The Lawyers’ Association For Women — Marion Griffin Chapter
Presents The 2019
Marion Griffin Women’s Symposium
September 20, 2019  8:00 am—1:30 pm
Belmont University College of Law

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A WOMAN LAWYER

Keynote Luncheon Speaker:
Chief Justice Cheri L. Beasley
North Carolina Supreme Court

Presenting Sponsor
Tickets On Sale Online
3.5 Hours Dual Credit CLE
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Attention Longtime Members:

If you have any old LAW materials that might be a great addition to the official LAW Archives, such as photographs, newsletters, agendas, and historic documents pertaining to LAW, our archivists would love to take them off your hands!

Our archivists are in the process of adding to and updating the LAW Archives in preparation for the chapter’s forty-year anniversary. If you have anything you would like to donate, please contact Courtney Orr (Courtney.Orr@ag.tn.gov) or Amanda Bradley (abradley@hartzogsvilla.com).

Kristen Shields, formerly with Legility, has joined Cotney Construction Law’s Nashville office.

Kristi Arth, formerly of Bradley, has joined the Belmont University College of Law as an Assistant Professor.

Sally Ramsey has retired from full-time practice but will work as a consultant on administrative matters. She formerly served as Senior Counsel at Constangy, Brooks, Smith & Prophete, LLP.
Last year, for the first time, more women than men entered law school. But can the greater number of women candidates lead to more women partners, judges, and leaders? Despite women making up half of all law school classes for more than a decade, only 19% of law firms’ equity partners are women according to the ABA Commission on Women in the Profession. Why are women not more equally represented in the senior ranks of law firms, corporate law departments and other practice settings? The biggest reason is that only 36% of all practicing attorneys are women.

Why are women leaving the profession and how can we stop the decline? In the past, as we have heard from our own founding members, women faced overt discrimination and blatant sexism that prevented them from even being hired, let alone promoted. Today, the challenges women face are more nuanced and varied. Some suggest an unconscious bias leads to women receiving less interesting, less challenging work assignments, which produce weak performance reviews and lower billable hours and, in turn, affects women’s metrics and ultimately, their compensation. Others cite the challenges women face in raising children while practicing law—work-life balance and lack of childcare. Societal norms still tend to favor women as the primary caregiver, which requires not only more time but also more responsibility for women while they also juggle a legal career. Add to this the unfortunate fact that most law firms still offer only one path—full time work, plus limited child care options, with year long waiting lists and prohibitive costs, and it is no surprise that women leave the profession altogether.

Regardless of the particular reason, women are underrepresented as leaders in our firms and companies. Unfortunately for us all, women are leaving the practice of law before they can become leaders, before they can be role models, mentors and champions for the younger women lawyers behind them, and before they can effect real change in our profession.

But I believe we can change this pattern. We can create real changes in our profession through discussing these issues and collaborating to find solutions to improve the lives of women lawyers. This month, LAW will bring leaders from across the city together to discuss how women are effecting real change in their own lives and the lives of women lawyers at the Marion Griffin Women’s Symposium on September 20, 2019. In this Symposium, we will delve into some of the reasons women are leaving, explore pay disparity, implicit bias, and the child care dilemma, and have honest conversations with firm leaders about how we can improve the lives of women lawyers in Nashville. I hope that you will join us to be part of the discussion and part of the solution!
Chief Justice Cheri L. Beasley
North Carolina Supreme Court

Chief Justice Cheri Beasley began her twenty-year judicial career as a District Court Judge in Cumberland County, North Carolina in 1999. Prior to her appointment to the bench, she practiced law in the Twelfth Judicial District’s Public Defender’s Office where she tried cases ranging from misdemeanors to capital murder.

Chief Justice Beasley served four years as an Associate Judge on the North Carolina Court of Appeals. After ten years of service on the district court bench, she was elected to serve as an Associate Judge on the North Carolina Court of Appeals. Her election made her the first African-American woman elected in any statewide race without first being appointed to the office.

She was then appointed by Governor Perdue to fill the vacancy on the North Carolina Supreme Court created by the retirement of Justice Patricia Timmons-Goodson in 2012. At the time of her appointment, Chief Justice Beasley was the sixth woman, and only the second African-American woman, to serve on the Court. With her appointment by Governor Cooper in March, 2019, Beasley became the first African-American woman in the Supreme Court’s 200-year history to serve as Chief Justice of the state’s highest Court, and only the fourth African-American woman to lead a state’s highest court in the entire United States.

