

OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW

VOLUME 49

FALL 2024

NUMBER 1

ESSAY

A LEGACY OF SERVICE: THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW ALUMNI AS FEDERAL JUDGES

*Timothy T. Hsieh**

Abstract

Oklahoma City University School of Law (“OCU Law”) has produced numerous distinguished graduates, or alumni, who have gone on to serve with distinction in the Oklahoma state judiciary including in the Oklahoma Supreme Court. Just to provide an illustration, nearly half of the current district judges and special judges in the Oklahoma County District Court are alumni of the law school. Moreover, all the special judges in Oklahoma’s Canadian County are OCU Law alumni as well. However,

* Associate Professor of Law, Oklahoma City University School of Law. The author thanks Chief Judge Timothy DeGiusti, Andy Lester, Marcia Clark, Willa Bray, Rob Ramana and D. Wayne Lee for their historical insights, as well as Dean Paula Dalley, Professor Timothy Gatton, Dean Lee Peoples, Professor Von Russell Creel, Bob Burke, Amy Keller and Kaden Peebles for their research assistance and Emily Hurt and Caroline Rowland for their editorial assistance. The author finally would like to acknowledge the tremendous historical value of the book *Oklahoma City University School of Law a History*, written by Professor Creel and Mr. Burke, and to Dean Dalley who gifted me a copy.

there have not been any extensive records kept of any OCU Law alumnus serving on the federal bench. Although historically there is no known instance of a U.S. district judge or a U.S. court of appeals judge being an OCU Law alumnus, there are six notable individuals who have graduated from OCU Law who have served or are currently serving as a U.S. magistrate judge, one who attended their first year at OCU Law who served as a U.S. magistrate judge, and one graduate who has served as a U.S. bankruptcy judge. In addition, there are nine individuals who have served as either an administrative law judge (“ALJ”) or a military judge in the federal government—totaling to seventeen federal judges who are complete or partial OCU Law alumni. Finally, there are three more OCU Law alumni who have served as clerks of court or long-time judicial law clerks in the U.S. District or U.S. Bankruptcy Courts for the Western District of Oklahoma, amounting to twenty OCU Law alumni overall who have served the United States federal judiciary or administrative government and executive branch. Their collective careers not only reflect the values of dedication, justice and service that are central to OCU Law’s mission, but also the unique role that these individuals hold in the federal judicial system. This article explores the epic careers and highly impactful contributions of these esteemed and diverse federal judges as well as clerks who are also alumni of OCU Law.

Introduction

Oklahoma City University School of Law (“OCU Law”) has produced numerous distinguished graduates, or alumni, who have gone on to serve with distinction in the Oklahoma state judiciary including in the Oklahoma Supreme Court.¹ For example, nearly half (or seven out of fifteen) of the district judges in the Oklahoma County District Court are OCU Law

1. See *List of Oklahoma City University Alumni, Law*, WIKIPEDIA (Oct. 31, 2024, 02:07 UTC), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Oklahoma_City_University_alumni#Law [https://perma.cc/U59A-4N2V] (listing Oklahoma Supreme Court Justices Doug Combs (1976), Yvonne Kauger (1969), Marian P. Opala (1953) and James R. Winchester (1977) and several Oklahoma Court of Civil Appeals Judges—Alma Wilson also attended OCU Law before transferring to the University of Oklahoma for her JD); *Oklahoma City University School of Law, Notable Alumni and Students*, WIKIPEDIA (Sept. 17, 2024, 21:56 UTC), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oklahoma_City_University_School_of_Law#Notable [https://perma.cc/L8N4-EDN2].

alumni² and nearly half (or ten out of twenty-one) of the special judges are OCU Law alumni,³ and all the special judges in Canadian County are OCU Law alumni.⁴ However, there have not been any extensive records kept of

2. See *District Judges*, OKLA. CNTY. DIST. CT., <https://oklacountyjudges.org/district-judges/> [<https://perma.cc/V6GX-V77C>] (listing the seven judges as (1) Judge Kaitlyn G. Allen (*Judge Kaitlyn G. Allen: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/kaitlyn.g.allen> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)); (2) Judge Don Andrews (*Judge Don Andrews, District Courts of Oklahoma*, CLEATS FOR KIDS, <https://www.cleatsforkids.org/board-of-directors/don-andrews> [<https://perma.cc/CZ5W-24W3>]); (3) Judge Nikki Kirkpatrick (*About the Judge*, JUDGE NIKKI KIRKPATRICK, <https://www.nikkirkirkpatrick.com/about> [<https://perma.cc/L2QD-TWG4>]); (4) Judge Natalie Mai (*Judge Natalie Mai: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/natalie.mai> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)); (5) Judge Amy Palumbo (*Judge Amy Palumbo: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/amy.palumbo> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)); (6) Judge Kathryn R. Savage (*Judge Kathryn R. Savage: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/kathryn.r.savage> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)) & (7) Judge Cindy H. Truong (*Judge Cindy H. Truong: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/cindy.h.truong> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024))).

3. These are the ten OCU Law alumni who are special judges: (1) Judge Sharon Wigdor Byers (*Sharon Wigdor Byers*, AVVO, <https://www.avvo.com/attorneys/sharon-byers-4666143.html> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)); (2) Judge April D. Collins (C. Scott Jones, *April D. Collins, Special Judge*, BRIEFCASE, Feb. 2019, at 5, 5, https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.okcbar.org/resource/resmgr/briefcase/0219-ocba_briefcase_web.pdf [<https://perma.cc/GBT9-5DJH>]); (3) Judge Nichole Gillett (*Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, July 1, 2022—June 30, 2023*, OKLA. CNTY. JUV. BUREAU, Jan. 2024, at 7, <https://oklahomacounty.dev.dnn4less.net/Portals/0/DNNGalleryPro/uploads/2024/1/23/O CJBFY2023AnnualReport.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/X5NP-AJRV>]); (4) Judge Lydia Y. Green (*Judge Lydia Y. Green: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/lydia.y.green> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)); (5) Judge Elizabeth H. Kerr (*Judge Elizabeth H. Kerr: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/elizabeth.h.kerr> (last visited Oct. 26, 2024)); (6) Judge Mark C. McCormick (*Judge Mark C. McCormick: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/mark.c.mccormick> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)); (7) Judge Kevin C. McCray (*Judge Kevin C. McCray: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/kevin.c.mccray> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)); (8) Judge R. Trent Pipes (*Judge R. Trent Pipes: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/r.trent.pipes> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)); (9) Judge Thomas C. Riesen (*Judge Thomas C. Riesen: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/thomas.c.riesen> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)) & (10) Judge Cassandra Williams (*Judge Cassandra Williams: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/cassandra.williams> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)).

4. See *Staff Directory*, CANADIAN CNTY. OKLA., <https://www.canadiancounty.org/Directory.aspx> [<https://perma.cc/N7F3-VGBK>]. All

any OCU Law alumnus serving on the federal bench. Although historically there is no known instance of a U.S. district or U.S. court of appeals judge being an OCU Law alumnus, there are six notable individuals who have graduated from OCU Law—and one who attended their first year at OCU Law—who have served or are currently serving as a U.S. magistrate judge,⁵ one OCU Law graduate who has served as a U.S. bankruptcy judge⁶ and nine individuals who have served as federal administrative law

three special judges are OCU Law alumni: (1) Judge Charles Gass (Charles Gass, LINKEDIN, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/charles-w-gass-5199769/> (last visited Oct. 4, 2024)); (2) Judge David H. Halley (*David H. Halley*, MARTINDALE, <https://www.martindale.com/attorney/david-h-halley-1477568/> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)) & (3) Judge Barbara Hatfield (*Judge Barbara Hatfield: Professional Background and Legal Expertise*, TRELIS, <https://trellis.law/judge/barbara.hatfield> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024)).

5. See *FAQs: Federal Judges*, U.S. CTS., <https://www.uscourts.gov/faqs-federal-judges#:~:text=A%20U.S.%20magistrate%20judge%20is,delegated%20by%20the%20district%20judges> [<https://perma.cc/GJ8T-C2K5>] (“A U.S. magistrate judge is a judicial officer of the district court and is appointed by majority vote of the active district judges of the court to exercise jurisdiction over matters assigned by statute as well as those delegated by the district judges. The number of magistrate judge positions is determined by the Judicial Conference of the United States, based on recommendations of the respective district courts, the judicial councils of the circuits, and the Director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. A full-time magistrate judge serves a term of eight years. Duties assigned to magistrate judges by district court judges may vary considerably from court to court.”); see also *United States Magistrate Judge*, WIKIPEDIA (June 28, 2024, 09:16 UTC), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_magistrate_judge [<https://perma.cc/ZB4G-V2GM>] (“In United States federal courts, magistrate judges are judges appointed to assist U.S. district court judges in the performance of their duties. Magistrate judges generally oversee first appearances of criminal defendants, set bail, and conduct other administrative duties.”).

6. Craig A. Gargotta, *Who Are Bankruptcy Judges and How Did They Become Federal Judges?*, FED. LAW., Apr. 2018, at 11, <https://www.fedbar.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Bankruptcy-Brief-pdf-1.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/9RUV-QT8C>] (“Each judicial district in the United States and Puerto Rico has at least one bankruptcy judge. Bankruptcy judges are a ‘unit’ of the district court. Bankruptcy judges are judicial officers of the U.S. district court under Article III of the U.S. Constitution. Bankruptcy judges serve as adjuncts of the district court in bankruptcy cases. Bankruptcy judges are Article I judges whose offices are created under U.S. Const. art. 1, § 8, which authorizes Congress to constitute tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court. Bankruptcy courts are referred to as ‘legislative courts’ as opposed to Article III courts that derive their powers from Article III of the Constitution.”) (footnotes and citations omitted).

judges (“ALJs”)⁷ or military judges⁸—totaling to seventeen OCU Law alumni who are federal judges. Moreover, there are three more OCU Law alumni who have served as clerks of court or long-time judicial law clerks in U.S. district or bankruptcy courts locally here in the Western District of Oklahoma, totaling to twenty OCU Law alumni overall who are affiliated with the federal judiciary or administrative government and executive branch. Their careers not only reflect the values of dedication, justice and service that are central to OCU Law’s mission⁹ but also the unique role that these individuals hold in the federal judicial system.¹⁰ This Essay

7. *Administrative Law Judge (ALJ)*, CORNELL L. SCH.: LEGAL INFO. INST., [https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/administrative_law_judge_\(alj\)](https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/administrative_law_judge_(alj)) [<https://perma.cc/5Y4U-92PR>] (“Administrative law judges (ALJ) (not administrative judges) are executive judges for official and unofficial hearings of administrative disputes in the Federal government. Because they only hear administrative law issues as designated in the Administrative Procedure Act of 1946 (APA), administrative law judges are considered part of the executive branch, not the judicial branch, and ALJs are appointed by the heads of the executive agencies.”).

8. *The U.S. Army Trial Judiciary*, U.S. ARMY TRIAL JUDICIARY, <https://www.jagcnet.army.mil/sites/trialjudiciary.nsf> (last visited Oct. 23, 2024) (“The position of military judge was created in 1969 with the implementation of the Military Justice Act of 1968. Prior to that time, the legal advisor to court-martial panels (juries) was called a law officer, and the law officer did not have the authority and powers of today’s military judges. Military judges preside over general and special courts-martial and powers similar to federal judges including the authority to preside at judge alone trials when an accused elects that option. Military judges instruct court-martial panels on the law and apply the Military Rules of Evidence, patterned closely after the Federal Rules of Evidence. Military Judges, like federal judges, may issue warrants, subpoenas, and judicial orders. The Army Trial Judiciary currently consists of over 20 active Army military trial judges and over 20 Army Reserve military trial judges, all field grade officers and members of the Judge Advocate General’s Corps. All military judges are attorneys who have graduated from an accredited law school and are admitted to practice law in one or more states. They are selected based on their record of service and expertise in criminal law.”).

9. See LEE PEOPLES & BOB BURKE, OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW COME TO LEARN. LEARN TO LEAD 41 (Gini Moore Campbell et al. eds., 2020) (“The mission of Oklahoma City University School of Law is to prepare students to become responsible professionals through a rigorous program of instruction. Six core beliefs guide the instruction that focuses on students’ intellectual and professional development, enabling them to become leaders in law, business, government and civic life. The core beliefs are: [1] academic excellence [2] personal and intensive attention [3] professionalism [4] service to the legal community [5] diversity of experience and viewpoint [6] student success and welfare.”); see also *About OCU Law*, OKLA. CITY UNIV. SCH. OF L., <https://law.okcu.edu/about/> [<https://perma.cc/GX24-HTZ3>] (citing *Vision, Mission, Values & Purpose*, OKLA. CITY UNIV., <https://www.okcu.edu/campus-life/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/vision-mission-values-purpose> [<https://perma.cc/E7QX-XKTF>]).

10. *About Federal Judges*, U.S. CTS., <https://www.uscourts.gov/judges-judgeships/about-federal-judges> [<https://perma.cc/Y68Z-P4J2>].

explores the epic careers and highly impactful contributions of these esteemed federal judges and clerks who are also proud to call themselves alumni of OCU Law.

I. The Honorable Ronald Lloyd Howland: A Pillar of Justice in the Western District of Oklahoma and the First OCU Law Alumnus to Serve as a Federal Judge

Ronald Lloyd Howland, a 1964 graduate of OCU Law,¹¹ served as a U.S. Magistrate Judge in the Western District of Oklahoma for thirty years from 1978 to 2008.¹² Judge Howland was born in Houston, Texas, on March 27, 1934, to Aaron and Ruth Howland and, as a child of the Depression, learned many life lessons by overcoming hardship; for instance, “[a]fter his father died in an oil field accident, [his] family moved to Norman, [Oklahoma].”¹³ Judge Howland eventually obtained a degree in business administration from the University of Oklahoma (“OU”) and served an ROTC commission as an army second lieutenant.¹⁴

[Judge Howland] first served his country in an Artillery Division of the United States Army in Korea[,] [and] [w]hile in the military, [he] graduated from the Army’s Aviation School, Primary Helicopter School, and finally Army Command and General Staff School. He served in the Army National Guard as a pilot flying over 3000 hours, finally retiring as a Colonel and Master Army

11. Admin, *Keating Appoints Committee to Conduct DA Search: Legal Beat*, J. REC. (May 17, 2001), <https://journalrecord.com/2001/05/keating-appoints-committee-to-conduct-da-search-legal-beat/> [<https://perma.cc/VB8D-GDDF>] (“Ronald Howland will receive the School of Law’s 2001 Distinguished Alumnus Award. After over 20 years as a U.S. Magistrate Judge in the Western District of Oklahoma, Howland retires this spring with the distinction of being the highest-ranking OCU School of Law alumnus to serve in the federal judiciary. He served in the U.S. Army and spent time in Korea before attending the OCU School of Law. He was president of the 1964 law school class and served as president of the law alumni association in 1971.”).

12. *Ronald Lloyd Howland*, OKLAHOMAN (Aug. 13, 2021), <https://www.oklahoman.com/obituaries/p0135113> [<https://perma.cc/2FSJ-3M63>] (“Judge Howland was appointed United States Magistrate for the Western District of Oklahoma in November 1978. In 1999, Judge Howland transitioned to Recalled Magistrate Judge until finally leaving the bench in 2008, after thirty years of dedicated service.”).

