

# THE LEGAL BRIEF

A Publication of the Thurston County Bar Association

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## President's Message

By: Laura Murphy

*Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.* John F. Kennedy

Our legal landscape has changed dramatically over the last year and may change even more with new Justices on the SCOTUS. Recently, social pressure resulted in headlines related to college admissions scandals and court testimony regarding sexual abuse. The hope is that through exposing injustice, change will happen.

The Thurston County District Court embraced change recently by engaging in a program to investigate and acknowledge overt or implicit bias in the judicial process. As a result, Judge Brett Buckley received an APEX award as the 2019 Outstanding Judge. As is typical, Judge Buckley quickly pointed out the award as a reflection of dedicated staff and Judges in Thurston County District Court. (See more on this topic on page 15)

This past summer, Thurston County Superior experienced a change in judicial officers. Superior Court Commissioner Jonathan Lack, who presided over family and juvenile cases, accepted a position in King County Superior Court. Shortly thereafter, Commissioner Zinn was selected as our next Superior Court Commissioner. During the swearing in ceremony, Commissioner Zinn expressed her dedication to learning new areas of law as well as procedures specific to Family Juvenile Court.

Moving into a new positions or a new area of law can be challenging and sometimes frightening. I know this from personal experience. Over the last year, I have transitioned from family law to employment law and moved from private practice to working for a government agency. And yes, I experienced a few sleepless nights as I questioned my ability to learn new statutes, WACs, and policies. I suppose the only thing more frightening than starting something new is staying in a position that no longer suited me. With the support of my Director and fellow staff, I have been able to attend courses at the National Judicial College and National Attorneys Pension Plans. Thankfully, my gray matter was up to the challenge and I have since settled into the position.

I encourage my colleagues to consider learning a new area of law or taking a new direction. If sudden change is overwhelming, consider volunteering. The Thurston County Bar Association has two open positions on the Board of Directors. Serving on the TCBA Board provides an opportunity to make a positive change in your legal community. A number of our Board members organize and provide low cost CLEs to our membership while other members assist with articles in the Legal Brief or serve in a liaison position. Whatever your interest may be, the TCBA Board provides a vehicle for positive change.

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## A View From the Bench

By Judge Mary Sue Wilson  
Thurston County Superior Court



On August 5, 2019, the Superior Court welcomed Commissioner Rebekah Zinn to her new position of full-time court commissioner. Many of you already know Commissioner Zinn from her prior work as part-time commissioner and staff attorney for our court where she presided over the civil ex parte, unlawful detainer and probate and guardianship calendars. In her new assignment, Commissioner Zinn presides over domestic violence protection order, probate and guardianship, and preliminary appearance criminal calendars. In the near future, she will begin hearing Involuntary Treatment Act calendars as well.

As the court welcomes its newest full-time judicial officer, I want to take this opportunity to reflect on some important pillars of our justice system here in Thurston County.

Compassion for each person who comes before the court. A litigant who visits the courthouse to establish a parenting plan, ask for a protection order, face eviction or appear for an arraignment would probably prefer to be anywhere but the courthouse. They are at court because they are facing a difficult time in their lives. When the professionals in our system show they understand and care about the people we serve, whether it is through a kind gesture, a smile, or an offer of a box of Kleenex, we show the caring face of our system.

Respect for the role of a neutral decision-maker. Judges and juries promise to decide each case on the law and the facts. This does not mean we don't have compassion or that we cannot show it. What it does mean is that we must be mindful of the role of compassion in the decision-making setting. When we show emotion, we need to be certain that emotion is neither influencing our decision nor creating an appearance that it is.

A friend recently asked whether I smile when I am on the bench. My response was not a yes or no answer. Instead, I explained that, as a judge, I am committed to showing respect for the people and cases that come before me; and the parties must have confidence that I will decide their case on the law and the facts. A friendly smile at the beginning of a case is ok so long as it does not suggest a lack of reverence for the particular proceeding. But a party who observes a judge tearing up in response to an emotional statement would understandably question whether sympathy may influence the judge's decision.

Professionals who work in our court play a huge role in promoting the public's confidence in our justice system. Before parties come into the courtroom, many have already been educated by their lawyers, their probation officers, volunteers at TCVLS, or courthouse facilitators. Providing details about the roles and responsibilities of the court system participants, including the neutral decision-maker role of the judicial officer, helps prepare parties for what's coming and increases the likelihood that parties will trust the system. I encourage and thank our court professionals for this work!

Commitment to life-long education. From learning about and acknowledging that implicit bias is real to training on best practices in dependency cases, we improve our justice system when we are open to developing new skills and learning new information. The monthly Lunchtime Education Program held at Family and Juvenile Court is a great example of this commitment to education for all court professionals. Thank you to the many professionals who give of their time and expertise to make Lunchtime Education presentations and thank you to those who attend. We are building our 2020 program list right now, and we welcome suggested topics!

