the Pinewood General Store in Nunnally, Tenn. She is married to state Senator Jack Johnson, and is mother to their three children: Mackenzie, Trevor and Walker.

**Susan L. Kay**  
**Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and Clinical**  
**Professor of Law - Vanderbilt Law School**

Sue Kay has headed the law school's clinical and experiential legal education program since 2001, having joined the clinical faculty in 1980. In addition to teaching in the Criminal Practice Clinic, Dean Kay supervises the Trial Advocacy courses and student externships, and teaches courses on Professional Responsibility, Criminal Law and Evidence. She is active in many professional and service activities and has served as president of the Clinical Legal Education Association, a national association that represents more than 600 law faculty, and as president of the board of the Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services and the Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberlands. She currently chairs the board of the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee. Dean Kay is a member of the Standards Review Committee of the ABA's Section on Legal Education and Admission to the Bar. Within the clinic, she has conducted major public law litigation concerning jail overcrowding, inmates' rights and juvenile justice. In 2007, she completed an assignment as a court-appointed monitor in federal litigation challenging the state's compliance with its responsibilities to children enrolled in the TennCare program. In 2005, Dean Kay was co-reporter with on the Tennessee Bar Association Criminal Justice Section's study of effectiveness of counsel in death penalty cases.





**Rep. William Lamberth**  
**State House District 44**

William Lamberth represents the 44<sup>th</sup> District in the Tennessee House of Representatives, which encompasses a portion of Sumner County. The District includes the communities of Hendersonville, Gallatin, Portland, Westmoreland, and New Deal. William is a fifth generation resident of Sumner County and has dedicated his life to serving this community. Before being elected State Representative, William served as an Assistant District Attorney General in Sumner County and is a graduate of Portland High School. He received his Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and earned his Juris Doctor from the College of William and Mary. In addition to his work as State Representative, William is heavily involved in the daily life of the community. He currently serves as Chairman of the Portland

Community Education Foundation, is on the board of Children Are People, Inc. and Historic Rock Castle, and is a former President of both the Gallatin Rotary Club and Sumner County Bar Association. In addition, Representative Lamberth currently serves as Chairman of the Criminal Justice Committee and has championed legislation to impose stricter penalties for those who commit the most heinous of crimes, while at the same time allowing for rehabilitation programs for those who sincerely seek to reform their lives by rejoining society in a positive way.

**Susan Mattson** (Non-Voting Member)  
**Principle Legislative Research Analyst - Tennessee**  
**Comptroller of the Treasury Office**

Susan Mattson is a Principal Legislative Research Analyst with the Tennessee Comptroller's Offices of Research and Education Accountability. She has a B.A. in Economics and Urban Studies from Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Kentucky. She has over 25 years of experience as a public policy analyst. Policy areas of research have included criminal justice and the courts, transportation, and education. She has been involved with the Tennessee judicial, district attorneys, and public defenders weighted caseload studies and data systems since 2006.





## **Mark A. Mesler, II**

### **Attorney – Rosenblum & Reisman Law Firm**

Mark A. Mesler is recognized by his peers as one of the top criminal defense attorneys in the Memphis area and has been named one of the Top 8 Criminal Lawyers by the Memphis Business Quarterly. He is known for his diligent representation of clients in Shelby County criminal courts for more than a decade. Mark appears periodically on Fox 13 Morning News as part of the "Ask the Attorney" segment where he shares his expertise in the areas of Criminal Law, Personal Injury Law, Real Estate Law and Workers' Compensation Law. He is regularly asked to serve as a special judge in a number of the local courts. He received his B.S. in Business Administration from the University of Florida, and his J.D. from the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, Memphis, Tennessee. He served on the Memphis Bar Association's Young

Lawyer's Board of Directors from 1997 to 1999, served on the Moot Court Board as an Associate Justice, and was a member of the University of Memphis Law Review. Mark is currently a member of the Memphis Bar Association, the Tennessee Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, and the American Bar Association.

## **Judge Loyce Lambert Ryan** **Shelby County General Sessions Court**

Loyce Lambert Ryan is the presiding Judge of General Sessions Criminal Court Division XV. Prior to her election on August 2000, Judge Lambert Ryan was known as a skilled trial attorney in the legal community. She has also distinguished herself as the first female selected as a member of the Shelby County Public Defenders Capital Defense Team and the first female supervisor of the unit. Judge Lambert Ryan was the first female president of the Ben F. Jones Chapter of the National Bar Association and received its highest award, the A. A. Latting Award for outstanding Legal Services in 1995. Judge Lambert Ryan is a 1980 graduate of Clark Atlanta University and a 1983 Juris Doctorate recipient from the University of Iowa College of Law. She also attended the National Criminal Defense College in Macon, Georgia in July 1989. She served as a Reginald Heber Smith Community Lawyer Fellow through Legal Services Corporation of America in 1983-85 and was employed with the Department of Justice in 1985. Judge Lambert Ryan is a Charter member of the Clark Atlanta University Alumni Association Memphis Chapter, a member of the University of Iowa Alumni Association and a member of the Tennessee General Sessions Judges Conference along with several other organizations. Judge Ryan currently presides over the Compulsory Attendance Court, which attempts to address parents whose children are habitually absent from school. Judge Ryan filed for re-election in 2014 in the general county election and received no opposition. She will continue to serve the citizens of Shelby County for another eight years.