13. *Id.*

14. *Id.*

Aviator with 30 years of service and numerous medals of commendation and distinguished service.¹⁵

“After his Army active duty [and service, Judge Howland] worked his way through night law school [at OCU Law] as a Deputy Court Clerk”¹⁶ for the Federal Bureau of Investigations,¹⁷ assigned to federal Western District of Oklahoma U.S. District Judge Fred Daugherty.¹⁸ It was also at OCU where he met his future wife (of forty-nine years), Ellenmarie, who was “studying to dedicate her life to education.”¹⁹

After graduation from law school, Ron continued his dedication to public service [by becoming a judicial law clerk] for Judge Daugherty, serv[ing] as an Assistant [U.S.] Attorney, enter[ing] private practice for a period, and then return[ing] to the federal courthouse as [U.S. District] Judge Ralph Thompson’s [judicial] law clerk until being appointed a [U.S.] [m]agistrate [judge in November of 1978].²⁰

Howland’s career is perhaps most famously marked by his role in the early proceedings of one of the most significant cases in U.S. history—the Oklahoma City bombing.²¹ Judge Howland “presided over the arraignment, preliminary hearing and detention hearing for Timothy McVeigh,” the perpetrator of the bombing that claimed 168 lives and injured hundreds more—“still considered to be the deadliest homegrown

15. *Id.*

16. *Id.*

17. Admin, *Howland Receives Journal Record Award on Law Day*, J. REC. (May 2, 2008), <https://journalrecord.com/2008/05/howland-receives-journal-record-award-on-law-day/> [<https://perma.cc/BC58-D76X>] (“Mélou said Howland’s career began as a night clerk for the FBI while working his way through the Oklahoma City University School of law.”).

18. *Ronald Lloyd Howland*, *supra* note 12; *Fred Daugherty, Class of 1969*, OKLA. HALL OF FAME GAYLORD-PICKENS MUSEUM, <https://www.oklahomahof.com/hof/inductees/daugherty-fred-1969> [<https://perma.cc/BAR2-J3KW>]; *Frederick Alvin Daugherty*, WIKIPEDIA (Oct. 30, 2024, 17:18 UTC), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_Alvin_Daugherty [<https://perma.cc/6HGL-H68U>].

19. *Ronald Lloyd Howland*, *supra* note 12.

20. *Id.*

21. *Id.*

terrorist attack in American history.”²² His judicious handling of this emotionally charged case—where he was a steadfast protector of due process—became a testament to his professionalism and unwavering commitment to the rule of law.²³ Beyond this high-profile case, Judge Howland was known for his fairness and deep understanding of the law, earning him respect from colleagues and litigants alike. “In 1999, Judge Howland transitioned to Recalled Magistrate Judge until finally [stepping down from] the bench in 2008, after thirty years of dedicated service.”²⁴ In 2008, Judge Howland received the Journal Record Award, “which recognizes attorneys for service to the legal profession and the community,”²⁵ and in 2001, Judge Howland received OCU Law’s 2001 Distinguished Alumnus Award.²⁶ For his leadership and commitment to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma,²⁷ Judge Howland was awarded the “‘Reflections of Hope’ award from the Oklahoma City National Memorial in 2015.”²⁸ His legacy continues to be felt in the Western District of Oklahoma where his decisions have shaped the course of justice for decades.

22. *Id.*; Okla. City Nat’l Mem’l & Museum, *We Remember Judge Ronald Howland*, FACEBOOK (Aug. 12, 2021), <https://www.facebook.com/okcmemorial/videos/we-remember-judge-ronald-howland/2978916879029098/> [https://perma.cc/6YZW-XWXD] (“The Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum is saddened to learn of the death of U.S. Magistrate Judge Ronald Howland. Judge Howland issued the arrest warrants for the perpetrators of the bombing and presided over the initial hearing for Timothy McVeigh. His work will long be remembered in the Museum.”); *The Names and Faces of Victims of the Oklahoma City Bombing*, OKLAHOMAN (Apr. 19, 2023, 9:18 AM), <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/local/2023/04/18/oklahoma-city-bombing-victims-names-and-faces/5929605001/> [https://perma.cc/K3AY-9WJA] (“The Oklahoma City bombing committed by Timothy McVeigh killed 168 people. These are the names and faces of those who died on April 19, 1995, in Oklahoma City.”).

23. *Ronald Lloyd Howland*, *supra* note 12.

24. *Id.*

25. *Howland Receives Journal Record Award on Law Day*, *supra* note 17.

26. *Keating Appoints Committee to Conduct DA Search: Legal Beat*, *supra* note 11.

27. *Ronald Lloyd Howland*, *supra* note 12 (“[Judge Howland] was Chairman of the Oklahoma County Bar Association’s Law Day Committee which initiated the televised ‘Ask a Lawyer’ program which remains one of the county bar’s most successful public service programs[] [and also] was a member of the American Bar Association, Oklahoma Bar Association, Oklahoma County Bar Association and was past president of the OKC Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.”).

28. *Id.*; *Honorees Speak About Importance of Fair Trial*, DAILY OKLAHOMAN, Apr. 21, 2015, at 2, <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-daily-oklahoman-1995-okc-bombing-20/24322006/> [https://perma.cc/RC7B-UMZW].

II. The Honorable Gary M. Purcell: The Longest Active-Serving U.S. Magistrate Judge in Tenth Circuit History at the Time of His Death

Gary M. Purcell, an OCU Law graduate of the class of 1975, held the distinction of being the longest active-serving U.S. magistrate judge in the history of the 10th Circuit at the time of his passing.²⁹ Judge Purcell served the Western District of Oklahoma for over three decades, specifically thirty-one years, from 1992 when he was appointed to 2023 when he passed away.³⁰ Before becoming a U.S. magistrate judge, Judge Purcell was appointed as a special district judge for Cleveland County where he served for fifteen years—as a result, he served a total of forty-four years on both the state and federal bench!³¹

Judge Purcell “was born on Dec[ember] 26, 1950, to Evelyn and Fred A. Purcell [Senior] [a]s the second of four children growing up in Oklahoma City,” had a passion for being a pitcher in Little League Baseball and “graduated from Putnam City High School with honors.”³² Purcell attended OU, and in 1973, graduated with a bachelor’s degree in economics, obtained OU’s Outstanding Economics Senior award and was a member of Phi Gamma Delta.³³ In 1969 while taking honors political science, he met his wife of fifty years Chris Aubrey.³⁴ Judge Purcell then attended and graduated from OCU Law in 1975.³⁵ Upon graduation from OCU Law, “he served as [a judicial] law clerk for [U.S.] District Judge Stephen Chandler” of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of

29. Brian D. King, *Judge Gary Purcell Dies at 72, is Remembered by Colleagues*, NORMAN TRANSCRIPT (Nov. 13, 2023), https://www.normantranscript.com/news/local_news/judge-gary-purcell-dies-at-72-is-remembered-by-colleagues/article_8396de5e-8272-11ee-94e8-531c49ac2042.html [<https://perma.cc/3GER-LGD2>]. “[T]he Tenth Circuit [also] includes [federal courts in the] six states of Oklahoma, Kansas, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah, plus those portions of the Yellowstone National Park extending into Montana and Idaho.” *General Information*, U.S. CT. OF APPEALS FOR THE TENTH CIRC., <https://www.ca10.uscourts.gov/clerk/general-information> [<https://perma.cc/N764-B3E3>].

30. King, *supra* note 29.

31. *Gary Purcell*, OKLAHOMAN (Nov. 14, 2023), <https://www.oklahoman.com/obituaries/pokl0626801> [<https://perma.cc/P5WP-QG86>].

32. *Id.*

33. *Id.*

34. *Id.*

35. *Id.*; King, *supra* note 29.

Oklahoma.³⁶ “In 1977, [Judge Purcell] was appointed [as a] Special District Judge for Cleveland County and enjoyed 15 years serving on [that state] bench” before being “sworn in as [a U.S.] Magistrate Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma in 1992.”³⁷

Judge Purcell’s tenure was marked by a steadfast commitment to justice, demonstrated through his handling of a wide array of complex cases—for instance, during his combined forty-four years of state and federal service as a judge, he “presided over 200,000 cases, spoke at numerous legal seminars, and . . . [was a] mentor to many judges and [attorneys].”³⁸ Judge Purcell was known for his meticulous attention to detail, his ability to navigate the often-complicated waters of federal law with clarity and precision and “his uncanny ability to settle even the most complex civil cases” (and accomplishment of being able to settle “hundreds of cases during his career”) according to his colleague, fellow U.S. Magistrate Judge Shon T. Erwin.³⁹ Chief Judge Timothy DeGiusti also remarked that “Judge Purcell was an outstanding jurist and took great pride in the efficiency with which he handled his assigned cases.”⁴⁰ Judge Bill Hetherington, one of Judge Purcell’s state court colleagues, mentioned that although he could be “quite the jokester,” he was “a true professional when he needed to be” and “set the standard . . . here in Cleveland County and as a federal magistrate [judge] for what it meant to be part of our Judicial branch of government – how to act, be a leader, a

36. Gary Purcell, *supra* note 31; Stephen Sanders Chandler, *Class of 1960*, OKLA. HALL OF FAME GAYLORD-PICKENS MUSEUM, <https://www.oklahomahof.com/hof/inductees/chandler-stephen-sanders-1960> [<https://perma.cc/5X9A-KR8T>]; Stephen Sanders Chandler Jr., WIKIPEDIA (July 28, 2024, 11:16 UTC), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Sanders_Chandler_Jr. [<https://perma.cc/G8G6-Z5AB>].

37. Gary Purcell, *supra* note 31.

38. *Id.*

39. King, *supra* note 29 (“Magistrate Judge Shon T. Erwin said he has enjoyed serving with Purcell over the last 28 years. ‘He loved his work and it showed. He was an excellent mentor to me and to other judges. He cared deeply about his court family,’ Erwin said. ‘Among his many fine judicial attributes was his uncanny ability to settle even the most complex civil cases. He settled hundreds of cases during his career. We will miss the wit and wisdom of Gary Purcell.’ Erwin [also] said [that] Purcell was the longest active serving magistrate judge in the history of the 10th Circuit.”).

40. *Id.* (“‘Judge Purcell was an outstanding jurist and took great pride in the efficiency with which he handled his assigned cases,’ DeGiusti said. ‘Universally admired and respected by his judicial colleagues and Court staff, he was also a beloved friend among the wider Western District of Oklahoma Court family. We are deeply saddened by his passing, and he will be greatly missed.’”).

consensus builder when needed and professionally strong and even tough when the case before him so demanded.”⁴¹ Finally, Cleveland County District Judge Thad Balkman stated that whenever he called Judge Purcell “seeking advice, he generously responded with sage wisdom” and “[h]is portrait hangs in [his] courtroom and is a constant reminder of one who exemplified proper judicial temperament” because “Judge Purcell was respected and loved universally because he was respectful to litigants, attorneys, and court staff and he knew how to bring a smile to your face.”⁴²

His long service is a testament to his deep dedication to the judiciary and his belief in the importance of the role of U.S. magistrate judges in the federal court system. Judge Purcell’s legacy is not only in the cases he adjudicated but also in the example he set for future generations of judges in the 10th Circuit and beyond. However, Judge Purcell will likely be most remembered by his favorite quote: “People forget what you say, people forget what you do, but people will never forget how you make them feel. I hope you feel loved by the way I treated you.”⁴³

III. The Honorable Kimberly E. West: A Trailblazer and the First Woman U.S. Magistrate Judge Appointed in the Eastern District of Oklahoma

Kimberly Ellis West, a graduate of OCU Law’s class of 1983, made history as the first woman to be appointed as a U.S. Magistrate Judge in the Eastern District of Oklahoma.⁴⁴ Judge West is also the daughter of Western District of Oklahoma U.S. District Judge Lee Roy West (1929–2020).⁴⁵ Judge West received her bachelor’s degree from OU in 1980 and

41. *Id.*

42. *Id.*

43. *Gary Purcell, supra* note 31.

44. *Judge Kimberly E. West*, OKLAHOMAN (Apr. 17, 1992, 12:00 AM), <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/1992/04/17/judge-kimberly-e-west/62495927007/> [<https://perma.cc/6NLL-56HT>]; Paula Burkes, *Federal District Court Salutes 18 Women for Firsts in Nation, Oklahoma*, OKLAHOMAN (Mar. 27, 2011, 12:00 AM), <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/business/2011/03/27/federal-district-court-salutes-18-women-for-firsts-in-nation-oklahoma/61175406007/> [<https://perma.cc/Z8VC-BJCW>] (“Kimberly West, left, first woman U.S. [M]agistrate [J]udge appointed to the Eastern District of Oklahoma . . .”).

45. *Voices of Oklahoma, Lee Roy West, Federal Judge*, OKLA. HIST. SOC’Y, <https://voicesofoklahoma.com/interviews/west-lee-roy/> [<https://perma.cc/FBG4-S7XF>] (“LW: . . . Now we have two daughters, Kimberly who is now a magistrate judge in

her juris doctor (“JD”) from OCU Law in 1983.⁴⁶ She started “her legal career with the firm of Bennett, Taylor and West in Ada,” Oklahoma, and from 1986–1990, Judge West was an associate with the firm of Lambert, Roberts & Jacques, also in Ada.⁴⁷ In July of 1990, Judge West was appointed as a judge to the Oklahoma Workers’ Compensation Court of Existing Claims by Governor Henry Bellmon for a six-year term that began July 1, 1990.⁴⁸ That year, Judge West “had 2,041 cases docketed, issued 433 orders and approved 573 settlements.”⁴⁹

Appointed as a U.S. magistrate judge in March of 2005,⁵⁰ Judge West quickly established herself as a jurist of great integrity and intellect. Her appointment was a significant milestone not only for OCU Law but also for women in the legal profession in Oklahoma and the broader region.⁵¹ Judge West’s judicial career has been marked by her fair and balanced approach to the law, her keen legal insights and her ability to manage complex cases with skill and grace. Her contributions to the Eastern District of Oklahoma have been profound, and she continues to serve as an inspiration to women in law, demonstrating that perseverance and excellence can break barriers and set new standards in the judiciary. Judge West is also currently a recall magistrate judge.⁵²

Muskogee and Jennifer Lee who is in the collections business in Tulsa.”); *Lee West*, ADA NEWS, <https://obituaries.theadanews.com/obituary/lee-west-1079088155> [https://perma.cc/7QRK-9TM9] (“He is survived by his daughter, Kimberly Ellis West, and her husband, Greg Saunders, of Muskogee . . .”).

46. *Judge Kimberly E. West*, *supra* note 44.

47. *Id.*

48. *Id.*

49. *Id.*

50. *Kimberly E. West (E.D. Oklahoma)*, CT. LISTENER, <https://www.courtlistener.com/person/9481/kimberly-e-west/> [https://perma.cc/LKU8-GFE9].

51. *Burkes*, *supra* note 44.

52. *Kimberly E. West, Recall Magistrate Judge*, U.S. DIST. CT. FOR THE E. DIST. OF OKLA., <https://www.oked.uscourts.gov/content/kimberly-e-west-recall-magistrate-judge> [https://perma.cc/YG4T-CHGX].

