



GATE CITY BAR ASSOCIATION

www.gatecitybar.org

March 2015

GATE CITY BAR ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Darrick L. McDuffie, Esq.

I am truly honored and humbled to serve as President of the Gate City Bar Association. To serve in such a position of trust and leadership on behalf of Gate City is the pinnacle of the community service aspect of my professional career. With the support of Gate City's membership, sponsors and friends, I am sure 2015 will be a great year for Gate City, as well as the communities it serves.

As I contemplated what theme would be appropriate for Gate City in 2015, I focused on Gate City's mission statement, which is clear: "To create in the community a practical appreciation for the legal profession; to encourage persons of outstanding promise to attend first rate law schools and return to the communities that need their services most; to oppose arbitrary and capricious laws in our state with all the force and fiber of which we are capable as an organization; and to uphold and extend the principles of justice in every phase of American life to the end that no one shall be discriminated against because of color, race, religious beliefs or national origin." This year, guided by its mission statement, Gate City's theme is: *pursuing justice and providing opportunities in our communities.*

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stated in his "Letter from Birmingham Jail" on April 16, 1963, "that law and order exist for the purpose of establishing

justice and that when they fail in this purpose they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress." These words are still true today. As an organization, Gate City has a long and well-established track record of addressing issues of injustice and the lack of opportunities



facing minorities and economically disadvantaged individuals within our justice system. We, as individual lawyers, have an obligation to uphold the principles of justice in such a way that every individual has a fair opportunity to prosper. As Dr. King once said: "Life's

most persistent and urgent question is, What are you doing for others?" Gate City will continue to answer this call with community service programs designed to help those who need our help the most. On behalf of Gate City, I welcome everyone to join our efforts in 2015, as we rededicate ourselves to pursuing justice and providing opportunities in our communities!

BE A RAINMAKER

By: The Honorable Carol Walker-Russell, Judicial Chair

Each of us comes here with seeds of greatness stored inside. Whether those seeds ever take root and flourish depends upon the degree of nourishment they receive. In order to take root, seeds are planted into the dark earth where there is no light. Amazingly, over time and with careful watering, the seed breaks out of its shell and transforms into a flowering plant that climbs out of the darkness into the light. Similarly, the seeds of greatness buried deep inside of us also need watering and will only germinate after being showered with inspiration, confidence, motivation, support, hope, and encouragement.

Whether we ever become all that we were meant to be depends upon the amount of rain that we receive from each other. Each one of us can be a rainmaker. Not the kind of rainmaker that brings in new business and wins new accounts almost magically, but a rainmaker who brings people to self-awareness and motivates mystically. The true essence of being a great rainmaker is not measured in the abundance

of what you bring but by the magnitude of what you have left behind. Undoubtedly, after such down pouring of rain, we give each other substances necessary for growth to bring forth our unique talents and fruits in abundance.

Let it rain... Let it rain!



Pursuing Justice And Providing Opportunities In Our Communities

The views expressed in the Gate City Bar Association Newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the Daily Report or ALM MEDIA, LLC.

MESSAGE FROM THE PARALEGAL SECTION

By: Wanda Davis, Chair

I am honored to serve as the 2015 Chair of the Gate City Bar Association Paralegal Section Executive Committee. Having been involved with GCBA Paralegal Section in various leadership roles and board positions over the past several years, I am excited to take on this new responsibility. My fellow Board members

and I anticipate leading the organization in continuing the long standing traditions of CLE's, student scholarships, job search and professional networking.

As Chair, my focus will be to foster the professional development of paralegals and



maintain a high order of ethical and professional standards, while mentoring those aspiring to become paralegals. As the paralegal profession continues to change, we must take an active part in shaping that change. I am excited to work with our members and the legal community to carry out the association's mission statement and to support the effective utilization of paralegals.

A MESSAGE FROM THE STATE BAR PRESIDENT

By: Patrise M. Perkins-Hooker, Esq.

During my term of office, we celebrate the courageousness of a nation that would sign into law, 50 years ago, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. We remember brave foot soldiers in Selma and Birmingham that dared to risk their lives and the lives of their families to ensure their voices were heard in Washington, DC. Many brazenly walked across the Edmond Pettis Bridge in the face of peril seeking the right to vote, justice and the very freedoms espoused in the Magna Carta 800 years ago. Their actions would ultimately propel passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The fundamental rights in the Magna Carta were later incorporated into the Constitution of the United States of America. In 1776, the founders of our country set out to create a system in which men would be entitled to certain inalienable rights, based upon the concepts of the freedoms established in England through the Magna Carta. The 800th Anniversary of the creation of the Magna Carta celebrates the

foundation of these principles of personal liberties and protections against the authority of governments.