She is a graduate of Douglass College of Rutgers University and of The University of Tennessee College of Law. In 2018, she earned an L.L.M. in Judicial Studies from Duke University School of Law.

She has received Honorary Doctorates of Humane Letters from North Carolina Central University and Fayetteville State University.

Chief Justice Beasley’s commitment to serve North Carolina and her residents has extended far beyond the halls of justice. She has worked tirelessly mentoring students and judges. She lectures at area law schools and travels extensively nationwide and abroad to promote the rule of law, the administration of justice, the importance of an independent judiciary, and fair judicial selection.

Chief Justice Beasley has spent her career in dedicated support of the legal profession. She is the Chair of the North Carolina Equal Access to Justice Commission, as well as the Chief Justice’s Commission on Professionalism. She has served on the American Bar Association’s Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defense (SCLAID) for many years. She holds memberships in the American Bar Association, the North Carolina Bar Association, the North Carolina Association of Women Attorneys, the Capital City Lawyers Association, and the North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers. She formerly served as vice-president of the North Carolina Bar Association, and is a member in a host of other professional and civic organizations.

Chief Justice Beasley is the proud recipient of a number of professional awards and honors, including the Fayetteville State University Chancellor’s Medallion, the Gwyneth B. Davis Award of the North Carolina Association of Women Attorneys, the University of Tennessee Knoxville’s Trailblazer Award, and the Women of Justice Public Official Award. She has received inductions into The Douglass Society, the highest honor bestowed by Douglass College-Rutgers University, and the Hall of Fame of the Rutgers University African-American Alumni Alliance.

Chief Justice Beasley and her husband, Curtis Owens, are the proud parents of twin sons, Thomas and Matthew, who are currently attending college at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Their home church is First Baptist Church, Moore Street, in Fayetteville, and they are members of First Baptist Church, South Wilmington Street, in Raleigh where Chief Justice Beasley serves on the Board of Trustees.
UPCOMING EVENTS

2019

September 10, 2019
Health & Wellness Book Club

6—8:00 pm
Hosted by Doreen Farthing
836 Harrisburg Lane
Mt. Juliet 37122
615-260-4649
Bring your favorite beverage and an appetizer to share!

October 7, 2019
Health & Wellness Book Club

6—8:00 pm
Hosted by Joyce Safley
836 Harrisburg Lane
Mt. Juliet 37122
615-260-4649
Bring your favorite beverage and an appetizer to share!
Weather permitting, dress for a bonfire!

October 15, 2019
Membership Luncheon and One Hour CLE

Plan to attend this informative luncheon in the newly renovated event space at the Café at Thistle Farms.

11: 15 am Registration and Lunch
Noon—1:00 pm CLE
5122 Charlotte Ave., Nashville, TN 37209

Watch for more details!
October 24, 2019

Practicing Parents Networking Breakfast

7:30—9:30 am

Drop the kiddos at school and meet your sisters in the law for breakfast!

Milk and Honey (in The Gulch)
214 11th Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37203

Free flowing coffee on LAW!

November 7, 2019

New Admittees’ Breakfast

7:15—9:00 am

Wildhorse Saloon
120 2nd Avenue North
Nashville, TN 37201

Keynote Speaker:
Anne Clayton Martin
Chancellor, Part II
Davidson County Chancery Court
Twentieth Judicial District Court
Nashville, Tennessee

November 12, 2019

Health & Wellness Book Club

6—8:00 pm

Watch for more details!
Take your favorite beverage and an appetizer to share!

December 12, 2019

Member Appreciation CLE

3—5:00 pm

Butler Snow LLP
150 3rd Avenue South, Suite 1600
Nashville, TN 37201

Followed by Holiday Mixer

To register for all LAW events, go to www.law-nashville.org/events
August Member Meeting Recap  
By Caroline Sapp

On August 20, 2019, LAW members convened for the August meeting at the Nashville City Club to hear from the Honorable Martha Craig Daughtery and Rose Palermo. Judge Daughtery and Mrs. Palermo discussed Mrs. Palermo’s experience with a Registrar, her refusal to register anew under the surname of her husband, her name purge from the registration list, the litigation that followed, a VW Beetle, “Dear Sir” letters, and a few law school stories.

Judge Daughtery and Rose Palermo were two of five females in their graduating class at Vanderbilt Law School, and have been close friends since their law school journey together.