IV. The Honorable Jason A. Robertson: Commitment to Justice in the Eastern District of Oklahoma and the First Cherokee Nation Citizen U.S. Magistrate Judge

Jason A. Robertson, a distinguished 1997 graduate of OCU Law,⁵³ was appointed as a U.S. Magistrate Judge for the Eastern District of Oklahoma in 2022 and is a trailblazer in his own right by being “the first Cherokee Nation citizen to be selected as a U.S. magistrate judge” and currently “the only Native American judge . . . serving in the federal judiciary [within] the state of Oklahoma.”⁵⁴ Judge Robertson was born in Muskogee, graduated from Wagoner High School and received his bachelor of science (“BS”) with a double major in political science and criminal justice in 1994 from Northeastern State University and his JD in 1997 from OCU Law.⁵⁵ “He [is also] the first graduate from both Wagoner High School and Northeastern State University to be sworn in as a federal judge.”⁵⁶

“Upon graduation from [OCU Law], [Judge Robertson] became an assistant public defender for Tulsa County where he defended . . . persons charged with felony crimes.”⁵⁷ His practice and overall twenty-four-year career spent litigating in state and federal courts in Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas focused on complex civil litigation matters in general, products, premise, municipal, professional and pharmacy liability; civil rights; construction litigation; police misconduct; medical malpractice; nursing home abuse; auto and trucking accidents and bad faith.⁵⁸ Before taking the bench, Judge Robertson was a partner at Pierce Couch Hendrickson Baysinger & Green, L.L.P., which he joined in 2010,⁵⁹ and a mediator with

53. Jason Robertson, United States Magistrate Judge, LINKEDIN, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jason-robertson-65ba63b> (last visited Oct. 24, 2024) (listing Oklahoma City University School of Law, 1997).

54. Staff Reports, *CN Citizen Jason Robertson Appointed as a US Magistrate Judge*, CHEROKEE PHOENIX (Mar. 28, 2022), https://www.cherokeephoenix.org/news/cn-citizen-jason-robertson-appointed-as-a-us-magistrate-judge/article_2a8fc28c-aecd-11ec-b505-df59ccffcb52.html [<https://perma.cc/L8CM-W24D>].

55. *Public Notice – Magistrate Judge Jason A. Robertson*, U.S. DIST. CT. E. DIST. OF OKLA., <https://www.oked.uscourts.gov/sites/oked/files/MJ%20Announcement%20Jason%20Robertson%20TO%20POST.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/3F33-8UR9>]; Jason Robertson, United States Magistrate Judge, *supra* note 53; Staff Reports, *supra* note 54.

56. *Public Notice – Magistrate Judge Jason A. Robertson*, *supra* note 55.

57. *Id.*

58. *Id.*; Staff Reports, *supra* note 54.

59. *Congratulations Jason on Your Appointment*, PIERCE COUCH, <https://www.piercecouch.com/news/jason> [<https://perma.cc/248T-CX9N>].

Dispute Resolutions Consultants.⁶⁰ He was also selected as a “Rising Star” by *Super Lawyers* Magazine for four consecutive years from 2008–2011 and named a “Super Lawyer” from 2017–2021.⁶¹ “In addition to his law practice, [Judge Robertson also] served as a volunteer basketball coach for Jenks Middle School and as a boxing coach at 99 BXNG in Tulsa”⁶²

On June 24, 2022, the swearing-in ceremony was held to welcome Judge Robertson to the federal bench of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma and to succeed U.S. Magistrate Judge Steven P. Shreder.⁶³ Judge Robertson’s storied experience as a practitioner will serve him well with the expertise needed to handle the diverse range of cases that come before the federal court. Known for his thoughtful deliberation and fair judgment, Judge Robertson continues to contribute significantly to the legal landscape of Eastern Oklahoma, upholding the principles of justice that are at the core of the judiciary’s mission.

V. The Honorable Ron C. Griffin: Serving with Distinction in the Western District of Texas and Likely “The Most Interesting U.S. Magistrate Judge” in the Country

Ronald Clark Griffin,⁶⁴ another esteemed OCU Law alumnus—specifically class of 1999—currently serves as a U.S. Magistrate Judge in the Western District of Texas.⁶⁵ Appointed to this position on August 13, 2018,⁶⁶ after a notable career in both private practice and public service, Judge Griffin has established himself as a dedicated and fair-minded jurist. Judge Griffin grew up in Fort Stockton, Texas, was a welder’s helper for his father, cowboied on ranches and worked in Fort Stockton’s Ste. Genevieve Vineyard, played high school football as a left cornerback for the Fort Stockton High Panthers in Fort Stockton, Texas, and was a team

60. *Public Notice – Magistrate Judge Jason A. Robertson*, *supra* note 55.

61. *Id.*; Staff Reports, *supra* note 54.

62. *Public Notice – Magistrate Judge Jason A. Robertson*, *supra* note 55.

63. *Congratulations Jason on Your Appointment*, *supra* note 59.

64. *Find A Lawyer, Ronald Clark ‘Ron’ Griffin*, STATE BAR OF TEX., https://www.texasbar.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Find_A_Lawyer&template=/Customsource/MemberDirectory/MemberDirectoryDetail.cfm&ContactID=201745 [<https://perma.cc/PHY9-M6H8>].

65. *Ronald C. Griffin*, BALLOTEDIA, https://ballotpedia.org/Ronald_C._Griffin [<https://perma.cc/PE6Z-3EST>].

66. *Ronald C. Griffin, Judicial Milestones*, U.S. CTS., <https://www.uscourts.gov/judicial-milestones/ronald-c-griffin> [<https://perma.cc/9WCG-JEMF>].

roper for high school rodeos.⁶⁷ Judge Griffin subsequently “attended Sul Ross State for two years, graduated from Army Airborne school, made 25 parachute jumps and was a satellite radio operator in Kuwait from January to March 1993” during Operation Desert Storm.⁶⁸ In 1996, he obtained a bachelor of arts (“BA”) in political science from Texas Tech University and acquired his JD in 1999 from OCU Law.⁶⁹ Upon graduation, he served as a judicial law clerk for U.S. Magistrate Judge Stuart Platt from 1999–2001.⁷⁰ After his clerkship with Judge Platt, Judge Griffin moved to Odessa and worked for thirteen years from 2001–2014 at the firm of Shafer, Davis, O’Leary & Stoker where he defended insurance companies and represented Ector and Pecos counties in Texas, the City of Odessa and Medical Center Hospital.⁷¹ From 2014–2018, Judge Griffin practiced law in the Ector County Hospital District as general counsel of Medical Center Hospital, succeeding State Representative Brooks Landgraft.⁷²

On August 13, 2018, Judge Griffin was appointed as a U.S. Magistrate Judge for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas in the Midland-Odessa Division by U.S. District Judge David Counts for an eight-year term.⁷³ His work as a U.S. magistrate judge has been characterized by his commitment to applying the law impartially and his ability to handle the complexities of federal cases with expertise. For example, RPX Corporation recently reported that patent cases may be flowing to the Midland-Odessa Division where Judge Counts and Judge Griffin preside.⁷⁴ Judge Griffin’s contributions to the Western District of

67. Bob Campbell, *Military Veteran, Lawyer in West Texas Now US Magistrate*, WASH. TIMES (Apr. 23, 2019), <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2019/apr/23/military-veteran-lawyer-in-west-texas-now-us-magis/> (“Griffin is a 50-year-old Fort Stockton native who wore the Panthers’ blue and white as left cornerback, going 5-5 as a senior in the 4A district with Sweetwater, Big Spring, Monahans and Lamesa.”).

68. *Id.* (“‘The thing I remember about jumping is not the sensation of falling but the prop blast,’ he said. ‘There was a tremendous amount of hot air and jet fuel smell. You’re not out there very long because the chute opens in four seconds. Then you’re just flying the chute to get to the ground.’ . . . [H]e still rides occasionally at stepfather Fred Pearce’s ranch between Tatum and Roswell, New Mexico.”).

69. Campbell, *supra* note 67; Ronald C. Griffin, *Judicial Milestones*, *supra* note 66.

70. Campbell, *supra* note 67; Ronald C. Griffin, *supra* note 65.

71. Campbell, *supra* note 67.

72. Campbell, *supra* note 67; Ronald C. Griffin, *supra* note 65.

73. Campbell, *supra* note 67; Ronald C. Griffin, *Judicial Milestones*, *supra* note 66.

74. *Q2 in Review*, RPX RATIONAL PATENT, July 2024, at 1, 5-6, <https://www.rpxcorp.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2024/07/RPX-Q2-in-Review-July->

Texas have been significant, and his decisions have often set important precedents that guide the application of the law in federal courts.

VI. The Honorable Joseph A. Cordova: A Dedicated Jurist and Legendary Federal Public Defender Recently Appointed in the Western District of Texas

Joseph Anthony Cordova,⁷⁵ a 1992 graduate of OCU Law,⁷⁶ serves as a U.S. Magistrate Judge in the Western District of Texas in the Del Rio division, having been officially appointed on October 25, 2023.⁷⁷ Judge Cordova also had his investiture ceremony on April 19, 2024, where he was sworn in by Chief U.S. District Judge Alia Moses.⁷⁸ Judge Cordova

2024.pdf [<https://perma.cc/A788-DRQK>] (“Plaintiffs and their counsel have also begun to look beyond Waco in seeking a preferable West Texas venue. In particular, patent cases are increasingly flowing to the Midland-Odessa Division, where District Judge David Counts essentially adopted Judge Albright’s standing order governing patent cases, with some minor changes, shortly after the issuance of the July 2022 case assignment order. Since the July 2022 order and its May 2024 replacement are both specific to patent cases filed in Waco, plaintiffs are still free to target Midland-Odessa, where they are guaranteed to get Judge Counts, the division’s only district judge, under the same single-judge filing loophole that enabled Judge Albright’s former dominance. Though Judge Counts had scarcely ever overseen patent cases before the assignment order and his adoption of Judge Albright’s rules, with just one defendant added in his courtroom in 2021, his caseload has risen steadily each year since, reaching 12 defendants added in 2022 and 35 in 2023. While these are still relatively small numbers, it is also worth noting that one of the top plaintiff-side firms by volume, Ramey LLP, has increasingly focused on Midland-Odessa. Though Ramey filed virtually no cases there before Q3 2022, it has filed a steadily greater share of its litigation there, even as its overall filings in the district have dipped: After accounting for 14% of the firm’s West Texas litigation in 2023 (at 16 defendants added, or 46% of Judge Counts’s total 2023 caseload), 75% of the defendants added by Ramey in West Texas in Q1 2024 were in Midland-Odessa (albeit, at just nine of 12 total), and 55% in Q2 (six out of 11 defendants).”).

75. *Find A Lawyer, Mr. Joseph Anthony Cordova*, TEX. BAR PROFILE, https://www.texasbar.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Find_A_Lawyer&template=/Cust_omsources/MemberDirectory/MemberDirectoryDetail.cfm&ContactID=150855 [<https://perma.cc/F63N-DA3Y>].

76. Joseph Cordova, LINKEDIN, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/joseph-cordova-7a102a2a> (last visited Oct. 8, 2024).

77. *Joseph A. Cordova, Judicial Milestones*, U.S. CTS., <https://www.uscourts.gov/judicial-milestones/joseph-cordova> [<https://perma.cc/EXX9-9KQK>].

78. Ricardo E. Calderon, *United States Magistrate Judge Joseph A. Cordova Investiture Ceremony Held on April 19, 2024*, EAGLE PASS BUS. J. (Apr. 26, 2024), <https://www.epbusinessjournal.com/2024/04/united-states-magistrate-judge-joseph-a-cordova-investiture-ceremony-held-on-april-19-2024/> [<https://perma.cc/ZXA9-JAKP>].

graduated from St. Mary's University in 1989 with a BA in public justice and also from OCU Law with a JD in 1992.⁷⁹ Upon graduation, he was a solo practitioner of law at the Law Office of Joseph A. Cordova from September 1992 to July 1998 in San Antonio, Texas.⁸⁰ "In [July of] 1998, Judge Cordova became an [a]ssistant [f]ederal [p]ublic [d]efender with the Southern District of Texas," serving in that role until August 2000, and from August 2000 to May 2006 served as an assistant federal public defender but this time in the Western District of Texas.⁸¹ "In [May of] 2006, [he] was named [the] Chief Public Defender for Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid Regional Office in Del Rio, Texas," serving in that position until August of 2007.⁸² "In [August] 2007, Judge Cordova became once again an [a]ssistant [f]ederal [p]ublic [d]efender for the Western District of Texas in Del Rio, Texas, rising to Supervisory Assistant at the Del Rio Federal Public Defender's Office . . ."⁸³ He served in that role until being appointed to a U.S. magistrate judge in October of 2023.⁸⁴

In 2014, Judge Cordova was named "Lawyer of the Year" by the Del Rio Association of Federal Attorneys—"the most prestigious [honor] presented annually by the [association] as its members vote for which attorney has demonstrated extraordinary lawyering and leadership during [that year]."⁸⁵ Judge Cordova's name was "engraved in a plaque at the [Federal Courthouse for] the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas, Del Rio Division, in Del Rio, Texas" (along with all commemorated past recipients of the Lawyer of the Year Award) and the award was specifically presented to him by U.S. Magistrate Judge Victor Roberto Garcia on "May 5, 2014, at the 2014 Law Day Banquet and Scholarship Fund Raiser held at the San Felipe Country Club in Del Rio."⁸⁶

Although appointed this year, Judge Cordova's extensive experience as a federal public defender and his commitment to justice will certainly provide him with a solid foundation for his judicial duties. Moreover,

79. *Id.*; Joseph Cordova, *supra* note 76.

80. Calderon, *supra* note 78.

81. *Id.*; Joseph Cordova, *supra* note 76.

82. *Id.*

83. *Id.*

84. *Id.*

85. Ricardo E. Calderon, *Joseph Cordova Named Lawyer of the Year*, EAGLE PASS BUS. J. (May 6, 2014), <https://www.epbusinessjournal.com/2014/05/joseph-cordova-named-lawyer-of-the-year/> [<https://perma.cc/3L97-KQKN>].

86. *Id.*

Judge Cordova's earned respect within the Del Rio legal community for his legal acumen and integrity will undoubtedly make him an exceptional judge in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas. As a result, his service in that court will most certainly reflect the values of excellence and justice that the graduates of OCU Law embody.

VII. The Honorable Bana Roberts: U.S. Magistrate Judge Who Attended OCU Law Her First Year but Transferred to and Graduated from OU Law

Bana Roberts attended OCU Law but then transferred to the University of Oklahoma College of Law ("OU Law"), graduating from that law school in 1977.⁸⁷ After obtaining a BA in English from OU, Judge Roberts taught English to seventh graders in Norman—specifically classes of thirty to forty of them—and “realized that . . . was not what she wanted to do with her life.”⁸⁸ As a result, she accepted a position as a secretary with the law firm of Crowe & Dunlevy in the early 1970s, eventually becoming a paralegal there.⁸⁹ She soon realized that the path of the law was for her, and she attended OCU Law while working full-time as a paralegal.⁹⁰ Although attempting to balance full-time work with the demands of being a law student was challenging, Judge Roberts was able to deftly handle both responsibilities and transferred to OU Law to finish her JD in the spring of 1977—it was also during spring break of that year when she even gave birth to her son, Todd Blasdel.⁹¹

“After graduating . . . law school, Judge Roberts joined the law firm of Foliart, Mills and Neimeyer [where she represented hospitals] and . . . defend[ed] [them] in medical malpractice [lawsuits].”⁹² Judge Roberts then joined the law firm of Fenton, Fenton, Smith, Reneau, and Moon where she litigated insurance defense matters.⁹³ “In [recalling] her [time] with these [two law] firms, Judge Roberts gratefully acknowledge[d] the

87. Lyn Entzeroth, *Judicial Profile, Hon. Bana Roberts U.S. Magistrate Judge, Western District of Oklahoma*, FED. LAW., May 2007, at 32, 32, <https://www.fedbar.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/RobertsMay2007-pdf-3.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/XZB5-69UB>].