**Judge Vicki S. Snyder**  
**Henry County General Sessions Court**

Judge Vicki Shepherd Snyder is a graduate with honors from the University of Tennessee at Martin and from the University of Memphis, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. She clerked with the Shelby County Criminal Court Judges from 1985-1986. Judge Snyder worked in private practice and served as an Assistant District Attorney General and an Assistant District Public Defender for the 24<sup>th</sup> Judicial District before she was elected to the bench in 2006. Judge Snyder is a member of the Board of Directors for the Plus Endowment, and for the Literacy Council. She is a past member of the Board of the Directors for the Lakeway Kiwanis Club, the Real Hope Youth Center, and for the Family Resource Center. She is a member of the Henry County Bar Association as well as the Tennessee Bar Association. Judge Snyder is the Education Committee Chairman and a member of the Tennessee General Sessions

Judges Conference as well as the Executive Committee member and Conference Treasurer for the Tennessee Council of Family and Juvenile Court Judges. Judge Vicki Shepherd Snyder was named 2009 Kiwanian of the Year, The Reader's Choice Award for the Best County Official in 2007 and 2009, and the 2008 Honorary Chairperson for the Salvation Army.

**Judge Barry A. Steelman**  
**Criminal Court Judge – 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial District**

Barry Steelman is a graduate of Red Bank High School, Carson-Newman College and the University of Tennessee College of Law. He was admitted to the Tennessee Bar in 1989 and worked for the law firm of Spears, Moore, Rebman, and Williams where he practiced in civil litigation. In 1995 Barry was hired by then-District Attorney Gary Gerbitz as a prosecutor in Hamilton County's criminal courts. After the election of Bill Cox as District Attorney in 1996, Barry was assigned to the position of managing prosecutor in Criminal Court Division III. In both positions he was responsible for the prosecution of felony and misdemeanor offenses in criminal and municipal courts. Barry was later promoted to the position of Executive Assistant District Attorney. In this role he had the unique experience of serving as a leading trial lawyer and office administrator for the District Attorney. His jury trial experience included capital and life-without-parole cases. Barry's administrative duties included supervision and management of assistant district attorneys and support staff. He also served as a liaison to law-enforcement agencies and other governmental entities. In August 2006 Barry was elected Criminal Court Judge, Division I, Hamilton County where he continues to serve.





### **Sen. John Stevens** **State District 24**

John Stevens was elected to the State Senate in 2012 and represents Obion, Weakley, Henry, Gibson, Carroll and Benton Counties in Northwest Tennessee. Sen. Stevens is the first Republican to ever represent Obion and Weakley counties in the State Senate. While in Nashville, Mr. Stevens serves on the Judiciary and Finance Ways and Means Committees. He is past chairman of the Corrections Sub-Committee of State and Local Government Committee. Mr. Stevens is a practicing attorney with Rabalais Law, which is a multi-state Estate Planning law firm. He is a 1992 graduate of Gallatin High School. Sen. Stevens graduated from UT-Martin in 1996 with a BS in Political Science. He received his law degree from the University of Memphis in 2002. He worked for the Honorable

Judge Don A. Ash upon graduating from law school and before going out into private practice. In 2014, Governor Bill Haslam appointed Sen. Stevens to the Governor's Task Force on Sentencing and Recidivism. In 2010, Mr. Stevens was selected by Governor Bill Haslam to participate in the Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy which targets community leaders throughout the Delta Region. Sen. Stevens is a 2014 graduate from the Henry Toll Fellows program, which is a leadership training academy made up of select-members of the three branches of government from around the nation. Sen. Stevens was honored as a Champion of Commerce by the Tennessee Chambers of Commerce in 2014 and Legislator of the Year in 2013 by the Tennessee Association of Assessing Officers.

### **Dwight Tarwater**

#### **General Counsel – Tennessee Office of the Governor**

Dwight E. Tarwater joined Governor Haslam's senior team as general counsel in December of 2014. Tarwater, a founding partner of the Knoxville firm Paine, Tarwater & Bickers, LLP, received his undergraduate degree in 1977 from the University of Tennessee, where he was elected a Torchbearer, the University's highest honor. He received his law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1980 and served as law clerk to the Honorable Houston M. Goddard of the Tennessee Court of Appeals. Tarwater has vast courtroom experience, having tried cases locally, across the state of Tennessee, and in several other states. On appeal, he has represented clients before the Tennessee Court of Appeals, the



Tennessee Supreme Court and in the United States Courts of Appeals for the Fourth, Sixth, Tenth, and Eleventh Circuits. He has held numerous leadership positions in the Knoxville and Tennessee Bar Associations and Legal Aid of East Tennessee. His former firm was honored with the Pro Bono Law Firm of the Year Award in 2010, 2012 and 2013. He was a member of the 2002 Class of Leadership Knoxville and a former Board Member of the East Tennessee Foundation. In 2006, he became a fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers. He has been an invited guest lecturer at the University of Tennessee College of Law and asked to speak at various meetings of his professional colleagues.



## **DarKenya Waller**

### **Managing Attorney – Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland**

DarKenya Waller is a 1999 graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Law. She earned a Masters of Business Administration from Belhaven College in 2005. Mrs. Waller was a solo practitioner in Jackson, Mississippi, where she specialized in domestic law and real estate. She also worked with Chinn & Associates, PLLC, one of the premier domestic relations firms in Mississippi. From 1999 to 2001 she worked with the Mississippi Attorney General's office, Division of Medicaid. She established and ran a Technology and Communications company that represented clients such as the City of Atlanta and the National Conference of Black Mayors. Mrs. Waller is a member of the Mississippi and Tennessee Bars. She joined the Legal Aid Society in 2008 and has been the Managing Attorney of the Nashville office since 2010. Her legal practice is focused on family law. She was a member of the 2011 class of the Tennessee Bar Association's Leadership Law Program for outstanding young lawyers. She serves on the Tennessee State Domestic Violence Coordinating Counsel, the Tennessee Bar Association Family Law Code Committee and the Williamson County Pro Bono Committee.