In September 1973, Rose married Denty Cheatham, and kept her birth/maiden name, Palermo. Following their marriage, Ms. Palermo lodged a change of address with the Registrar. The Registrar advised Ms. Palermo that she must register anew under her husband’s surname, or Rose would be purged from the registration records. The Registrar pointed to Tennessee’s state-wide, compulsory Registration Law, Section 2-206. Ms. Palermo refused, and her name was later purged from the voter registration list. So, what does an attorney do? She tells her law-school classmate and friend, Judge Daughtery, and Judge Daughtery filed a lawsuit on her behalf.

Judge Daughtery sought a declaratory judgment that the Registrar’s interpretation of the statute was erroneous, or in the alternative, that the statute be declared violative of the Nineteenth Amendment and the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The Chancellor ruled in Ms. Palermo’s favor and the state appealed. The Tennessee Supreme Court held that upon marriage, women may elect to retain their own surname and that Ms. Palermo was not required to assume the name of her husband, and at her election, her legal name continued to be her maiden name for all purposes. See Dunn v. Palermo, 522 S.W.2d 679 (Tenn. 1975). LAW members then listened as Judge Daughtrey and Ms. Palermo recalled some of their favorite memories together.
Caroline Sapp is a 2019-2020 Newsletter Editor for LAW, and an attorney at the Law Offices of John Day, P.C.
Closing the Gap
By Mariam Stockton

At times in the legal profession, a female attorney may experience being the only woman in the room, the only woman at the counsel table, or the only woman in a leadership role within an organization. A smaller segment of our profession experiences another veil of diversity—being the only person in the room with a different race, gender orientation, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, disability, or life experience. Lawyers with these diverse experiences add tremendous value to the legal community, yet they are not equally represented because the legal industry remains one of the least diverse professions.1 The statistics, while slowly improving, are still daunting.

In 2018, the National Association for Law Placement’s Report on Diversity found that women comprised 35.41 percent of the total lawyers in the United States law firms, yet minority women made up a mere 8.08 percent.2 When considering women in leadership roles, the statistics continue to decline: women accounted for 23.36 percent of law firm partners across the United States in 2018.3 Minority women saw an increased disparity at the partnership level and averaged a meager 3.19 percent of the total number of partners at law firms across the United States.4 In the last few months, more than 170 corporate attorneys across the country urged law firms to commit to diversity and inclusiveness at the partnership level by pledging to hire law firms that manifest results.5

Organizations, such as the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD), are leading the diversity charge with over 300 law firm managing partners and the general counsel of major corporations dedicated to increasing diversity and inclusiveness in the legal profession. Through LCLD’s Fellows Program, diverse high-potential attorneys from corporations and law firms participate in a year-long business development program aimed to advance minority attorneys to leadership roles within the legal profession. LCLD Fellows have a track record of being promoted to general counsel, law firm partnership, and other leadership positions after participating in the program. In turn, the cycle continues through an alumni mentoring program.

Other organizations, such as the ABA Office of Diversity Initiatives, the National Association of Women Lawyers, and our very own Marion Griffin Chapter of the Lawyers’ Association for Women (LAW), have been long-standing trailblazers in empowering and promoting women in the legal profession. For example, LAW’s Lean-In Circles provide support to female attorneys through mentorship and education—these smaller, intimate circles cultivate real relationships and promote women in the legal community.

Joining an organization or creating a community, whether it be a lean-in circle comprised of women with a similar legal practice or a conference room of minority attorneys seeking a way to enhance our great profession, allows us to connect on a deeper level. This heightened level of communal support creates a platform of empowerment, sponsorship, and collaboration necessary to foster one another as we strive to maximize our leadership potential. Together, we can begin to close the gap and create a more inclusive legal profession.

3 Id.
4 Id.

Mariam Stockton is an attorney at Neal & Harwell, PLC. She serves as a co-chair of Diversity Committee, and she is a lean-in circle group leader. She is also a 2019 Fellow of the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity.
On August 18, 2019, LAW members attended the Votes for Women lunch at the Hermitage Hotel. The lunch celebrated the 99th anniversary of Tennessee’s historic vote ratifying the 19th amendment and granting women the right to vote nationwide.

Not only was the Hermitage Hotel the location of the Votes for Women lunch, but the hotel also served as “the national headquarters for pro- and anti-suffrage causes while state legislators cast their votes that brought about the ratification of the 19th Amendment.”

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Back-to-School Season

With a new school year on the horizon (or already starting for some), LAW members recall their favorite back-to-school activity when they were young or their favorite back-to-school activity with their child/children.