Clear communications about process and outcome. I am certain that many parties come to court and find our court system slow and confusing. Likely, you've heard a judge or court staff tell a self-represented party that the judge (and court staff) cannot provide legal advice. But we can help with procedure. We work hard to make the process understandable. From a recently re-designed website to numerous informational handouts, to family-law case orientation by court staff, we strive to help litigants (especially self-represented parties) navigate the court process.

In the courtroom, whenever possible I explain the process that will be used at the specific calendar or proceeding. When I announce a decision, I first explain how I deliberated and then explain the decision I reached. I want every party who comes to court – whether they win or lose – to hear the process and the outcome in as clear and understandable terms as possible.

(Continued on page 6)



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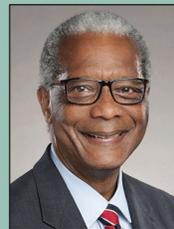
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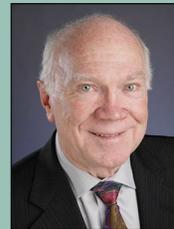
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To schedule a case in the location most convenient for you, call 206.622.5267.



## YOUNG LAWYER SPOTLIGHT

BY INGRID ZERPA, YL CHAIR

# Adison Richard, WSBA#54057

(206) 707-0991 Adison.richards@nwjustice.org



- \* **Areas you practice:** Family Law, U-Visa Applications, and Consumer Debt primarily as a Victims of Crime Attorney at Northwest Justice Project.
- \* **I became a lawyer because:** Of the access gap those with low and middle incomes face in finding legal help.
- \* **The future of the practice of law is:** Finding a way to make people feel they have a voice and can influence the legal system as it is vital for the ongoing health of our republican democracy.
- \* **One of the greatest challenges in law today is:** Breaking down barriers between lawyers and the law, and people with legal needs.
- \* **The hardest part of being a young lawyer is:** Drinking water from a fire hose. There is so much to learn at once.
- \* **If I were not practicing law:** I would be coaching cross country and teaching history.

- \* **If I could change one thing about the law, it would be:** A right to legal advice or requiring pro-bono hours.
- \* **This is the best advice I have been given:** "Fight for every point." - my high school AP Calculus teacher.
- \* **Trait I admire in other attorneys:** Attention to detail
- \* **I would give this advice to a first-year law student:** Keep moving, this is a grind, find people who will lift you up.
- \* **Someone whose opinion matters to me:** Besides wife, family, and coworkers, my high school cross country coach who is still a mentor.
- \* **People living or from the past I would like to invite to a dinner party and why:** Abraham Lincoln to hear his stories and analogies.
- \* **I am most happy when:** I'm with my wife.
- \* **I am most proud of this:** Working alongside the people I do at Northwest Justice Project.
- \* **My favorite vacation place:** Glacier National Park
- \* **Best stress reliever:** Bike riding or running.
- \* **A book I would recommend reading:** "Long Walk to Freedom" by Nelson Mandela.
- \* **What keeps me awake at night:** Client safety.
- \* **Technology is:** Great until it's not.
- \* **Currently playing on my iPod/CD player/record player:** "Gonna Fly Now" by Bill Conti, Rocky Soundtrack.
- \* **If I could live anywhere:** Bavaria
- \* **I can't live without:** Hope
- \* **This is the hardest part of my job:** Breaking down legal realities for a Survivor of sexual assault.
- \* **This is the best part of my job:** Seeing someone get the protection they need after coming forward.
- \* **I would like to add this:** This is a great community and I look forward to developing and continuing to develop relationships with the legal community here in Thurston County.
- \* **Brief synopsis of you, your personal life, your work life, and any special awards or activities:** I grew up in and now live in Gig Harbor area, I went to Villanova Law in Philadelphia, and I have been a lifelong Philadelphia sports fan.

If you would like to be featured in the Young Lawyer Spotlight or know someone you would like your fellow lawyers to get to know, email Ingrid at [Ingridzer@gmail.com](mailto:Ingridzer@gmail.com).



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(Continued from page 2)

View from the Bench by Judge Mary Sue Wilson

The values discussed above are important in all court settings, but especially important when cases involve participants unfamiliar with our justice system, like self-represented parties. I have had the privilege of serving at Family and Juvenile Court for the last 18 months. Here, we encounter many self-represented parties. On a daily basis, I witness these shared values in the work and in the words of the many professionals at our court. Thank you for your efforts at building the public's confidence in our justice system, one conversation and one gesture at a time!



### **United Way Day of Caring on September 27, 2019**

A team of TCBA members will participate in this year's 27th annual United Way Day of Caring on Friday, September 27, 2019, the single largest day of volunteerism in Thurston County.

