

Speaker Biographies

FCBA In-Person Bench & Bar CLE 2024

June 25, 2024, 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Fayette Circuit Courthouse Multi-Purpose Room

Say What? Domestic Violence Court for Lawyers who Think DV Means "Directed Verdict" - 1 Hour 9:00 a.m.- 10:00 a.m.

Speaker: Judge Ross Ewing

Biography: Hon. Ross Ewing is currently a family court judge in Lexington, Kentucky. Prior to his election in 2022, he was a family law attorney and mediator in private practice and held many leadership positions in the Kentucky bar and his local community. Judge Ewing was the founding president of the Kentucky Bar Association's LGBT Law Section and is a long-time volunteer with the Kentucky Lawyers Assistance Program. He is also an adjunct professor at the UK College of Law, teaching in the area of family law. In 2024, he was awarded the Raising the Bar Award by the Kentucky Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers in recognition of his contributions to elevating the practice of family law across the state. When not in court or chambers, Judge Ewing can usually be found outdoors – hiking, gardening, or reading a book in the shade.

Authenticating Digital Evidence in the Courtroom – 1 Hour 10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Speaker: Hon. Susan Wesley McClure

Biography: Hon. Susan Wesley McClure, Family Circuit Judge, Chief Circuit Judge, 4th Judicial Circuit, Vice-Chief Regional Judge, Purchase Region.

Judge Susan Wesley McClure graduated from the University of Kentucky and UK's College of Law. Before becoming the Hopkins Family Court Judge in 2007, she served as the general jurisdiction circuit judge (2006), as the domestic relations commissioner (2000-2006), and as an assistant county attorney (1990-1998) for Hopkins County. She has also served as a Special Justice on the Kentucky Supreme Court (1999), was an instructor for Madisonville Community College, and is currently an adjunct instructor (teaching family law) at the UK College of Law. When in private practice, Judge McClure worked in the areas of corporations, real estate, probate, and banking law.

Judge McClure is a member of the NCFJCJ and has attended the National Judicial College in Reno, NV. She is an NCFJCJ Model Court Lead Judge and has participated in national and statewide trainings and conferences. She is a mentor judge for the Kentucky Court of Justice, a contributing author and editor of the Circuit Judges' Benchbook, a member of the Judges ECR & Tools Subcommittee, and the First VP of the Circuit Judges' Association. In October 2023, she will begin a two-year term as that organization's president. She is also a member of the KY Circuit Judges' Executive, Educational, and Legislative Committees. In July 2023, she will begin a three-year term on the KBA Foundation Board as the appointee of the Circuit Judges' Association. Judge McClure has just finished terms on the Administrative Council, the Finance Committee, and the Staff-Parish Relations Committee for the Madisonville First United Methodist Church where she also teaches an adult Sunday School Class, served as the 2020-2022 Lay Delegate to Annual Conference, and occasionally plays the piano. She is on the House Corporation Board for Alpha Delta Pi at UK and participates in numerous community activities. The UK Women's Law Caucus has honored her as the 2022

Outstanding Legal Professional. The Madisonville-Hopkins County community has named her the Business and Professional Woman of the Year and the Lions' Club Woman of the Year. She is a devoted UK fan and a soccer mom. Judge McClure is married to Dr. Tom McClure; they are the parents of two attorneys, a graduate student, and a rescue dog.

Court of Appeals Update – 1 Hour 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Speaker: Judge Pamela R. Goodwine

Biography: Judge Pamela R. Goodwine was elected to the Kentucky Court of Appeals in November 2018 to serve Division 1 of the 5th Appellate District. Before her election to the Court of Appeals, she was Chief Regional Circuit Judge for Fayette County and served as a circuit court judge since November 2003. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Kentucky, College of Law in 1994 and was admitted to practice law in the Commonwealth of Kentucky in October 1994. Aside from her legal career, Judge Goodwine is married to Lee A. Padgett, Jr. They have two children, six grandchildren, and a 12-year-old German Shepherd named Kobe. In addition to her professional endeavors, she enjoys interior design, watching sports, and teaching fitness classes after being certified as a Jazzercise fitness instructor in June 2012.

Legislative Update – 1 Hour 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Speaker: Senator Reginald Thomas

Biography: Senator Reginald Thomas was elected to the Kentucky State Senate to represent the 13th District of Fayette County in a special election in 2013. He took his oath of office and began service in January 2014. He was elected to Senate Democratic Leadership as Caucus Chair by his Democratic colleagues in 2020. An attorney, he serves as an assistant professor at Kentucky State University. Senator Thomas resides in Lexington with his wife, Vela Thomas. He and his late wife, Lynda Morris Thomas, have a daughter, Johanna; two sons, Leonard and William Phillip, and three grandchildren. He remarried in 2019 to Vela Thomas. He is a member of St. Paul A.M.E. Church, where he serves on the board of trustees.