88. *Id.*

89. *Id.*

90. *Id.*

91. *Id.*

92. *Id.*

93. *Id.*

[attorneys] who [assisted and mentored] her when she was a young lawyer,” and she also distinctly remembered the thrill of winning a jury trial.⁹⁴

During “the mid-1980s, Judge Roberts [was] assistant general counsel to the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, primarily representing University Hospital and Children’s Hospital.”⁹⁵ Around this time, Judge Roberts was also invited to apply for an opening as an Oklahoma District Court Judge and to “toss her hat” into the “ring” of the state judicial nomination process.⁹⁶ “In 1988, [then-Oklahoma] Governor Henry Bellmon appointed Judge Roberts to serve as [an Oklahoma County District Judge], where she presided over [both] criminal and civil trials.”⁹⁷ The next year in 1989, the “Oklahoma Trial Lawyers’ Association recognized her judicial talent[] [and] nam[ed] her Outstanding State Trial Judge [of the year].”⁹⁸

“In 1991, Judge Roberts was appointed to serve as a U.S. [M]agistrate [J]udge [for the U.S. District Court] for the Western District of Oklahoma,”⁹⁹ a position she held for twenty-two years before retiring on March 31, 2013.¹⁰⁰ “As [a U.S.] magistrate judge, Judge Roberts handle[d] a variety of cases, ranging from civil rights cases to general civil cases to habeas petitions and criminal matters.”¹⁰¹

“Judge Roberts’s intelligence, warmth, and compassion [were] evident in her dealings with all who [came] before her” as a federal U.S. magistrate judge: “From jurors to [attorneys] to litigants to witnesses to schoolchildren visiting the courtroom, Judge Roberts grace[d] all with her warm smile and ma[de] sure that all [parties in front of her were] treated with respect and dignity.”¹⁰²

In addition, “Judge Roberts also [gave] meticulous attention to all the

94. *Id.*

95. *Id.*

96. *Id.*

97. *Id.*

98. *Id.*

99. Entzeroth, *supra* note 87, at 32.

100. *Bana Roberts*, BALLOTPEDIA, https://ballotpedia.org/Bana_Roberts [<https://perma.cc/928Q-4ZNZ>]; *Bana Roberts, Judicial Milestones*, U.S. CTS., <https://www.uscourts.gov/judicial-milestones/bana-roberts> (reflecting “Retired” from the “Position: U.S. Magistrate Judge U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma” on “March 31, 2013”).

101. Entzeroth, *supra* note 87, at 32.

102. *Id.* at 32-33.

orders, opinions, reports, and recommendations she issu[ed].”¹⁰³ Perhaps it is due to her past experience of being a seventh grade English teacher, but Judge Roberts ensured “that no grammatical errors appeare[d] in her orders” as a U.S. magistrate judge.¹⁰⁴ She even corrected grammatical mistakes in search warrant applications, and lawyers were put on notice to carefully proofread any document they presented to her for her signature and approval.¹⁰⁵ Judge Roberts was also “known to wade patiently and painstakingly through *pro se* pleadings and applications . . . to [ascertain] that . . . litigant[s’] claim[s] [were] heard even if [they were] inartfully pleaded.”¹⁰⁶

Finally, the commitment that Judge Roberts expressed with respect to the law extended well beyond the courtroom: For example, “[s]he is a past president and former member of the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Bar Association.”¹⁰⁷ “She is also the past president and emeritus member of the William J. Holloway, Jr. American Inn of Court,” and served on various Oklahoma Bar Association committees, including committees focused on legal education and law schools, alternative dispute resolution and continuing education.¹⁰⁸ Judge Roberts also “served on the steering committee for the [very] first Women in the Law Conference.”¹⁰⁹ “In well-deserved recognition of her career, in 1999, Judge Roberts received the Mona Lambird Spotlight Award, which is [an accolade] given annually to women who have not only distinguished themselves in their legal careers but also have lit the way for other women pursuing legal careers.”¹¹⁰

103. *Id.* at 33.

104. *Id.*

105. *Id.*

106. *Id.* (emphasis added).

107. *Id.*

108. *Id.*

109. *Id.*

110. *Id.*

VIII. The Honorable Niles L. Jackson: The First and Currently Only OCU Law Alumnus that has Served as a U.S. Bankruptcy Judge

Niles L. Jackson is a 1975 graduate of OCU Law¹¹¹ and served as a U.S. Bankruptcy Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma for fourteen years from April 2002 to April 2016.¹¹² Before holding that position, Judge Jackson was a district judge in the 7th District Court for Oklahoma County.¹¹³ Judge Jackson worked on “misdemeanor, felony, divorce, death-penalty and civil cases” while an Oklahoma County District Judge, and “[w]hat is believed to be the largest civil judgment in Oklahoma County [before 2002] was awarded in [his] courtroom,” specifically, a “\$12.5 million judgment against Arthur Andersen for accounting malpractice.”¹¹⁴ Judge Jackson was sworn in and appointed as a U.S. bankruptcy judge on April 10, 2002, and “was appointed to the bankruptcy court by the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver[] . . . [by being] the top candidate out of three applicants selected by a committee named by the higher court to recommend a new federal bankruptcy judge.”¹¹⁵

Judge Jackson “was born in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1941[] . . . and attended Colgate University, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1964.”¹¹⁶ “After college, [Judge Jackson] served as a volunteer in the

111. VON RUSSELL CREEL & BOB BURKE, OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW A HISTORY 181 (commonwealth press 2008); *see also Oklahoma City University School of Law*, WIKI LAW SCH., https://www.wikilawschool.org/wiki/Oklahoma_City_University_School_of_Law [<https://perma.cc/L5V5-XKF5>].

112. *Niles L. Jackson*, BALLOTPEDIA, https://ballotpedia.org/Niles_L._Jackson [<https://perma.cc/4SZX-59QZ>] (noting that “[h]e succeeded John TeSelle on the court”); *Niles L. Jackson, Judicial Milestones*, U.S. CTS., <https://www.uscourts.gov/judicial-milestones/niles-l-jackson> [<https://perma.cc/K3D2-92G4>].

113. Diana Baldwin, *Veteran Judge to Take Oath for U.S. Bankruptcy Court*, OKLAHOMAN (Apr. 10, 2002, 12:00 AM), <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/2002/04/10/veteran-judge-to-take-oath-for-us-bankruptcy-court/62099634007/> [<https://perma.cc/ZMZ9-GVUH>]; *Niles L. Jackson*, *supra* note 112. The term Judge Jackson was an Oklahoma County District Judge may be twelve years since it says he was a district judge since 1990 and the article was written in 2002 but it says “eighteen years—however this is likely due to Judge Jackson being appointed an Oklahoma County District Court Special Judge in 1984. *See Hall & Eberle, infra* note 116, at 23.

114. Baldwin, *supra* note 113.

115. *Id.*

116. Sarah A. Hall & April B. Eberle, *Modern Bankruptcy Courts in Oklahoma*, at 22, 22,

Peace Corps”¹¹⁷ “in the mid 60s teaching physical education in Venezuela[,] . . . worked for the Associated Press,”¹¹⁸ was a news anchor, reporter, talk show host, a congressional press secretary, a director of publications for Mutual Federal Savings and Loan and a public relations assistant for Cities Service Gas Company, all before becoming a federal bankruptcy judge.¹¹⁹

Judge Jackson “attended law school at [OCU Law], graduating in 1975” and while at OCU Law “he received three American Jurisprudence awards for academic excellence.”¹²⁰

Following law school, [Judge] Jackson was executive director of the Oklahoma Nurses Association, an Assistant District Attorney in Perry, Oklahoma, a research assistance to several appellate judges and Assistant Director of the Oklahoma District Attorneys’ Council. In 1984, [Judge Jackson] was appointed [as an] Oklahoma County District Court Special Judge, [which] he held until 1991, when he was elected [to be an] Oklahoma County District Court Judge. . . . [A]s a district court judge, [Judge] Jackson served as . . . Presiding Judge and the Vice Presiding Judge for Oklahoma County.¹²¹

Judge Jackson, while an Oklahoma County District Judge, also “used an administrative order to create a pro bono program in which [attorneys], paralegals, court reporters, mediators, investigators, . . . volunteers, and OCU law students could [aid] abused children making their way through the legal system.”¹²² More than “300 to 400 children [could] be helped at one time [from this order], with as many as 200 lawyers volunteering their time to the program”; and at OCU Law, “volunteer training [was] held

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54170cd0e4b00eba52a2db00/t/5b6c95ac4ae23726e905c7a4/1533842863033/4475977_2.+Modern+Bankruptcy+Oklahoma_Hall+and+Eberle.pdf [https://perma.cc/AZY5-88TH].

117. *Id.*

118. Peter Gill, *Life’s an Adventure for Judge Niles Jackson*, OKC FRIDAY, <https://okcfriday.com/lifes-an-adventure-for-judge-niles-jackson-p787.htm> [https://perma.cc/UP4E-U2PC].

119. Hall & Eberle, *supra* note 116, at 22.

120. *Id.*

121. *Id.* at 23.

122. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 138.

through the year”—Crowe & Dunlevy attorney Kent Myers stated that “OCU [was] invaluable to the program. The law school willingly share[d] its resources and facilities and the students generously donate[d] their time.”¹²³

In 2002, Judge Jackson was appointed as a U.S. Bankruptcy Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma and served as Chief Judge for that court from 2007-2012.¹²⁴

He has been and remains a member of various professional groups, including the Oklahoma Judicial Conference, the Oklahoma Trial Judges Association, the Oklahoma Bar Association, the Oklahoma County Bar Association, the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges and the [Ruth Bader] Ginsburg American Inn of Court, of which he served as President from 1997-1998. He [was also] on the Board of Governors for the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges and a member of the Administration of Bankruptcy Committee of the Judicial Conference. [Judge] Jackson has received numerous awards for his judicial service and community service including the Marian Opala Lifetime Achievement in Law Award from [OCU Law] in 2011, the 2000 Neil E. Bogan Professionalism Award from the Oklahoma Bar Association and the 1996 Outstanding State Trial Judge from the Oklahoma Trial Lawyers Association.¹²⁵

As to Judge Jackson’s varied extracurricular activities, he wrote the legal column “The Case Of . . .” for the publication *OKC Friday*, his “interests outside law include gardening, collecting rare books and spending time with his family” and he has “been involved in multiple organizations . . . [including serving] on two committees for the Bar Association, [being] a member of the Quail Creek Homeowners Association and attend[ing] the Men’s Dinner Group.”¹²⁶ After law school, Judge Jackson also “hosted an evening radio talk show on KTOK” where “he did a cooking program where he prepared all sorts of concoctions in

123. *Id.*

124. Hall & Eberle, *supra* note 116, at 23.

125. *Id.*

126. Gill, *supra* note 118.

an electric frying pan he brought up to the studio.”¹²⁷

[As a] fan of chocolate chip cookies, he hosted a cooking contest for the best chocolate chip cookies as part of his show[] [and] [t]hinking that he wouldn't receive many entries, he was mistaken[:] [h]is contest received 93 dozen entries. He had to recruit everyone he could find to help judge and eat them all, he said. Another time, [Judge Jackson] took a small engine repair class[,] [which] led . . . to his dismantling of his lawnmower's carburetor. When his wife, Barbara Thorton, got home she noticed some oil on the carpet in their home[-i]t turned out that he'd brought the parts into the house to watch his favorite show, '*Oklahoma Gardening*' on PBS[:] [Judge] Jackson said that was the first ever fight he and his wife ever had. . . . [At one point, Judge Jackson took a flight] to China to meet with his son's family who [was] adopting a little girl there[,] [and in China saw] the terracotta warriors in Xian, spen[t] time in Beijing and [took] a trip up the Li River to see the Mystical Mountains.¹²⁸

As a result, Judge Jackson's legacy as not only a U.S. bankruptcy judge for fourteen years but also an Oklahoma County District Court Special Judge for eighteen years combines to a total of thirty-two years of continuous service as a distinguished jurist in both state and federal courts. Judge Jackson therefore continues the legendary examples of extended terms of service demonstrated by other OCU Law alumni and federal judges such as Judge Ronald Lloyd Howland (thirty years of service as a U.S. magistrate judge) and Judge Gary M. Purcell (thirty-one years of service as a U.S. magistrate judge and the longest active-serving, at the time of his death, U.S. magistrate judge in Tenth Circuit History).

IX. The Nine Administrative Law Judges & Military Judges Who Are OCU Law Alumni

Additionally, based on my research, I have found a total of nine ALJs and military judges that are OCU Law alumni, primarily from the source

127. *Id.*

128. *Id.*

text of *Oklahoma City University a History* by Professor Von Russell Creel and Bob Burke. The nine of them, organized by their class year in ascending order historically, are as follows:

1. Oran O’Neal (Class of 1958)—ALJ, Social Security Administration (“SSA”)
2. Robert Lee Mills (Class of 1963)—ALJ, SSA
3. Terry Pendell Moser (Class of 1967)—ALJ, SSA
4. Arnold Battise (Class of 1971)—ALJ, SSA
5. Jonathan P. Tomes (Class of 1976)—Military Judge, U.S. Army
6. Byard Clemmons (Class of 1978)—Chief Judge, U.S. Navy
7. Kim Parrish (Class of 1981)—ALJ, SSA
8. Rocklin D. Lyons (Class of 1984)—ALJ, SSA
9. Franklin Deramus (Class of 1985)—ALJ, SSA

First, however, will be a description of the unique roles that federal ALJs and military judges play. Although ALJs exist on the state and federal level,¹²⁹ the role or position of the federal ALJ was created by the Administrative Procedures Act (“APA”) in 1946.¹³⁰ Interestingly enough, all the ALJs that are OCU Law alumni served with the SSA or the Bureau of Hearings and Appeals of the SSA. Military judges, on the other hand, are by nature federal due to their affiliation with the different branches of the military and the Judge Advocate General (“JAG”) Corps.¹³¹

A. Judge Oran O’Neal (‘58)—ALJ for the SSA

Judge Oran O’Neal was initially listed as a “U.S. District Judge in the Southern District of Louisiana” on page 184 in Professor Creel and Mr.

129. See *Administrative Law Judge, State ALJs*, WIKIPEDIA (Sept. 16, 2024, 22:52 UTC), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Administrative_law_judge [<https://perma.cc/7TUL-KERH>].

130. *Administrative Law Judge Positions*, OPM, U.S. OFF. OF PERS. MGMT., <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-standards/specialty-areas/administrative-law-judge-positions/> [<https://perma.cc/29B7-7HP5>].

131. *Judges, CAREERS IN THE MIL., ASVAB CEP*, <https://www.careersinthemilitary.com/career-detail/judges> [<https://perma.cc/JA3P-B93B>].

Burke's text, *Oklahoma City University School of Law a History*.¹³² I became very excited because I thought I had stumbled upon the very first documented OCU Law alumnus who had become a U.S. district judge. However, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Louisiana does not exist and has never existed¹³³ and there was no record on Google or in the Almanac for the Federal Judiciary¹³⁴ of any U.S. district judge in any federal court with the name "Oran O'Neal." As a result, further research unveiled this obituary in Tulsa World which mentioned that Judge O'Neal—full name Judge Oran Herbert "Pat" O'Neal—was "appointed to the Federal bench, serving 24 years."¹³⁵ Even further research uncovered an administrative law decision from the SSA entitled *In the Matter of Lovelady Independent School District Texas and Texas Education Agency* listing Judge O'Neal as "Honorable Oran H. O'Neal Administrative Law Judge Bureau of Hearings and Appeals Social Security Administration 3744 Government Street Alexandria, Louisiana

132. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 184 (stating "Oran O'Neal, '58—U.S. District Judge in the Southern District of Louisiana").

133. See *Courts of Louisiana*, WIKIPEDIA (Oct. 5, 2024, 19:28 UTC), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Courts_of_Louisiana [https://perma.cc/L66D-DKZ5] (listing only, as federal courts, the currently existing U.S. District Courts for the Eastern, Middle, and Western Districts of Louisiana and formerly the U.S. District Court for the District of Orleans and the U.S. District Court for the District of Louisiana).