Initially, African American citizens were not granted equal rights in every area of human life. Descendants of slaves were denied equal access to public facilities, accommodations, transportation systems and the right to vote. Demonstrations were held in strong opposition to the unfair and unequal treatment of African Americans.

These protests brought to light the inherent injustice of a system that treated members of the same society, differently. And yet, we are seeing a repeat of some of the same civil protests that are being sparked throughout the country, by citizens who are angry about the denial of equal treatment by local law enforcement authorities and judicial systems. The resounding theme is "BLACK LIFE MATTERS...ALL LIFE MATTERS." It is ironic that at a time when we celebrate laws and



the system of justice that provided rights to African Americans, that very same system is being tested by situations like Michael Brown in Ferguson, Trayvon Martin in Miami Gardens, Tanisha McBride in Detroit, Tamir Rice in Cleveland and Eric Garner in New York City. It seems as if everyone does not understand or apply equally to all citizens the principles of justice and freedom.

As we celebrate these milestones in history, we are being reminded as a society about how fragile the balance is between enforcing the law and protecting the rights of citizens. Under the Magna Carta, the rights of citizens were prominent, and yet today the same system of justice designed to protect and preserve the basic liberties described in the Magna Carta is under siege. The problem is that our forefathers did not consider the impact of the institution of slavery on the values and behaviors of people in the justice system. The emotional and systemic psychological damage done to both groups of people who benefitted from, and those who were subjected to enslavement is being revealed today by racism in our

criminal and civil justice systems. These monumental acts have shaped who we are as a society. If we fail to make adjustments to the system, to address the actual impact of racial and discriminatory biases, then the types of civil liberties envisioned 800 years ago in the Magna Carta will never truly belong to all people. As members of the justice system, we must review and analyze the systemic failures and the basis for the same. We must ensure that we are preserving in practice, the rights granted to all people in society in each of the declarations whose anniversaries we celebrate this year.

Please join the State Bar on March 30th at a Symposium celebrating the Magna Carta and its impact on the formation of the American system of justice. We are also working with the National Center for Civil and Human Rights to produce a series of public events to celebrate and remember the actions of people who made sacrifices for civil rights in addition to the celebration of the passage of premier Voting and Civil Rights Acts. Look out for more details on these events in the months to come.

MARTIN L. KING JR. DAY OF SERVICE

By: Shawntel R. Hebert, Esq.

On Monday, January 19, 2015, Gate City Bar Association celebrated the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Holiday with a day of service. Partnering with Hands on Atlanta, Gate City Executive Board Members along with Therrell High School's Mock Trial Team and coaches joined other volunteers at Premier Learning Academy in Austell, Georgia for a morning of painting. Armed with painting supplies and a willingness to work, volunteers spent four hours painting classrooms, offices, and other spaces in need of a little TLC! On the eve of the installation of the new board, the MLK Day Service Project was just what the doctor ordered for building comradery among the 2015 Executive Board. We look forward to more service projects this year!



UPCOMING EVENTS

March

Law Student Workshop
Excellence Through Education (10th)
Brother to Brother Mentoring

April

AVLF Saturday Lawyer Program (18th)
Tradition Of Excellence Breakfast
Youth And Law Summit
Litigation Coalition
MBLC Cook- Off
Spring Fling Mixer

May

Race for the Cure
Community Law Clinic (16th)
Law Day
Summer Associate Program
If You Can See It You Can Be It

June

Excellence Through Education (9th)
Founders Cup Golf Tournament (13th)
Georgia State Bar Annual Meeting (18th-21st)
Justice Benham Law Camp

July

AVLF Saturday Lawyer Program (11th)
Litigation Coalition
90th Annual National Bar Association Conference- Los Angeles, Ca.

August

Annual Judicial Reception (18th)

September

BLSA Kick Off Mixer
CLE Trip (16th-20th) St. John USVI
Law Students Retreat
Excellence Through Education (29th)

October

Hands On Atlanta (3rd)
Litigation Coalition
End Of Summer Social
Nominations For 2016 GCBA Officers
Aids Walk Atlanta

November

Hall Of Fame Gala (14th)
Grand Hyatt Buckhead
Excellence Through Education (12th)

December

Holiday Party

The Gate City Bar Association

Invites You to

“EXCELLENCE THROUGH EDUCATION: PREPARING FOR GREATNESS”

Please join us as we embark upon “Excellence Through Education”: a continuing legal education series designed to equip Gate City members with practical skills for enduring success.