Got Questions? Insights from the Courthouse Experts 1 Hour 2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Speakers: Judge Kimberly N. Bunnell, Judge Denotra Gunther, Vincent Riggs, Dana Carter

Biographies:

Judge Kimberly N. Bunnell graduated from the University of Kentucky College of Law in 1988. She started her legal career as an Assistant Fayette County Attorney and then an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney. She was appointed to the District Court bench in January 2000 by Governor Patton and later elected Chief Judge in January 2002. In December 2002, she became one of Fayette County's first Family Court Judges. In January 2007, Judge Bunnell left Family Court to become a general jurisdiction judge. She is currently Chief Judge of the Fayette Circuit Court and Past President of the State Circuit Judges' Association. In addition to her legal work, Judge Bunnell is the president of the board for The Canaan House, a home for mentally ill adults, and an Advisory Board Member for Sullivan University Legal Studies. She also looks forward to the Christmas holidays every year when she plays the trumpet in the UK Alumni Pep Band for the UK Men's and Women's Basketball games. If you don't find her in court these days, you will probably find her on the Pickle Ball Court, her newest obsession.

Judge Denotra Gunter Fayette District Court Judge Denotra Gunther was born and raised in Augusta, GA to a career military family; she pursued a career in law after earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Journalism from the University of South Carolina and a Juris Doctor from the University of Kentucky College of Law. With significant experience as a Staff Attorney and

Assistant Fayette County Attorney, Denotra has made substantial contributions to her community, including co-creating the Truancy Intervention Program and obtaining a federal grant for the program. Her commitment to justice and education is evident through her years of teaching at the UK Gatton College of Business and Economics and the J. David Rosenberg College of Law, as well as her service on the LFUCG Ethics Commission and Racial Justice and Equality Commission. She was appointed to the court on December 10, 2021, by Gov. Andy Beshear.

Vincent Riggs Vincent Riggs, elected as the Fayette Circuit Court Clerk in 2012 and re-elected for a second term in 2018, was previously a practicing attorney in family, domestic violence, immigration, and estate law. He is a member of several bar associations and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Kentucky and a Juris Doctor degree from the Appalachian School of Law, Virginia. Additionally, he has held the position of president of the Kentucky Association of Circuit Court Clerks and serves on various legal committees and boards.

Dana Carter, Court Administrator for the Fayette Circuit Court for over 20 years, assisting in Human Resources Management of Court Personnel, Facilities Management, Juror Management, Purchasing Management, and other non-judicial matters. Previously, managed national and local professional associations, namely the National Association of State Purchasing Officials, the National Association of State Chief Administrators, and the Fayette County Bar Association. Ms. Carter serves on various community boards and programs.

Making it Back: One Lawyer's Remarkable Journey from Despair to Recovery – 1 Hour Ethics 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Speakers: Yvette Hourigan, Bruce Simpson

Biographies:

Yvette Hourigan is a former trial lawyer and Director of the Kentucky Lawyer Assistance Program (KYLAP). She is an inaugural member of the Kentucky Judicial Commission on Mental Health and the current chair of the American Bar Association's Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs (COLAP). Yvette has received several awards for her exceptional service, including the Chief Justice's Special Service Award and the KBA President's Special Service Award. She is also recognized for her work in suicide prevention in the legal profession and has spoken nationally on topics impacting lawyer competence and well-being, lawyer impairment, and suicide prevention. KYLAP's work has been featured nationally on various media platforms.

Bruce Simpson is a distinguished Civil Trial Lawyer with 41 years of experience, specializing in real estate, zoning, constitutional challenges to governmental decisions, and related civil litigation. He is the founder of Bruce Simpson Law, PLLC. Bruce holds a JD from the University of Kentucky J David Rosenberg College of Law, an MSW from the University of Kentucky College of Social Work, and a BA from the University of Kentucky in Sociology. As a US Army Veteran, Bruce served for 2 years on active duty and 4 years in the reserve duty as part of the Infantry. He has also made significant contributions to various legal and social organizations, having served as the Past President of the Fayette County Bar Association and as the Past President and current board member of the Children's Advocacy Center of the Bluegrass. Additionally, Bruce is a current board member of the Kentucky Equal Justice Center and Mental Health America-Kentucky Chapter. He also volunteers for the Kentucky Lawyer Assistance Program (KYLAP).