Kristi Arth

My favorite back-to-school tradition when I was a kid was a special first-day-of-school breakfast. My mom would always get up early and make my grandmother’s lost bread recipe (pain perdu), which was a Louisiana recipe for a sort of French toast. She’d let me pile on the powdered sugar and then ride that sugar high into the new school year. My boys now go to “school” at McKendree Methodist Daycare, a Reggio-Emilia-inspired school. My oldest just moved into the pre-school room—the “Researchers”—and announced, “I’m a big boy.” When they start elementary school at Harpeth Valley in a few years, perhaps, I’ll have to start letting a loaf of French bread go stale a day or two in advance and whip out the nutmeg, cinnamon, egg, milk, and confectioner’s sugar that made so many great back-to-school memories for me.

Kristi is a former LAW board member. She recently transitioned from Bradley and is now an Assistant Professor of Law at Belmont University.

Leighann Ness

Growing up, Leighann’s favorite back-to-school activity was shopping for new clothes and school supplies. This upcoming school year, she shopped with her high schooler who is starting her freshman year and her kindergartener.

Leighann is LAW’s treasurer and works at HCA Physician Services Group as Operations Counsel.
Samantha Simpson

One of Samantha’s favorite back-to-school activities was decorating the front cover of her spiral notebooks with scrapbooking supplies and stickers.

Callie Hinson

Prior to going back to school, Callie loved spending time with her grandparents. In the summer mornings, she would spend time with her grandfather at his optometry practice, and then, eat lunch at the neighborhood drug store on the square in Lexington, Tennessee. Spending time with her grandparents was her absolute favorite!

Callie is a co-chair of the New Admittees’ Breakfast Committee and an attorney at Neal & Harwell, PLC.
Emily Warth

On the weekend before school, Emily, her husband, and her twins, Zoe and Ethan, pick a fun activity to do together. This year, on the night before school, they had a family game night, and each child picked out a game, and we all played together.

Shellie Handelsman

Shellie’s father (pictured) would pick her up from school and take her to watch the Penguins play hockey. They would arrive early - while the players were warming up - and Shellie would work on her homework. One her homework was complete, the hockey game would start soon thereafter, and they would then watch the hockey game together.

Emily is a co-chair of the LAW membership committee, and she is Assistant General Counsel at Asurion where she manages litigation and advises on other risk related issues.

Shellie is a First-Year Director for LAW and an attorney at Shuttleworth PLLC where she practices in the areas of civil litigation, estate planning and probate law, entertainment and sports law, and intellectual property law (copyright and trademark).
Where are you from? Tell us about your path to practicing law. I am from Huntsville, Alabama - the “Rocket City” and I am a first-generation college graduate. I was one of those kids who knew I wanted to be a lawyer and never changed the goal. Going to college in Washington, D.C. sounded amazing for a future lawyer so I chose Howard University, because of its rich history and reputation for producing successful African-American scholars in various fields. I studied business and marketing in college. The risk-averse side of me wanted to ensure I had something to fall back on if the law didn’t work out. On my college graduation day, I didn’t know what I was going to do. I had interviewed for several marketing jobs, had some acceptances from good law schools, but I was also waiting for responses from the last two law schools. As I was moving out of my dorm, two days after graduation, I received my acceptance letter from Vanderbilt. I was excited to attend Vanderbilt Law School since it is a great educational institution and located much closer to my family.

After law school, I started out as a corporate/securities lawyer at a private law firm, then practiced for several years with the federal government in D.C. In recent years, I have worked as an in-house attorney, supporting clients in both the automotive and tire industries in a variety of areas. These opportunities have allowed me to develop a good understanding of “organizational behavior” and company risk management. I am thankful for the opportunities I’ve had, and I look forward to seeing how my career continues to evolve.

What do you do professionally, and what is your favorite part of your job? I am an in-house counsel at Bridgestone Americas. My official role is Senior Counsel, Regulatory Compliance. I advise business leaders and staff regarding product compliance with federal tire safety regulations, provide regulatory advice with respect to development of innovative technologies, conduct compliance trainings, and represent Bridgestone regarding policy matters in our trade association. I enjoy working with people who work in different functional areas of the business. It helps me appreciate the many inputs required to contribute to the overall success of a company. Also, I am continuously learning creative ways to push ideas forward and execute with excellence.

What leadership roles have you had with LAW? I have served as co-chair of the Mentoring/Professional Development Committee and co-chair of the Legislation and Litigation Committee.

What is your favorite part of LAW? The Mentoring Circles have been a favorite for me, because I have had an opportunity to meet some great people, share experiences, and learn from each of them.