SPONSOR:

MORGAN & MORGAN

Keenan R. S. Nix, Esq.

March 10, 2015 ----- Trial Excellence: “Mastering the Courtroom from Beginning to End”

June 9, 2015 ----- Civil Discovery: “Laying the Foundation for Success at Trial”

September 29, 2015 ----- Settlement & Negotiation: “The Art and Science of Closing the Deal”

November 12, 2015 ----- BuSiness Development: “Building a Successful Practice on Purpose”

State Bar of Georgia

104 Marietta Street
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
6:00 p.m.

RSVP to info@gatecitybar.org
by March 2nd for March 10th Program

A catered reception will follow. The series is free.

Printed materials will be available for participants that RSVP.

Questions: Contact Shyril Beck at info@gatecitybar.org or 404.669.5300

The Gate City Bar Association's 2015 Installation Ceremony

By: Akua D. Coppock, Esq.

On January 20, 2015, the 2015 President and the Executive Board of the Gate City Bar Association along with the Judicial and Paralegal Section were installed by the Honorable Justice Robert Benham at the Fulton County Government Center. Retired Fulton County Superior Judge Thelma Wyatt Moore performed official duties as the Mistress of Ceremonies. Close to one hundred family members, friends and supporters attended the ceremony. The Honorable Carol Walker Russell, an Administrative Law Judge with the State Office of Administrative Hearings was installed as the Chair of the Judicial Section. In her address, the Atlanta-born judge expressed concern for the need for continued growth in the Atlanta community and her plans to encourage local community outreach from our judges, lawyers and the legal community as a whole.

Darrick L. McDuffie was installed as the 2015 President and revealed his vision as expressed in the 2015 theme “Pursuing Justice and Providing Opportunities in Our Community.” The programming for 2015 reflects a variety of traditional and new service projects from the law student workshops and retreat, the Youth and Law Summit, and the Justice Benham Law Camp of which President McDuffie has championed since it was founded in 2007 by former President Harold E. Franklin Jr. Ms. Wanda Davis, a paralegal with CCRE, a subsidiary with Cantor Fitzgerald was installed as the Paralegal Section Chair and promised to lead with new and exciting programs and educational events for paralegals and students. The installation concluded with a reception sponsored by King and Spalding LLP.

GATE CITY BAR ASSOCIATION

Meet The Board

DARRICK L. MCDUFFIE
PRESIDENT

Darrick L. McDuffie is an Associate in King & Spalding's Business Litigation Practice Group. A native of Lake View, South Carolina, Darrick earned his Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, magna cum laude, from the University of South Carolina. In 2003, Darrick graduated from Harvard Law School. Darrick lives in Alpharetta, Georgia with his wife, Monikia, and has three children, Meyoshia, Shantyl, and Byron.



investment fraud. Prior to joining the US Attorney's Office, Nekia worked as a business litigation associate in Atlanta, GA, and as a corporate restructuring and bankruptcy associate in New York, NY. Nekia obtained a BBA in Accounting from Emory University, a JD from Harvard Law School, and an MBA from Harvard Business School.



eight (8) years. Germaine graduated Magna cum laude from North Carolina Central University with a Bachelors of Arts Degree in Political Science and a degree in English Literature. Germaine graduated from the NCCU School of Business and NCCU School of Law in 2012.

CHERYL F. TURNER
PRESIDENT-ELECT

Cheryl Turner earned both her B.A. and J.D. from Emory University and is a native of Atlanta.



She previously worked at Troutman Sanders and Thomas, Kennedy, Sampson and Tompkins law firms and spent the majority of her legal career at The Coca-Cola Company. In 2014, she joined the campaign of Michelle Nunn, the Democratic Nominee for the United States Senate.

An active member of the legal community, she is the founder of the Gate City Bar Association's Summer Intern Program; was named one of the Fulton County Daily Report's top attorneys under 40 in Atlanta in 2010; and is a member of the Emory University Alumni Board.

M. GINO BROGDON JR.
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Attorney Gino Brogdon is a graduate of the University of Georgia, School of law and trial attorney for The Brogdon Firm, LLC. His current practice specializes in Personal Injury and Criminal Defense law.