134. *Almanac of the Federal Judiciary*, WOLTERS KLUWER, <https://law-store.wolterskluwer.com/s/product/almanac-of-the-federal-judiciary-directory-of-fed-ct-gdlines-vitallaw/01tG000000BqZw6IAF> (last visited Oct. 31, 2024).

135. *O'Neal*, TULSA WORLD (July 24, 2004), https://tulsa-world.com/archive/oneal/article_13bdaab1-4327-5f18-bc23-681af250eda7.html [https://perma.cc/G5XA-ZUZU] ("O'Neal -- Oran H. 'Pat,' of Hot Springs Village, AR, passed away July 22, 2004. Judge O'Neal was born in Oklahoma City on March 16, 1929, to Oran O'Neal and Olivia Flor O'Neal. He attended Oklahoma State University and East Central University and received a B.S. degree in Business. **He also received an LLB and a Juris Doctorate degree from Oklahoma City University.** He was a member of the Oklahoma, Texas and Federal Bars. Judge O'Neal practiced law in Tulsa, OK, until 1972 and **was then appointed to the Federal bench, serving 24 years.** He served in the U.S. Air Force at the end of World War II and also in the Korean War. Survivors include his wife of 50 years, Kathleen C. O'Neal; a son, John Patrick O'Neal of Tulsa; two daughters, Rachel O'Neal Chaney and Jennifer O'Neal, both of Little Rock; a sister, Gloria O'Dell of Ada, OK; and a grandson, Calvin Chaney of Little Rock. Arrangements are by Caruth-Hale Funeral Home of Hot Springs Village. A memorial service will be held 10 a.m., Thursday, July 29 at the Woodlands Presbyterian Church in Hot Springs Village. Memorials may be made to the Woodlands Presbyterian Memorial Garden in Hot Springs Village.") (emphasis added).

71301.”¹³⁶ According to a website maintained by the SSA, that address is the official address of an SSA field office and the Office of Hearings and Appeals.¹³⁷ Moreover, there are several other briefs, pleadings and opinions confirming that Judge Oran O’Neal was an ALJ for the SSA.¹³⁸

Thus, with that confusion regarding an apocryphal Louisianan federal district cleared up, Judge O’Neal was confirmed an ALJ, but that would not be the end to his legendary legacy—for he was actually the son of Oran Herbert “Skinny” O’Neal Sr. (May 2, 1899–June 2, 1981), a Major League Baseball (“MLB”) pitcher who played for the Philadelphia Phillies in 1925 and 1927 and who was later hired as the manager for the Seminole Oilers in April of 1936.¹³⁹ Judge O’Neal’s parents were thus MLB player Oran “Skinny” O’Neal and Olivia Flor O’Neal, and he attended Oklahoma State University and East Central University, receiving a BS degree in business.¹⁴⁰ In 1958, he received a bachelor of laws (“LLB”) and a JD from OCU Law, and upon graduation, became “a member of the Oklahoma, Texas and Federal Bars[,] . . . practiced law in Tulsa, [Oklahoma] until 1972,” when he was appointed as an ALJ for the SSA and served in that role for twenty-four years.¹⁴¹ Judge O’Neal also “served in the U.S. Air

136. 1979 Ed. Civ. R. Rev. Auth. LEXIS 57, Docket No. S-109; *see also* 1984 Ed. Civ. R. Rev. Auth. LEXIS 14, Docket No. S-109 (listing him as just an “Administrative Law Judge” but leaving out the “Bureau of Hearings and Appeals Social Security Administration”).

137. *Appendix F – Office of Hearings and Appeals Addresses*, SOC. SEC. ADMIN., https://www.ssa.gov/privacy/sorn/app_f.htm [<https://perma.cc/YJ4N-YXN9>].

138. *See* Brief for Appellee, *Burrow v. Apfel*, 2000 WL 35543738 (8th Cir. 2000) (listing “ALJ Oran H. O’Neal” under “*C. Res Judicata*”); Lovelady Indep. Sch. Dist., Tex., Ed. Law. Rep. No. S-109 (Feb. 23, 1979) (mentioning that “[a] hearing was held before Administrative Judge Oran H. O’Neal (hereinafter referred to as Judge) on May 24-25, 1977”).

139. *Skinny O’Neal*, WIKIPEDIA (Oct. 3, 2024, 16:57 UTC), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skinny_O%27Neal [<https://perma.cc/F3AH-9LED>]; *see also* *O’Neal*, *supra* note 135 (stating “Judge O’Neal was born in Oklahoma City on March 16, 1929, to **Oran O’Neal**”) (emphasis added); *Oran Herbert O’Neal*, FAMILYSEARCH, <https://ancestors.familysearch.org/en/LDMH-YXY/oran-herbert-o%27neal-1899-1981> [<https://perma.cc/58M3-TRDY>] (stating that he had at least one son, and picturing, as a son below, Oran O’Neal Jr., 1929-2004, matching up with the lifespan dates from 1929-2004 of the Tulsa World obituary, *O’Neal*, *supra* note 135); *compare* *Oran H. “Pat” O’Neal*, FIND A GRAVE, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/149807470/oran_h_o& [<https://perma.cc/A9L8-CWTF>] (Judge O’Neal’s grave), *with* *Oran Herbert “Skinny” O’Neal*, FIND A GRAVE, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/42781547/oran_herbert_oneal [<https://perma.cc/LE2R-JJUX>] (noting the family members that are listed in each entry).

140. *O’Neal*, *supra* note 135.

141. *Id.*; Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 184 (disclosing that he was class of 1958).

Force at the end of World War II and also in the Korean War.”¹⁴²

B. Judge Robert Lee Mills ('63)—ALJ for the SSA

Judge Robert Lee Mills was a 1963 graduate of OCU Law and served as a federal ALJ with the SSA’s Office of Hearing and Appeals for twenty-four years from 1972–1996.¹⁴³ Judge Mills “was born [on] November 19, 1932 in Lewisville[,] Ohio to Rev. O. W. Mills and Lottie Bell Donnell Mills[;] [h]e [subsequently] grew up in Oklahoma and graduated from Capitol Hill High School in Oklahoma City.”¹⁴⁴ In 1955, Judge Mills graduated from Southwestern Assemblies of God University in Waxahachie, Texas, and in 1963, he graduated from OCU Law.¹⁴⁵ Upon graduation from OCU Law, Judge Mills served as an assistant to the Oklahoma County District Attorney and then became legal counsel to the Oklahoma Corporation Commission.¹⁴⁶ “In 1972[,] he became [a] Federal Administrative Law Judge for the Office of Hearings and Appeals [with the SSA] and served for 24 years until his retirement in December 1996.”¹⁴⁷

C. Judge Terry Pendell Moser ('67)—ALJ for the SSA and The Queen of Firsts

Judge Terry Pendell Moser graduated from OCU Law in 1967 and served in several judicial roles, including state positions as judge of the Oklahoma workers’ compensation court and as the first Presiding Judge of the Oklahoma City Municipal Court and a federal position as an ALJ for the SSA.¹⁴⁸

Judge Moser attended OU, where she was initiated into Gamma Phi

142. *O’Neal, supra* note 135.

143. *Judge Robert Lee Mills*, OKLAHOMAN (July 11, 2005, 12:00 AM), <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/2005/07/11/judge-robert-lee-mills/61935191007/> [<https://perma.cc/6V99-PJC5>]; Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 184 (disclosing that he was class of 1963 and stating “Robert Lee Mills, ‘63—Administrative Law Judge, Social Security Administration”).

144. *Judge Robert Lee Mills, supra* note 143.

145. *Id.*

146. *Id.*

147. *Id.*

148. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 184 (stating “Terry Pendell Moser, ‘67—Judge of the Oklahoma Workers’ Compensation Court; Administrative Law Judge, Social Security Administration; First Presiding Judge of the Oklahoma City Municipal Court”).

Beta.¹⁴⁹ At OU she served in many offices including the Office of the Vice President; and “[a]fter [graduation from] college, she . . . served on the House Corporation Board at OU and OCU.”¹⁵⁰ “Terry received a Bachelors and Master’s Degree from OU and began teaching speech in OKC.”¹⁵¹ “She wrote a new curriculum teaching Speech, Music, Art and Drama with a team teaching approach at the Junior High School level”¹⁵² and served as a teacher at Roosevelt Junior High School in Oklahoma City.¹⁵³ “She was named ‘Outstanding Young Speech Teacher of the Year’ by the Oklahoma Speech Association and [was] also recognized for an ‘Outstanding Teaching Award’ by the Central States Speech Association.”¹⁵⁴

“While teaching in the daytime, Terry began attending OCU School of Law in the evenings” in 1963 with her then-husband George Mumford Pendell.¹⁵⁵ One of the challenges that immediately became apparent was the male-dominated environment of law and law school in the early 1960s: For example, shortly after starting at OCU Law, “a male student asked her then-husband George why he was letting his wife attend law school [and] . . . wondered what George would do if she made better grades than him.”¹⁵⁶ Judge Moser “recall[ed] George’s response[] [as:] ‘She’s not only going to make better grades than I do, but she is also going to make better grades than you do, too.’”¹⁵⁷

Against this sexist sentiment of the times, Judge Moser believed in the words of her father who told her that “she could succeed in anything she wanted to do,” recalling that “He said I just needed to apply myself, study and work hard. I soon learned that he forgot to tell the rest of the world.”¹⁵⁸

149. *Zeta Spotlight, Terry Pendell Moser*, ZETA PHI ETA, 2007 at 11, 11, https://zetaphieta.org/pdf/files/ZetaCameo_Fall07.pdf [<https://perma.cc/Z3XY-LZ4B>].

150. *Id.*

151. *Id.*

152. *Id.*

153. Brook Arbeitman, *Terry Moser A Pioneer in the Legal Field*, OKLA. CITY UNIV. SCH. L. ALUMNI MAG., 2013 at 78, 78-79, https://issuu.com/oculaw/docs/women_of_influence_2013/80 [<https://perma.cc/2ZMW-VLRH>].

154. *Zeta Spotlight, Terry Pendell Moser*, *supra* note 149.

155. *Id.*; Arbeitman, *supra* note 153, at 78; *George Mumford Pendell Jr.*, OKLAHOMAN (May 11, 1993, 12:00 AM), <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/1993/05/11/george-mumford-pendell-jr/62459593007/> [<https://perma.cc/235H-49Y9>].

156. Arbeitman, *supra* note 153, at 78.

157. *Id.* (emphasis omitted).

158. *Id.*

“Support to [succeed eventually] came [in the form of] joining the Iota Tau Tau International Legal Sorority . . . and an [OCU Law] alumnae group”—because women were not allowed to join the male-only fraternities and law groups—both featuring women that had been down or were going down the same path and could work together to provide much needed encouragement.¹⁵⁹

These challenges that Judge Moser faced at OCU Law greatly prepared her for the “real world” of legal practice in the 1960s. “When she and George had an interview at a large firm, [she] was asked how many words a minute she could type”; Judge Moser recalls that “[t]hey informed me that I could work in the library during research and do my own typing, thereby saving money by not having to hire a secretary for me.”¹⁶⁰ Thus, because she wanted to be a trial attorney, “she and George opened Pendell & Pendell Lawyers, . . . quickly [establishing] a successful law practice.”¹⁶¹

“Paying it forward” with leadership service for those groups earlier mentioned, Judge Moser later “served as local and International Dean of the Iota Tau Tau Legal Sorority, President of the [Oklahoma] Association of Women Lawyers, Board of Directors of the National Association of Women Judges, . . . an active member of Zeta Phi Eta, Professional Fraternity in Communication Arts and Sciences, . . . as President of the [OCU Law] Alumnae Chapter and on the National Council as [its] 2nd Vice President” and “authored a booklet for the International Women’s Year Commission entitled ‘The Oklahoma Homemaker and the Law.’”¹⁶²

“In 1975, after George encouraged her to pursue the position,” Judge Moser applied for and was accepted as the first female judge of the Oklahoma City Municipal Court—a historic first in a string of many other “firsts” because a few years later, Judge Moser was elected as the very first female chief, or presiding, judge of that court.¹⁶³ Upon reflection on these history-making roles, Judge Moser has said “after keeping a classroom of eighth graders in order [during her time as a teacher at Roosevelt Junior High], the courtroom was a snap.”¹⁶⁴

“At first the lawyers would call me ‘Sir,’ [Judge Moser] recalls.”¹⁶⁵

159. *Id.*

160. *Id.* at 78-79.

161. *Id.* at 79.

162. *Zeta Spotlight, Terry Pendell Moser, supra* note 149.

163. Arbeitman, *supra* note 153, at 79.

164. *Id.* (emphasis omitted).

165. *Id.*

Aiming to raise “as little controversy as possible, she waited a few weeks before correcting the error,” and when a male attorney “she knew well called her ‘Sir’ [again, Judge Moser] pointed out [that the proper] way to address the court was ‘Judge’ or ‘Your Honor.’”¹⁶⁶ “Needless to say, the message made its way around the courthouse.”¹⁶⁷

The next judicial role for Judge Moser was becoming a judge for the Oklahoma Worker’s Compensation Court of Existing Claims, since she was selected for that role by then-Governor Henry Bellmon.¹⁶⁸ It was at this time in 1994 that she married her second husband, Cal Moser, and was debating whether or not to use her new married name or her former name so that the workers’ compensation court did not need to change out all the stationary and signs.¹⁶⁹

Judge Moser decided to first use her married name of Moser when she was appointed as a federal ALJ with the Office of Disability Adjudication Review of the SSA in the Little Rock, Arkansas office, where again she became the first female judge in that department.¹⁷⁰ “A year later, she was assigned[,] [again,] as [the first female] [c]hief [j]udge of the McAlester, [Oklahoma] office—[yet] another first.”¹⁷¹ A year later, she became the chief judge of the Oklahoma City office, and although that office previously had female judges, she had once again achieved another “first” by being the first female chief judge of that office.¹⁷²

An interesting anecdote Judge Moser recalls during her judicial career was how “all the female elected officials in Oklahoma could meet at her kitchen table.”¹⁷³ “Later the group grew in numbers, and we graduated to the living room. We were very close and supportive of each other.”¹⁷⁴ After her retirement, she still held regular lunches with her friends Judge Carol Hanson (OCU Law class of 1974), Judge Reta Struhbar (OCU Law class of 1981), Judge Patricia McGulgan (OCU Law class of 1975) and Judge Nancy Coats.¹⁷⁵

166. *Id.*

167. *Id.*

168. *Id.*; *Zeta Spotlight, Terry Pendell Moser*, *supra* note 149.

169. Arbeitman, *supra* note 153, at 79.

170. *Id.*; *Zeta Spotlight, Terry Pendell Moser*, *supra* note 149.

171. Arbeitman, *supra* note 153, at 79; *Zeta Spotlight, Terry Pendell Moser*, *supra* note 149.

172. Arbeitman, *supra* note 153, at 79.

173. *Id.* (emphasis omitted).