Describe yourself. I am a social person, but a private person by nature. You could call me an extroverted introvert. It takes some time to get to know me, and those that do find that I am a genuine and loyal person. I LOVE music and the performing arts. Attending concerts and theater shows are favorites on my list. I also love attending sporting events, especially football and basketball games.

It’s a Saturday night in Nashville. What are you up to? To be honest, it’s usually “Netflix and Chill”- I am trying to find new things to explore in Nashville. I recently booked a party bike for a night downtown, and it was so much fun!

Facebook or Instagram? The ‘gram.

Phone call or text? It depends on the purpose of the communication. A text usually gets it done, but deeper discussions require a phone call.

Netflix or Hulu? See above.

What is your favorite quote, piece of advice, or a motto you try to live by? No single setback, misstep or failure (perceived or real) is the end of the world. It’s never too late to change your path and learn new things. The only limits are what you allow your mind to imagine for yourself, and the energy you put into forging ahead and making things happen.
In August, LAW joined the citywide book club in selecting Elaine Weiss’s book, “The Woman’s Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote.” On August 18, 2019, LAW members attended the book club event at Salon@615 at Nashville’s Public Library.

This event occurred on the 99th anniversary of Tennessee’s historic vote granting women the right to vote and featured a conversation / discussion with Elaine Weiss and Callie Khouri, a movie producer.
Thank you to our Sustaining Members who support the programs, mission and purposes of LAW above and beyond the Sliding Income Scale categories.

Audrey Anderson  
Anne Arney  
Kristi W. Arth  
Katherine Austin  
Laura Baker  
Cindy Barnett  
Kathryn Barnett  
Margaret Behm  
Raquel Bellamy  
April Berman  
Judge Cheryl Blackburn  
Christen Blackburn  
Judge Melissa Blackburn  
Chancellor Claudia Bonnyman  
Jan Bossing  
Dewey Branstetter  
Hunter Branstetter  
Mary Katherine Bratton  
Lori Brewer  
Tracey Carter  
Jenny Charles  
Justice Connie Clark  
Kimberly Clark  
Brooke Coplon  
Kristen Cass Corra  
Nancy Krider Corley  
Chelsea Curtis  
Judge Martha Daughtrey  
Rebecca Demaree  
Jackie Dixon  
Sherie Edwards  
Jason Epstein  
Amy Everhart  
Doreen Farthing  
Judge Mark Fishburn  
Mandy Floyd  
Shana Fonnesbeck  
Grace Fox  
Jessica Gichner  
Elizabeth Gonser  
Shellie Handelsman  
Sarah Hannah  
Corey Harkey  
Laura Heiman  
Lisa Helton  
Lisa Hinson  
Jenny Howard  
Kyonzte Hughes-Toombs  
Lynne Ingram  
Michele Johnson  
Judge Lynda Jones  
Brendi Kaplan  
Anne Marie Kempf  
Nina Kumar  
Lauren Lambert  
Amelia Lant  
Pirjin Laser  
Lynn Lawyer  
Jessica Levine  
Courtney Leyes  
Haverly MacArthur  
Alexandra MacKay  
Nancy MacLean  
Chambre Malone  
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Chancellor Carol McCoy  
Susan McGannon  
Elise McKelvey  
Laura Merritt  
Amy Mohan  
Bianna Montminy  
Valerie Diden Moore  
Marlene Moses  
Chancellor Patricia Moskal  
Barbara Moss  
Karen Neal  
Leighann Ness  
Judge Alistair Newbern  
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Ashley Odubeko  
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Rebekah Parkhurst  
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Rachel Rosenblatt  
Abby Rubenfeld  
Jennifer Rusie  
Joyce Safley  
Maria Salas  
Julie Sandine  
Caroline Sapp  
Carolyn Schott  
Maria Scott  
Dianna Shew  
Judge Marietta Shipley  
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Liz Sitgreaves  
Judge Jennifer Smith  
Laura Smith  
Melissa Smith  
Leslie South  
Kate Stauffer  
Mariat Stockton  
Judge Jane Stranch  
Scott Tift  
Elizabeth Tipping  
Martha Trammell  
Judge Aleta Trauger  
Byron Trauger  
Robert Tuke  
Vanessa Vargas-Land  
Erica Vick  
Emily Warth  
Elizabeth Washko  
Malaka Watson  
Bernadette Welch  
Courtney Williams  
Karen Williams  
Susan Neal Williams  
Tyler Yarbro  
Amanda Young  
Jane Young  
Gulam Zade  
Rachel Zamata