In his free time, Gino is an avid volunteer with several youth outreach organizations and enjoys helping others reach their health goals through personal training. Gino is a graduate of Morehouse College and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc

CHRISTOPHER E. BRUCE
MEMBER AT LARGE

Christopher Bruce is an associate at Speed, Seta, Martin & Trivett, LLC in Lawrenceville, Georgia. As an undergraduate at Georgia State University, he received the A.C.E. award, the highest award given to a senior, and graduated Cum Laude from Georgia State University's Honor's Program obtaining a Bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in Sociology. Before attending law school, Chris was a paralegal at DLA Piper. At the University of Georgia School of Law, Chris held various leadership positions.



BRIAN GAITHER
MEMBER AT LARGE

Brian Gaither is an attorney at the Office of the Public Defender, Atlanta Judicial Circuit. Brian graduated with a Bachelors of Arts in Journalism with a concentration in Public Relations from Georgia State University in 2006. He graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law in 2010. After Law school, Brian worked as a Solicitor in Clayton County which helped him develop excellent trial, negotiation, and litigation skills which served him well in private practice and currently in the Public Defender's Office.



SHAWNTEL R. HEBERT
VICE PRESIDENT

Shawntel Hebert is a member of Taylor English's Employment, Labor & Immigration practice group. Ms. Hebert is a 2007 graduate of Emory University School of Law and graduated summa cum laude from her undergraduate alma mater, Howard University, in 2004. She has been active with the Gate City Bar Association since graduating law school and served as the Chair of the 2012 Hall of Fame Gala.



COY J. JOHNSON JR.
HISTORIAN

Coy J. Johnson, Jr. currently serves as the Director of the Fulton County Office of the Child Attorney whose mission is to provide legal representation to and to protect the rights of children who are alleged to be abused and/or neglected throughout the Fulton County Juvenile Court dependency process. Prior to joining the Office of the Child Attorney, Coy worked in Fulton's Office of the County Attorney as a Staff Attorney in the Public Safety group where, in 2008, he was named Employee of the Year.



Coy graduated Magna Cum Laude from Morehouse College with a B.A. in English and minor in Psychology. He earned his J.D. from the University of Georgia, School of Law and served on the Journal of Intellectual Property.

CANDIS R. JONES
MEMBER AT LARGE

Candis R. Jones joined Gray, Rust, St. Amand, Moffett & Brieske, LLP in 2014 as an associate. Candis graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelors of Arts Degree in political science from Spelman College in 2006. After law school, Candis served as a judicial law clerk for the Honorable Clarence Cooper at the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. When not practicing law, Candis enjoys spending time with her family, working out, and mentoring high school and college level students.



JEFFERY R. SAXBY
TREASURER

Jeff Saxby received his Bachelor of Arts degree, cum laude, from Morehouse College in 1995 with a concentration in corporate finance and a minor in economics. Mr. Saxby attended the College of Law of Georgia State University, receiving his Juris Doctorate in 1998. Jeff is formerly a Complex Commercial Litigation and Labor & Employment Partner in the Atlanta office of Epstein Becker & Green, P.C. Mr. Saxby is currently Of Counsel with the Atlanta office of Hall Booth Smith, P.C. practicing the areas of Complex Commercial Litigation, Labor & Employment, Insurance Coverage and Professional Negligence.



MEKA B. WARD
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Meka B. Ward is a Senior Associate in the Litigation Section of Thomas Kennedy Sampson & Tompkins LLP. A native of Atlanta, Meka received her Bachelor of Arts in English, magna cum laude, from Spelman College, and earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Miami School of Law. Meka is married to Judge Christopher E. Ward who serves on the Municipal Court of Atlanta. They are the proud parents of two daughters, Linda Christina and Evann Marie.



TAMEIKA L. MONTGOMERY
MEMBER AT LARGE

Tameika Montgomery is an attorney at King & Spalding LLP and is a member of the Business Litigation Group. She received her J.D. from the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law in 2002. She graduated from The Ohio State University in 1999 with a B.A. in Political Science. Ms. Montgomery is heavily involved in pro bono and community service through her law firm and various organizations. She is currently serving as the Vice President of the Board of Directors for Sporty Girls, Inc. She is also a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.



NEKIA S. HACKWORTH
SECRETARY

Nekia S. Hackworth is an Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia, prosecuting economic crimes such as securities fraud, tax fraud, and

GERMAINE A. AUSTIN
MEMBER AT LARGE

Germaine Austin is an Associate in the Litigation Section of Thomas Kennedy Sampson & Tompkins LLP. He joined the United States Army in 2002 and served as a Human Resource Sergeant for