174. *Id.*

175. *Id.*

In addition to her roles as a judge, Judge Moser has held many positions in non-profit leadership, including:

[B]eing a Director of the Ninety-Nines Museum of Women Pilots, Redlands Girl Scouts Council, Commission on the Status of Women, Skyline Urban Ministry and the Community Council of Greater OKC. [Judge Moser has also] helped organize the homeless shelters and work[ed] with the City-County Health Department [to] institute[] a program to test the homeless for [tuberculosis (“TB”)]. People entering a homeless shelter now have a picture ID showing they have been tested for TB[;] [t]his venture grew into arranging special housing for those who tested positive so they can begin treatments. [Judge Moser was also] instrumental in [building] a computer program connecting numerous service groups in [the OKC] community to provide health treatment, counseling, transitional housing and job training for the homeless. Judge Moser has [also] been honored with many awards [including the] Ladies in the News by the Oklahoma Hospitality Club, By-liner Award by Women in Communication, Executive Woman of the Year by High Noon Business Org. and Spotlight Award by the Women in The Law Committee of OBA. She is Master Emeritus of the Ruth Bader Ginsburg American Inn of Court and is listed in Who’s Who of American Women and Who’s Who of Women in the Law.¹⁷⁶

Judge Moser has additionally raised two sons, George Pendell M.D. and Wade Pendell, with her first husband George Pendell.¹⁷⁷

Finally, looking back at her legendary legal career, Judge Moser remarks that “I always tried to do my jobs as lawyer and judge with an awareness that if I served with integrity and competence, I would help pave the way for other women to have more opportunities in our profession and our community in the future.”¹⁷⁸

176. *Zeta Spotlight, Terry Pendell Moser, supra* note 149.

177. *Id.*

178. Arbeitman, *supra* note 153, at 79.

D. Judge Arnold S. Battise ('71)—ALJ for the SSA

Judge Arnold S. Battise is from the OCU Law graduating class of 1971 and served as an ALJ for the SSA in Seattle, Washington.¹⁷⁹ The book *Oklahoma City University School of Law a History* by Professor Von Russell Creel and Bob Burke states that the “incoming class of freshmen in 1967 featured an American Indian, Arnold Battise, a full-blood member of the Alibamo-Koasati Indian Nation.”¹⁸⁰ Battise “worked for federal government agencies for 43 years.”¹⁸¹ “Battise’s classmates included two FBI agents, four IRS agents, one deputy sheriff and Carolyn Sifford, who drove to classes every-night from Wichita, Kansas.”¹⁸² “Battise saluted the Professors, especially [former Oklahoma Supreme Court Chief Justice] Marian Opala, Wayne Quinlan, and Judge Carmon C. Harris.”¹⁸³ Battise remarked on his professors at OCU Law that “[t]hese three individuals were especially influential in that they not only provided instruction in how to think like a lawyer, but also provided examples of what a lawyer should be.”¹⁸⁴

According to the State Bar of Texas official website, Judge Battise was admitted to the Texas State Bar on April 16, 1973, and is indicated as being a member of the Alibamo-Koasati (also referred to as “Alabama-Coushatta”)¹⁸⁵ Indian Nation, with a graduation date of May 1971 from OCU Law.¹⁸⁶ Judge Battise was also the first member of the

179. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 173 (stating “Arnold Battise, ‘71—Administrative Law Judge for the Social Security Administration[,] Seattle, Washington”—Judge Battise’s name is spelled wrong however and should be “Battise”).

180. *Id.* at 40 (“When Battise arrived for his first class, Professor Abe Erdberg announced proudly, ‘We have one aborigine in the new class.’ The nickname stuck.”). The author would like to remind readers that this (likely now interpreted to be) insensitive comment was made in 1967.

181. *Id.*

182. *Id.*

183. *Id.*

184. *Id.*

185. Babbette Hermann, *Alabama-Coushatta Judge/Attorney Honored for Lifetime Achievement*, (ICT) INDIAN COUNTRY TODAY NEWS (Sept. 12, 2018), <https://ictnews.org/archive/alabama-coushatta-judgeattorney-honored-for-lifetime-achievement-2> (this article also notes the tribe that Judge Battise belongs to as named “Alabama-Coshatta”).

186. *Hon. Arnold S. ‘Arnold’ Battise*, STATE BAR OF TEX., https://www.texasbar.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Find_A_Lawyer&template=/Customsource/MemberDirectory/MemberDirectoryDetail.cfm&ContactID=159540 [<https://perma.cc/NRG9-3ZQZ>].

Alabama-Coushatta Tribe to be licensed to practice law in Texas.¹⁸⁷

On November 2, 2007, Judge Battise was awarded a prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award from the State Bar of Texas' American Indian Law Section.¹⁸⁸ "Ray Torgerson, chairman of the American Indian Law Section, [presented] Battise [with the honor] for his outstanding work as judge/attorney and his dedication to Native people."¹⁸⁹

Judge Battise "served as a judge and attorney for nearly four decades, with the bulk of his [service] in federal service."¹⁹⁰ In 1990, Judge Battise became a federal ALJ for the SSA in Alexandria, Louisiana,¹⁹¹ also served as an ALJ in Dallas, Texas, and finally served as an ALJ for the Social Security Office of Disability Adjudication and Review in Seattle, Washington, from 1999 to 2006.¹⁹² The busy career of Judge Battise "kept him moving to different locations across the country, yet he [still] managed to keep [updated] of Native [American] issues," remarking that "I moved a lot, but I kept up with news in Indian county."¹⁹³ Battise also remarked that "I don't know quite how to describe myself . . . I consider myself a Native American first who is also a lawyer."¹⁹⁴

Judge Battise's "wife of 47 years, Jo Ann, . . . serve[d] as the Alabama-Coushatta tribal chair[person]," and "knew about the accolade two months prior to the ceremony . . . [but] avoided [the] suspicion of her attendance by telling him . . . she was a guest speaker."¹⁹⁵

187. State Bar of Tex., FACEBOOK (Apr. 19, 2018), <https://www.facebook.com/statebaroftexas/photos/former-texas-supreme-court-justice-price-daniel-greets-arnold-battise-at-the-new/10156648983131111/> [<https://perma.cc/J6PH-TWDC>] ("Former Texas Supreme Court Justice Price Daniel greets Arnold Battise at the New Lawyer Induction Ceremony on April 30, 1973. Batisse was the first member of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe to be licensed to practice law in Texas. Daniel, who died in 1988, at one time was paid \$1 a year to serve as counsel to the tribe.").

188. Hermann, *supra* note 185.

189. *Id.*

190. *Id.*

191. This is very likely the same department/office of the "Bureau of Hearings and Appeals Social Security Administration 3744 Government Street Alexandria, Louisiana 71303" that Judge Oran O'Neal, the first listed ALJ/military judge above, worked at.

192. Hermann, *supra* note 185.

193. *Id.*

194. *Id.*

195. *Id.*; For a statement Jo Ann Battise made, see *Ysleta del Sur Pueblo and Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas Equal and Fair Opportunity Settlement Act: Hearing on H.R. 4985 Before the H. Subcomm. of Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs of the House Natural Resources Committee*, 115th Cong. (2018) (statement of Jo Ann Battise, Tribal Council Chairperson, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas).

Judge Battise graduated with “a Bachelor of Arts degree in French from the University of Houston.”¹⁹⁶ Before attending college at the University of Houston, Judge Battise served in the navy as a communications technician second class and traveled extensively to places like San Diego, Alaska, Washington D.C. and Copenhagen, Denmark, during his service tour and radio operator, “before being honorably discharged after eight years of active duty.”¹⁹⁷

Judge Battise obtained a JD degree from OCU Law in 1971.¹⁹⁸

His motivation for [going to law school and] becoming a[n] [attorney] stemmed from being harassed by Houston police[—h]e said that . . . skirmishes with [the] police were likely racially motivated, as segregation was paramount during the 1960s[—l]uckily, none of the[se] incidents turned violent, but were sobering enough for him to solidify a career choice[:] ‘I thought that the best way to handle that would be to learn the law and represent myself in these interactions’ During his [legal career, Judge Battise] represented the [Indian Health Service (“IHS”)] at its offices in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and North Carolina. He also served as . . . general counsel for [the Alibamo-Koasati] [T]ribe in 1990.¹⁹⁹

Moreover, during the early stages of his legal career, “he was involved with the National Congress of American Indians [“NCAI”] annual convention[—and] [d]uring the [19]70s, he witnessed American Indian Movement [“AIM”] members take over a NCAI Convention.”²⁰⁰ Judge Battise recalls that while “wearing a suit and a military-style haircut” at the convention, “a young AIM member called him ‘an apple’”²⁰¹—an insult referring to a Native American who supports white people and is “red on the outside, white on the inside”²⁰²—yet Judge Battise stated that

196. Hermann, *supra* note 185.

197. *Id.*

198. *Id.*

199. *Id.*

200. *Id.*

201. *Id.*

202. *Apple* *Indian*, URB. DICTIONARY, <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Apple%20Indian>

“nothing negative . . . could change the truth in his heart,” and that like AIM members, “he too was a proud American Indian and believed strongly in helping Native people.”²⁰³

[Judge Battise’s colleagues also] can attest to his dedication[:] [for example,] Judge Arthur Joyner, of black and Cherokee descent, worked with Battise for nearly five years in Seattle. The two periodically traveled on business together, and Joyner said that his friend made it a priority to visit nearby tribes. [Judge] Joyner described [Judge] Battise as ‘the archetypical much-beloved judge,’ whether at work or speaking to groups of Native elders interested in Social Security disability. ‘I think the reason he won the lifetime achievement award was because he always found a way to give back, especially to the Native American community no matter what he was doing and where he was at the time,’ [Judge Joyner] said. [Judge] Battise speaks English, Alabama-Coushatta, French and Spanish. Over the years, he has traveled to Montreal to practice his French and hopes to travel . . . more [post-retirement][:] ‘I would like to see more things before I pass on,’ he said.²⁰⁴

In 2016, Judge Battise “was honored by [OCU Law] as an outstanding example of American Indian achievement and a representative of the law school and of Indian Country.”²⁰⁵

[<https://perma.cc/F9MA-KJS3>]; see also *Apple*, THE RACIAL SLUR DATABASE, <http://www.rsd.org/slur/apple> [<https://perma.cc/FAE4-HTD9>]; Cheri Trusler, *Evolving Identity: Chasing an Idea of Home*, NATIVE NEWS (2015), <https://nativenews.jour.umt.edu/2015/evolving-identity-chasing-an-idea-of-home/> [<https://perma.cc/RK9Y-CUNP>] (“Living off the reservation, but feeling like they belong on one, both Hall and Frazier have come to terms with, and even embraced, an off-color term constantly flung at them: ‘Apple.’ Hall, a Blackfeet tribal member: ‘An apple is an urban Native American, it’s a slang word. It’s kind of derogatory.’ Frazier, who is Northern Cheyenne: ‘Just kind of assimilated to white culture I guess. That’s what an apple is.’”).

203. Hermann, *supra* note 185.

204. *Id.*

205. *Movers and Shakers*, 79 TEX. BAR J. 174, 174 (Feb. 2016), https://www.texasbar.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Past_Issues&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=32494 (last visited Nov. 20, 2024) (“Arnold Battise, a retired

E. Judge Jonathan P. Tomes ('76)—Military Judge for the U.S. Army & Law Professor

Judge Jonathan P. Tomes graduated from OCU Law in 1976 and served as a military judge with the Judge Advocate General Corps (“JAGC”).²⁰⁶

[Judge Tomes] was born in Chicago, Illinois on October 24, 1945 to Paul Jonathan Tomes and Mary Jane Wilson. . . . He graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a Commercial Arts degree and won a R.O.T.C. scholarship for the last half of his college career. Upon graduation, this [R.O.T.C.] scholarship led him to a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Military Intelligence Branch of the United States Army. . . . Second Lieutenant Tomes served as a U.S. Army Infantry platoon leader in Vietnam with friends Bill Hunt and Bruce Perry[] [and] . . . served under Walter Marm, who he greatly respected. In Vietnam, [Judge Tomes] received the Silver Star for Valor, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, an Air Medal, an Army Commendation Medal, a Combat Infantry Badge, an Airborne Badge and various other medals. After his tour of duty in Vietnam, he and his friend Bill Millar entered military intelligence school, where, among other things, they infiltrated the Baltimore Harbor in a rubber raft. After finishing military intelligence school, [Judge Tomes] served as a military intelligence officer in Germany commanding a counterintelligence unit and eventually became the East German Branch Chief responsible for all Army undercover espionage activities during the Cold War. He

administrative law judge in Livingston and member of the Alabama-Coushatta Indian Nation of Texas, was honored by Oklahoma City University College of Law as an outstanding example of American Indian achievement and a representative of the law school and of Indian Country.”).

206. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 187 (stating “Jonathan P. Tomes, ‘76—Administrative Law Judge, U.S. Army”).

received . . . many other honors and was [considered] ‘Airborne’ which he was especially proud of as he had a fear of heights.

. . . At the end of his tour of duty in Germany, the [U.S.] Army sent then Captain Tomes to [OCU] Law . . . where he graduated first in his class. Each summer during law school, [Judge Tomes] interned at various Judge Advocate Corps (JAGC) offices. After graduation, the Army moved him into the JAGC, where he continued to serve his country[:] first as a military prosecutor, then as defense counsel, and finally as [a] military judge. [JAG Officer Tomes] became a fierce advocate for his clients; one whom people respected and quickly learned never to underestimate[—h]e carried this zeal and advocacy into his private practice in later life. As a military judge, he was stationed at Fort Knox, Kentucky and rode the circuit from base to base in the Mid-West to places like Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. All regarded him as fair: upholding the law and not letting his political preference sway his decisions [in the slightest]. Upon finishing his tour of duty as a military judge, the [U.S.] Army sent [Judge Tomes] to school at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. . . . After finishing his education, [Judge Tomes] stayed on as a member of the faculty to teach military law, among other subjects. Finally, he finished out his Army career in the Army Claims Service at Fort Meade, Maryland. [Judge Tomes] retired after 20 years in 1988 with a rank of Lieutenant Colonel.²⁰⁷

After retiring from the military, Judge Tomes became Professor Tomes and “joined the faculty of [the] Illinois Institute of Technology Chicago-Kent College of Law in Chicago, where he was Dean of Students and taught legal writing, military law, health law, and criminal procedure,

207. *Jonathan Tomes, October 24, 1945—January 20, 2021*, LONGVIEW FUNERAL HOMES & CEMETERY, <https://www.longviewfuneralhome.com/obituaries/jonathan-tomes> (last visited Nov. 20, 2024).

among other[] [courses].”²⁰⁸ “He worked tirelessly to educate all his students, but in particular as a legal writing professor and moot court advisor.”²⁰⁹ He also became an associate professor of law.²¹⁰

He was proud of the fact that, during three of the four years he taught at Chicago-Kent [Law], one of his students was number one in each graduating class. One of his favorite positions was serving as a moot court advisor to the Black Law School Student Moot Court Teams and taking them to great success in many challenges[;] [as a result, the] Black Law School Student[] [Association] voted him professor of the year two years in a row during his tenure at Chicago-Kent [Law].

[Judge Tomes] also served as a very successful civilian lawyer and defense counsel from 1988 until 2019[] . . . [and] . . . successfully litigated many cases on behalf of his clients in federal and state courts. [Judge Tomes] also served as an expert witness in many complicated military and healthcare related cases[–d]uring these years, he became a leading expert in [the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act] HIPAA, [the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health] HITECH Act, and the Omnibus rule. [Judge Tomes also] trained medical companies, government agencies and practitioners in compliance matters and defending many clients in the face of allegations of allegations of HIPAA violations. [Judge Tomes has] also advised many businesses and state and local agencies about HIPAA privacy and confidentiality, reporting requirements, record retention requirements, risk analysis and general policies and procedures. In his later years, he consulted and taught regularly regarding Healthcare and Military matters.

208. *Id.*

209. *Id.*

210. *Jonathan P. Tomes*, APEX CLE, <https://www.apexcle.com/faculty/54> [<https://perma.cc/P9LF-RRYQ>].

[Judge Tomes] was also a prolific writer[:] [h]e wrote more than 60 nonfiction books dealing with medical record issues, HIPAA, HITECH, military law, and privacy matters. He has several published law review articles including articles regarding the Community Reinvestment Act, the Federal Tort Claims Act, the development of military justice in assault and rape cases over the years, and the development of HIPAA and HITECH over the first 20 years. The U.S. Supreme Court cited one of his law review articles.²¹¹

Judge Tomes “also wrote and published many novels and short stories.”

His novels include *I am Yosef, Ben Yaakov, Husband of Miryam*, and *Stepfather of the Messiah*, Meadville, PA: Christian Faith Publishing (forthcoming 2021), *Last Grade Served in Honorably*, Kansas City, MO: Veterans Press (forthcoming 2021), *HITECH Hysteria*, Kansas City, MO: Veterans Press (forthcoming 2021), *The Art Sting*, Kansas City, MO: Veterans Press (forthcoming 2021), *Many Units of Blood*, Kansas City, MO: Veterans Press (2019), *Ghost Six and the Bright Blue Blade*, Meadville, PA: Christian Faith Publishing (2018), *A Unit of Blood*, Overland Park, KS: Veterans Press (e-published

211. *Jonathan Tomes, October 24, 1945—January 20, 2021*, *supra* note 207; *see, e.g.*, Jonathan R. Tomes, *The Imagination of the Prosecutor: The Only Limitation to Off-Post Jurisdiction Now, Fifteen Years After O'Callahan v. Parker*, 25 AIR FORCE L. REV. 1, 9-35 (1985) (cited by the Supreme Court in *Solorio v. United States*, 483 U.S. 435, 448 n.13 (1987)); Jonathan P. Tomes, *The “Community” in the Community Reinvestment Act: A Term in Search of a Definition*, 10 ANN. REV. BANKING L. 225 (1991) (cited in notes 12 & 22 in Jonathan R. Macey & Geoffrey P. Miller, *The Community Reinvestment Act: An Economic Analysis*, 79 VA. L. REV. 291, 293 n.12, 300, n.22 (1993)); Jonathan P. Tomes, *Damned if You Do, Damned if You Don't: The Use of Mitigation Experts in Death Penalty Litigation*, 24 AM. J. CRIM. L. 359, 364 (1997) (cited by the Tenth Circuit in cases such as *Bryan v. Mullin*, 335 F.3d 1207, 1244 (10th Cir. 2003); *Bryan v. Gibson*, 276 F.3d 1163, 1182 (10th Cir. 2001) and by the Fifth Circuit in *Ayestas v. Davis*, 933 F.3d 384, 390 (5th Cir. 2019); and finally by the Seventh Circuit in *St. Pierre v. Walls*, 297 F.3d 617, 632 (7th Cir. 2002)); Jonathan P. Tomes, *Feres to Chappell to Stanley: Three Strikes and Servicemembers Are Out*, 25 U. RICH. L. REV. 93 (1990) (cited by the Third Circuit in *O'Neill v. U.S.*, 140 F.3d 564, 566 (3d Cir. 1998)).

on Amazon Kindle 2012), *HIPAA Hysteria*, Overland Park, KS: Veterans Press (2010), *JAGC-Off: A Politically Incorrect Memoir of the Real Judge Advocate General's Corps*, Overland Park, KS: Veterans Press (2010), *Lawful Orders*, Overland Park, KS: Veterans Press (hardcover 1998, Amazon Kindle version 2012). He also wrote many funny short stories, including those about Womble, the God of the Honey Trap, available on Amazon Kindle.

While writing non-fiction law books for commercial publishers, [Judge Tomes] started a small firm in Chicago and then moved his law practice to the Kansas City area. Eventually, he formed a publishing company, called Veterans Press, Inc., as well as a HIPAA consulting company, called EMR Legal, Inc.²¹²

F. Judge Byard Clemmons ('78)—Chief Judge for the U.S. Navy

Judge Byard Q. Clemmons graduated from OCU Law in 1978 and served as a military judge for the U.S. Navy.²¹³ According to his LinkedIn profile, Judge Clemmons was with the JAG of the U.S. Navy as an attorney, judge, commanding officer, law review editor, staff judge advocate and instructor for close to twenty-eight years from February of 1978 to December 2005.²¹⁴ According to LinkedIn, Judge Clemmons also served as an adjunct professor at the University of Memphis and Embry Riddle University from January of 1980 to June of 2005, teaching psychology and law to undergraduate students.²¹⁵ He finally lists that he was a clinical psychologist at Northwest Georgia Regional Hospital for two years from August 1974 to 1976.²¹⁶ In addition to his JD from OCU Law in 1978, Judge Clemmons has listed on his LinkedIn Profile that he received an LLM from Harvard Law School, an advanced diploma at University of Oxford, an MS and EdS in clinical and counseling psychology from the University of Georgia and an AB in psychology from

212. *Jonathan Tomes, October 24, 1945—January 20, 2021, supra* note 207.

213. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 175 (stating “Byard Clemmons, ‘78—Chief Judge, U.S. Navy”).

214. Byard Clemmons, LINKEDIN, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/byard-clemmons-65a12535/> [<https://perma.cc/P499-F8QH>].

215. *Id.*

216. *Id.*

Kenyon College.²¹⁷ He has also published several cited law review articles.²¹⁸

G. Judge Kim Parrish ('81)—ALJ for the SSA

Judge Kim Parrish received his JD from OCU Law in 1981 and was appointed as an ALJ for the SSA in 1995.²¹⁹ Judge Parrish holds several degrees including a masters in public administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and a BS from Oklahoma State University.²²⁰ After graduating OCU Law in 1981, Judge Parrish served as an Oklahoma County Assistant District Attorney and was in private practice for fourteen years with the law firm of Derryberry, Quigley, Parrish and Solomon²²¹ before he was appointed as an ALJ for the SSA in 1995.²²² Judge Parrish is also the co-editor of *The Harvard Guide to Influential Books* and the author of *Making Things Better: Wes Watkins' Legacy of Leadership* and of the national award-winning *Cowboy Up: John Smith Leads the Legendary Oklahoma State Wrestlers to Their Greatest Season Ever*.²²³

Judge Parrish has [also] taught, written, and practiced in

217. *Id.*

218. See, e.g., Jon D. Peppetti, *Building the Global Maritime Security Network: A Multinational Legal Structure To Combat Transnational Threats*, 55 NAVAL L. REV. 73, 89 (2008) (citing Byard Q. Clemmons, *Might Makes Right?*, 46 FED. LAW. 40 (1999) (“presenting the argument that national self-interest is the primary motivation for compliance with treaties and not dutiful obedience to the raw authority of law”)); see also Amanda Schaffer, *Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Terrorists: An In-Depth Analysis of the Government's Right to Classify United States Citizens Suspected of Terrorism as Enemy Combatants and Try those Enemy Combatants by Military Commission*, 30 FORDHAM URB. L.J. 1465, 1467 n.17 (2003) (citing Byard Q. Clemmons, *The Case for Military Tribunals*, 49 FED. LAW. 27, 27 (2002)); see also Michael C. Bonafede, *Here, There, and Everywhere: Assessing the Proportionality Doctrine and U.S. Uses of Force in Response to Terrorism After the September 11 Attacks*, 88 CORNELL L. REV. 155, 177 n.136 (2002) (citing Byard Q. Clemmons & Gary D. Brown, *Rethinking International Self-Defense: The United Nations' Emerging Role*, 45 NAVAL L. REV. 217, 225 (1998)).

219. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 185 (stating “Kim Parrish, ‘81—Administrative Law Judge, Social Security Administration”); *Kim Parrish, JD*, OKLA. CITY UNIV., <https://www.okcu.edu/faculty/kim-parrish-j-d> [<https://perma.cc/XYF5-QKJ2>].

220. *Id.*; *Kim D. Parrish*, OKLA. HALL OF FAME GAYLORD-PICKENS MUSEUM, <https://www.oklahomahof.com/author/kim-d-parrish> [<https://perma.cc/28M7-S3FK>].

221. *Kim Parrish, JD*, *supra* note 219.

222. *Id.*; Kim Parrish, LINKEDIN, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kim-parrish-46a83333/> (last visited Oct. 26, 2024).

223. *Kim D. Parrish*, *supra* note 220.

the areas of negotiation, mediation, dispute resolution, and public diplomacy for more than 30 years[,] [and] [h]e also serves as a lead instructor for incoming federal administrative law judges and has spoken in numerous continuing professional programs in the area judicial administration throughout his career.²²⁴

[In addition,] Judge Parrish is a member of the Oklahoma Bar Association, Oklahoma County Bar Association, and licensed to practice in the United States Supreme Court, the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the Western, Eastern and Northern Districts of Oklahoma. He is also a member of the Association of Administrative Law Judges, and a life member of the Oklahoma State University Alumni Association.²²⁵

According to the website Disability Judges, Judge Parrish can be seen resolving cases at the Office of Disability Adjudication and Review in McAlester, Oklahoma, and still serves as an ALJ for the SSA.²²⁶

H. Judge Rocklin D. Lyons ('84)—ALJ for the SSA

Judge Rocklin D. Lyons graduated from OCU Law in 1984.²²⁷ According to his LinkedIn profile, he also received his undergraduate bachelor's degree from OCU in aviation business management—which he acquired in 1981—and also holds an associate's degree in general studies from Utah Technical College, which he obtained in 1972.²²⁸ From June of 1964 to January of 1972, Judge Lyons was a pilot and air traffic controller with the U.S. Marine Corps.²²⁹ From January 1974 to July of 1985, Judge Lyons was a Federal Aviation Administrator (January 1974 to March

224. *Id.*

225. *Kim Parrish, JD, supra* note 219.

226. *Kim D. Parrish, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma Odar Office, Administrative Law Judge, DISABILITY JUDGES, ADMIN. L. JUDGE CASE STATS.,* <https://www.disabilityjudges.com/judge/kim-d-parrish/> [<https://perma.cc/9YST-8SQW>].

227. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 183 (stating “Rocklin D. Lyons, ‘84—Administrative Law Judge, Social Security Administration”).

228. Rocklin (Rock) Lyons, LINKEDIN, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/rocklin-rock-lyons-96a14790/> (last visited Oct. 26, 2024).

229. *Id.*

1975), a flight inspection pilot (March 1975 to August 1980) and a flight inspection pilot instructor (August 1980 to July 1985).²³⁰ From July 1985 to August 1996, Judge Lyons was an attorney of law with Looney, Nichols & Johnson where he practiced product liability law and general litigation.²³¹ From September of 1998 to June of 2001, Judge Lyons was also an adjunct professor of law at Central California College of Law in Fresno, California.²³² Judge Lyons was appointed as an ALJ with the SSA in September of 1996 and still serves in that role today.²³³

I. Judge Franklin Deramus ('85)—ALJ for the SSA

Judge Franklin Deramus is a member of the OCU Law graduating class of 1985.²³⁴ According to his LinkedIn profile, Judge Deramus obtained his bachelor of business administration (“BBA”) in economics in 1966 from OU, where he was also on the varsity track team and the Letterman’s Club.²³⁵ In 1980, Judge Deramus acquired his master of business administration (“MBA”) from the University of Central Oklahoma, and in 1985 Judge Deramus completed his JD degree from OCU Law.²³⁶ Judge Deramus was vice president, secretary and general counsel at John Deere Life Insurance Company from January of 1987 to November of 1989.²³⁷ From November of 1989 to April of 2005, Judge Deramus served as managing attorney at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (“FDIC”).²³⁸ In April 2005, Judge Deramus was appointed as an ALJ with the SSA.²³⁹ In August of 2017, Judge Deramus became a senior ALJ, and still serves in that role today.²⁴⁰

230. *Id.*

231. *Id.*

232. *Id.*

233. *Id.*

234. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 176 (stating “Franklin Deramus, ‘85—Administrative Law Judge in Caddo Parish, Louisiana”).

235. Frank Deramus, Details: Education, LINKEDIN, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/frank-deramus-60805772/details/education/>.

236. *Id.*

237. Frank Deramus, LINKEDIN, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/frank-deramus-60805772/>.

238. *Id.*

239. *Id.*

240. *Id.*

**X. Special Mention: OCU Law Alumni as Federal Court Clerks:
Robert Dennis, Grant Price and April Eberle**

Although not federal judges, and also not federal judicial law clerks (who clerk for federal judges),²⁴¹ special mention should be made to federal court clerks²⁴²—an executive hired by the judges of a federal court to carry out the court’s administrative and non-judicial functions—who have served the federal district and bankruptcy court in the Western District of Oklahoma and are graduates of OCU Law. There are three to the author’s knowledge: Robert Dennis, OCU Law class of 1973,²⁴³ who served as the federal court clerk for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma for twenty-nine years from 1985-2014;²⁴⁴ Grant

241. *Law Clerk*, WIKIPEDIA (Nov. 19, 2024, 03:45 UTC), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_clerk [<https://perma.cc/3EFT-MGNE>] (“Judicial law clerks are usually recent law school graduates who performed at or near the top of their class and/or attended highly ranked law schools. Serving as a law clerk is considered to be one of the most prestigious positions in legal circles, and tends to open up wide-ranging opportunities in academia, law firm practice, and influential government work.”).

242. *Judicial Administration, Individual Courts*, U.S. CTS., <https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/judicial-administration> [<https://perma.cc/X885-VWZZ>] (“The clerk of court is the executive hired by the judges of the court to carry out the court’s administrative functions. The clerk manages the court’s non-judicial functions according to policies set by the court and reports directly to the court through the chief judge.”).

243. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 176 (stating “Robert Dennis, ‘73—Clerk, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma”).

244. Staff Reports, *Longtime Oklahoma City Federal Court Clerk to Retire*, OKLAHOMAN (Apr. 1, 2014, 12:00 AM), <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/local/oklahoma-city/2014/04/01/longtime-oklahoma-city-federal-court-clerk-to-retire/60835230007/> [<https://perma.cc/D5DX-QJHY>] (“The longtime Oklahoma City federal court clerk will retire Tuesday. Robert D. Dennis became the federal court clerk in 1985. Dennis served 41 years in federal service, also working as an assistant U.S. attorney and as district counsel for the U.S. Small Business Administration. He also previously served as assistant general counsel at the state Public Safety Department. Dennis retired in 1995 from the military. He was a private in the Oklahoma Army National Guard and later was reassigned to the Oklahoma Air National Guard as a commissioned officer. He earned his bachelor of science degree from Oklahoma State University in 1967 and *his juris doctor degree in 1973 from Oklahoma City University*. Dennis has received various awards over the decades, including being recognized for outstanding leadership for his role in the aftermath and response to the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. Dennis worked at the Roosevelt Lodge in Yellowstone National Park last summer, and said he plans to continue public service after his retirement.”) (emphasis added).

Price, OCU Law class of 1978,²⁴⁵ who was appointed as the federal court clerk for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Oklahoma in 1993²⁴⁶ and April Eberle, OCU Law class of 1999,²⁴⁷ who was a clerk for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Oklahoma for more than thirteen years from July 2000 to August 2013 and has been an attorney in private practice since October of 2013.²⁴⁸ To the author's knowledge, there is no other OCU Law alumnus who has served as a clerk for a federal court longer than April Eberle. However, the author maintains a database of OCU Law alumni who have served as judicial law clerks for state and federal judges.²⁴⁹ It is clear that the future generation of federal judges—including the high possibility of the first U.S. district judge or U.S. court of appeals judge—will be drawn from this list. Each of the three above clerks will now be profiled in turn.

A. Robert Dennis ('73)—Court Clerk for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma

Robert Dennis earned his BS degree in forestry²⁵⁰ from Oklahoma

245. Creel & Burke, *supra* note 111, at 185 (stating “Grant Price, ‘78—Clerk, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Western District of Oklahoma”).

246. *Bankruptcy Court Clerk Named*, OKLAHOMAN (Aug. 18, 1993, 12:00 AM), <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/1993/08/18/bankruptcy-court-clerk-named/62450936007/> [<https://perma.cc/A787-6G32>] (“Grant E. Price, 44, has been appointed U.S. Bankruptcy Court Clerk in Oklahoma City, replacing James Garman, who was ousted last month after a critical management survey. Price, a former practicing lawyer, has been acting bankruptcy court clerk since Garman’s ouster. He previously was chief deputy court clerk of the U.S. District Court in Oklahoma City, where he served for nearly eight years. Price called his appointment ‘quite an honor. I’m real happy and thrilled to have received the appointment.’ He will be formally sworn into office at ceremonies at 2 p.m. Aug. 27. As bankruptcy court clerk, Price will supervise an office of 48 employees.”).

247. April Eberle, LINKEDIN, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/april--003b0277/> (last visited Nov. 1, 2024).

248. *Id.*

249. Timothy Hsieh, *OCU Law Alum Judicial Law Clerk Database*, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LMXbXIEROZB85XZAD1LciQIGU5MUtgwiAFIkFV8DCE8/edit?usp=sharing> [<https://perma.cc/X9J8-GSCS>] (last updated Sept. 8, 2024).

250. Paula Burkes, *Federal Court Clerk in Oklahoma City Functions like a Company CEO*, OKLAHOMAN (Nov. 28, 2010, 12:00 AM), <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/business/local/2010/11/28/federal-court-clerk-in-oklahoma-city-functions-like-a-company-ceo/61197159007/> [<https://perma.cc/95SZ-SXU9>] (“Though he earned an undergraduate degree in forestry, for the past quarter

State University in 1967 and his JD degree from OCU Law in 1973, while attending night school and serving as a courtroom deputy at the Oklahoma County Clerk's Office during the day.²⁵¹ He credits “watching a movie [as a kid where] a big city attorney fights city hall on behalf of common folk” and a “pre-law social fraternity” leading him to a career in the law and a “desire to help others who [do not] have a voice.”²⁵² He served in the military until 1995, where “[h]e was a private in the Oklahoma Army National Guard and later was reassigned to the Oklahoma Air National Guard as a commissioned officer.”²⁵³ He also served as assistant general counsel for the Oklahoma State Public Safety Department, general counsel for the Oklahoma U.S. Small Business Administration and an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Oklahoma.²⁵⁴ In 1985, Mr. Dennis became the federal court clerk of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma, serving for twenty-one years until his retirement on April 1, 2014.²⁵⁵ In total, Mr. Dennis compiled over forty-one years in federal service—including his years as the court clerk—and in addition to working as an assistant U.S. attorney and district counsel for the U.S. Small Business Administration, he also spent a summer working at the Roosevelt Lodge in Yellowstone National Park.²⁵⁶

Although Mr. Dennis' job responsibilities as court clerk included intervening when summoned jurors gave staff members flak about being called for duty, attorneys raising unique pleading questions or judges asking about the incidences of specific kinds of cases, his biggest challenge was getting the federal court of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma back in action six days after the Murrah Federal Building bombing on April 19, 1995, and he was recognized for outstanding leadership for this role.²⁵⁷ In a video on the Facebook page of the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, Mr. Dennis talks about

century he has been putting out different kinds of fires.”); *see also* Robert Dennis, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/robert.dennis.948/> (last visited Nov. 1, 2024) (listing “Studied Forestry at Oklahoma State University”).

251. *Id.*; Staff Reports, *supra* note 244.

252. Burkes, *supra* note 250.

253. Staff Reports, *supra* note 244.

254. *Id.*; Burkes, *supra* note 250.

255. Staff Reports, *supra* note 244.

256. *Id.*

257. Burkes, *supra* note 250 (““It was like a bomb went off here (at 200 NW 4[th] [Street])’ said Dennis, who had a meeting in the Murrah building when the bomb blew and crawled out of the blast to rush back to his office, where windows fractured, a staff member suffered a broken nose and another, the loss of a toddler daughter.”).

how the Oklahoma City bombing was meant to be an attack to shut down the U.S. federal government but instead the City decided not to be defeated—“a decision [that] must [be] recommit[ted] today in the face of constant attacks on [U.S.] democracy.”²⁵⁸ Mr. Dennis also has an account of when the bombing occurred in *The Oklahoman*²⁵⁹ and in *The O’Colly*.²⁶⁰

258. Okla. City Nat’l Mem’l & Museum, *Robert Dennis on Justice*, FACEBOOK (Mar. 29, 2021), <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=931913394245723> (“The feeling was that, you know, that was an attack against the government, against our country, against the government as such. And so we felt it was pretty important that we, that’s what they attempted to do as to stymie the arms of justice and our government so we felt it was important to get it back up and we’re not going to be defeated by that so we made every effort that we could to bring it up as quickly as we possibly could and not be defeated by it and carry on.”).

259. Ellie Sutter & Bryan Painter, *Downtown Folks Still Confront Uneasy Feelings*, OKLAHOMAN (May 22, 1995, 12:00 AM), <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/1995/05/22/downtown-folks-still-confront-uneasy-feelings/62389813007/> [<https://perma.cc/H7VD-FZR8>] (“In his federal courthouse office, Robert Dennis rolls an object that is about the size of a quarter between his left thumb and index finger. But it’s not a coin. Instead, the court clerk for Oklahoma’s western federal judicial district holds a thick piece of glass, a remnant from his building of the worst terrorist attack on U.S. soil. The piece of glass he picked up recently while walking through the work area outside his office serves as a reminder of how so many things - material and otherwise - were broken April 19 when a bomb ravaged the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building across the street from the federal courthouse. He’s heard all the descriptives: terror, tragedy, and so on. In fact, all he has to do is sit at his desk and look out at the window, and there it is - the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. To downtown Oklahoma City workers like Dennis who have returned to work, the building is now the focal point of downtown Oklahoma City. ‘You look over there and think, ‘Did it really happen?’’ he says, still fidgeting with the glass. ‘It’s a sad, sad thing.’ On April 19, with a meeting just finished, Dennis was preparing to leave the federal building to return to his office when the bomb exploded. Physically, he made it out, but a lot of memories - and some people he knew - remained in the rubble where he once worked. ‘Everything fell all around us. It all went black with dust and smoke. I thought I was going to suffocate,’ he said. . . . A videotape shows damage in the federal courthouse. As Dennis watches the tape, he turns his focus from past days to those ahead. ‘The way I look at it now, life has to go on,’ he said. ‘You can’t let those people that did it defeat you.’”).

260. Mason Waldvogel, *First Reporter Remembers OKC Bombing* (Apr. 18, 2013), https://www.ocolly.com/news/osu/first-reporter-remembers-okc-bombing/article_4e4d4882-a87b-11e2-8bac-001a4bcf6878.html [<https://perma.cc/SFV8-XVPU>] (“Confused about what was developing around her, she stepped out of her blocked-in car. Almost immediately, survivors started pouring out of the backside of the building, including Robert Dennis, the court clerk for the Western District Federal Court of Oklahoma. He had been on the first floor in a meeting and had crawled through the pancaked building, attempting to make contact with his staff across the street. ‘I came out

On his role as court clerk, Mr. Dennis has stated “I tell people I’m the CEO of a company, but the board of directors are our six judges who set policy . . . I’m responsible for the court’s administrative duties, so judges can do what they do and make decisions.”²⁶¹

B. Grant Price ('78)—Court Clerk for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Oklahoma

Grant Price is a member of the OCU Law class of 1978,²⁶² and before becoming the court clerk for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Oklahoma, he served as the chief deputy court clerk for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma under Robert Dennis, profiled above.²⁶³ In 2006, Mr. Price commented that the number of bankruptcy filings decreased,²⁶⁴ but in 2009, the number of bankruptcies increased.²⁶⁵ In 2015, Mr. Price and his Case Management Assist

of the west end,’ Dennis said. ‘As I was running to the Federal Courthouse, Carrie was live and immediately started to ask questions.’ The interview only lasted a few seconds, but those few moments shared live on the air were the most memorable for Hulsey-Greene; a reminder of the importance of her work. ‘One of my neighbors heard me being interviewed and was able to call my wife to tell her I was OK,’ Dennis said.”).

261. Burkes, *supra* note 250 (“Phil Lombardi, Dennis’ counterpart in the Northern District of Oklahoma in Tulsa, said he learned to adopt the mindset of servant leader, versus empirical leader, while working as deputy to Dennis in the mid- to late ‘90s. ‘We gather information, build consensus, make decisions and take responsibility for decisions, but have servant roles,’ Lombardi said. ‘We act like a clearinghouse for our own staff, judges, lawyers, probation officers, U.S. Attorneys, public defenders and the U.S. Marshal’s office to open up avenues, so procedurally everyone gets their jobs done.’”).

262. Creel & Burkes, *supra* note 111, at 185 (stating “Grant Price, ’78—Clerk, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Western District of Oklahoma”).

263. *Bankruptcy Court Clerk Named*, *supra* note 246; Burkes, *supra* note 250 (“Bankruptcy Court clerk Grant Price, who also served under Dennis, calls it empathy. ‘You’ve got to have empathy,’ he said, ‘to keep the staff’s loyalty and attention.’”).

264. Admin, *Bankruptcy Filings Decline*, J. REC. (Jan. 4, 2007), <https://journalrecord.com/2007/01/bankruptcy-filings-decline-2/> [<https://perma.cc/ZEE3-YDW9>] (“Grant Price, court clerk for the Oklahoma City-based Western District of Oklahoma U.S. Bankruptcy Court, said a little more than 3,500 new cases were filed there in 2006 after more than 21,000 in 2005.”).

265. Robert Barron, *Bankruptcy Filings at Record High in 2009, Despite Law Changes*, ENID NEWS & EAGLE (Feb. 21, 2010), https://www.enidnews.com/news/local_news/bankruptcy-filings-at-record-high-in-2009-despite-law-changes/article_687ab51b-1e43-5ce0-bd0a-0ac1b2294b31.html

[<https://perma.cc/K9FD-SNVF>] (“Grant Price, court clerk of the U.S. Federal Court for the Western District, said bankruptcies were up 25 percent in 2009 over 2008. In 2009, the

“CMA”) Team won a Director’s Award from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts for Excellence in Court Operations that recognizes employees who have contributed to excellence in operating with economy and efficiency, in providing innovations that improve service or in establishing community outreach programs or enhancing the public’s awareness of the federal judiciary.²⁶⁶ Although the current website for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Oklahoma reflects Douglas Wedge as the current court clerk,²⁶⁷ a position he may have assumed as early as 2020,²⁶⁸ it is uncertain when exactly Mr. Price retired from or left his position, possibly sometime between 2015 and 2020.

C. April Eberle ('99)—Longtime Clerk for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Oklahoma

April Eberle, OCU Law class of 1999,²⁶⁹ was a clerk for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Oklahoma for more than thirteen years from July 2000 to August 2013 and has been an attorney in private practice at the law firm of Abowitz, Timberlake & Dahnke since

western district, which basically is Oklahoma from Interstate 35 and west, showed a total of 7,397 bankruptcies in 2009. That is compared to 5,955 in 2008.”).

266. *2015 Director’s Awards Honor Court Employees*, U.S. CTS. (Nov. 19, 2015), <https://www.uscourts.gov/news/2015/11/19/2015-directors-awards-honor-court-employees> [<https://perma.cc/A6DW-ZY9J>] (“The Case Management Assist (CMA) Team for the Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Oklahoma (Oklahoma City). The team developed CMA, now used by 37 bankruptcy courts and two district courts with other courts in the implementation stage. CMA works alongside the Case Management/Electronic Case Files System to distribute, organize, prioritize, and assign work for a case administrator, among other capabilities. Financial officers also may use it to monitor payments due and judges and clerks may use it to remain current on court filings. Team members are IT Manager Scott Bellingham, Administrative Support Analyst Annamarie Cooper, Automation Supervisor Ronn Folk, **Bankruptcy Clerk of Court Grant Price**, Chief Deputy Bankruptcy Clerk of Court Sheila Sewell, Operations Manager Penny Wallis.”) (emphasis added).

267. *Court Information, Oklahoma City*, U.S. BANKR. CT., W. DIST. OF OKLA., <https://www.okwb.uscourts.gov/content/oklahoma-city> [<https://perma.cc/H24Q-BWKJ>] (listing “Douglas Wedge” and his phone number; also “Court Clerk Douglas Wedge” is visible as a header on the page).

268. *Major League Alumnus: Doug Wedge, Baseball and the Written Word*, THE UNIV. OF TULSA (Oct. 5, 2020), <https://tulsa.edu/news/doug-wedge-english-alumnus/> [<https://perma.cc/68C2-Q9ZK>] (“Today, Wedge serves as the clerk of court for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in the Western District of Oklahoma. As a court administrator, he helps coordinate long-range planning, oversees the budget and ensures the clerk’s office provides public service consistent with the applicable laws and regulations.”).

269. April Eberle, *supra* note 247.

October of 2013.²⁷⁰ Ms. Eberle is a member of the class of 1992 at Enid High School and also graduated from the University of Central Oklahoma with a bachelor's degree in political science and government in 1996.²⁷¹ While there, she was a member of the President's Leadership Council and Class Marshall.²⁷² Ms. Eberle entered OCU Law in 1996 and in 1999, she graduated from the law school where she was a Hatton Sumners Foundation Scholar, won American Jurisprudence awards and participated on the ABA Moot Court Team for two years.²⁷³ Ms. Eberle is also the co-author, with U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Sarah Hall, of the article "Modern Bankruptcy Courts in Oklahoma."²⁷⁴

Conclusion

The contributions of these twenty federal judges and clerks who are all alumni of OCU Law, and demonstrations of groundbreaking diversity and many "firsts" for female, Native American and Hispanic federal judges, underscore the significant impact that OCU Law graduates have had, and will have, on the federal judiciary. Each of these judges and clerks have brought a unique perspective and skill set to the bench or their court, reflecting the diverse training and education provided by OCU Law. Their careers serve as a testament to the importance of federal judges and clerks in various legal systems, highlighting their crucial role in managing the complexities of modern federal civil, criminal, administrative and military-based litigation.²⁷⁵ Through their service, these individuals have not only upheld the rule of law but have also set a standard of excellence for future generations of OCU Law graduates to follow and very likely become federal judges and clerks themselves. This will also undoubtedly set the stage for the first OCU Law alumnus to become a federal U.S. district judge or U.S. court of appeals circuit judge. Their legacies continue

270. *Id.*

271. *Id.*; see also April Bergdall Eberle, FACEBOOK, <https://www.facebook.com/april.eberle/> (last visited Nov. 1, 2024) (stating "Studied Political science at University of Central Oklahoma").

272. *Id.*

273. April Eberle, *supra* note 247.

274. Hall & Eberle, *supra* note 116.

275. *List of Magistrate Judges and Table of Succession Since 1971, District of Oklahoma*, TENTH CIRC. HIST. SOC'Y, <https://www.10thcircuithistory.org/magistrate-judges-district-of-oklahoma> [<https://perma.cc/GL2B-TH2D>]; *Judges of the Western District Court*, THE HIST. SOC'Y OF THE U.S. DIST. CT. FOR THE W. DIST. OF OKLA., <https://www.wdohistory.org/us-western-district-judges> [<https://perma.cc/5S36-4S44>].

to inspire, demonstrating that the values of dedication, integrity and justice are alive and well in the American federal judiciary upheld by OCU Law alumni.