You can volunteer in the morning, afternoon, or all day, whatever works for your schedule.

If you would like to volunteer, please email Heather at [tcba.info@gmail.com](mailto:tcba.info@gmail.com) by September 25, 2019.

### **Swearing-in Ceremony**

There will be a Swearing-in Ceremony on

October 3, 2019

at 4:00 p.m. at

Thurston County Superior Court

A post ceremony celebration to follow at Well 80 Brewhouse (back room) at 5:00 p.m. Appetizers will be provided by the TCBA's Young Lawyer section with the help from sponsors.

Many organizations have been interested in contributing time and funds to host these new young lawyers. Please let Ingrid Zerpa know at [Ingridzer@gmail.com](mailto:Ingridzer@gmail.com) if your group is interested in partnering with the Young Lawyer division.

### **Half Day TCBA Diversity CLE on September 10, 2019**

The Thurston County Bar Association is making a commitment to diversity. In doing so, we are offering a half-day CLE on the topics of diversity, white fragility, implicit bias, etc. Increase your awareness and familiarity with these topics and practice the skills needed to improve your work styles, behavior, communications and relationships.

Please mark your calendars now and join us in this commitment on Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup> 2019 from 11:30am – 4:30pm at the Hotel RL.

Registration information will be emailed to members and posted on the TCBA website in August.

The price will be \$65 for members and \$115 for non-members.

2.5 Ethics, 1.5 Professional Development, and .25 Law & Legal credits have been approved by the WSBA.

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## News from the Washington State Law Library

### Greeting and Farewell

The State Law Library has undergone some recent staff changes, so you may notice a new face during your next visit. Jody Perkins was hired in June to serve as a part-time legal reference librarian. Jody arrived in Washington from Mississippi, where he worked in academic and public libraries. We also said farewell to a member of the reference staff this summer. After five years on our team, Elly Krumwiede left the Temple of Justice to join the public library field as an adult services librarian. During her tenure, Elly served as the library liaison to the Minority and Justice Commission and as our website administrator, including creating and updating the library's blog.

### New to the Collection

The law library recently added over 60 new titles to our catalog, including several that explore social and criminal justice issues, as well as current events and legal reference. You can request any of these titles by email ([library.requests@courts.wa.gov](mailto:library.requests@courts.wa.gov)) or place a hold over the phone at 360.357.2136. Here is a look at a few of the latest additions to the collection:

*Rethinking incarceration: advocating for justice that restores* / Dominique DuBois Gilliard

*Gone but not forgotten: the untold stories of jail deaths in Washington* / Columbia Legal Services

*Report on the investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election* / Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller, III

*An associate's first year: a guide to thriving at a law firm* / edited by Jennifer L. Bluestein

*Being heard: presentation skills for attorneys* / Faith Pincus

*The new Wigmore: a treatise on evidence: selected rules of limited admissibility: regulation of evidence to promote extrinsic policies and values* / David P. Leonard, Richard D. Friedman

We are still shifting of portions of our collection to the Main Reading Room, so some of your favorite titles may have a new location code in the catalog. Current editions of *AmJur* and *CJS* are the latest volumes to make the move.

### New on HeinOnline

The legal database, HeinOnline, has a new collection, "Democracy in America." According to Hein, "Democracy" showcases Alexis de Tocqueville's classic work of the same name, along with over 1,000 annotations and references. They also added ten new journals, including *Atlantic Law Journal*, *Florida Law Review Forum* and *Trends in State Courts*. The law library provides public access to HeinOnline, and can also email you documents from the database.

### Upcoming Holiday Closures

WSLL will be closed on the following holidays:

Monday, Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> – Labor Day

Monday, Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> – Veterans Day

Thursday and Friday, Nov. 28-29<sup>th</sup> - Thanksgiving

Contributed by Washington State Law Library reference staff.

## ADVERTISING IN THE LEGAL BRIEF

If you would like to advertise in the LEGAL BRIEF, please contact  
Heather Ligtenberg at [tcba.info@gmail.com](mailto:tcba.info@gmail.com)

- The cost for advertising is \$240 for a full page, \$120 for 1/2 page, \$55 for 1/4 page and \$27.50 for 1/8 page.
- All advertisements are subject to approval of the Legal Brief's Editorial Board.
- The LEGAL BRIEF is published bi-monthly (January, March, May, September and November).
- Visit [thurstoncountybar.com](http://thurstoncountybar.com) for more information on specs and to view past editions of the Legal Brief.



## The Rainier Cup

I need your help. We need to take the Rainier Cup! What is the Rainer Cup you say? It is the magical culmination of all attorneys donating to the Campaign for Equal Justice. Last year the campaign raised \$1.74 million dollars. This money was used to help our neighbors, friends and relatives with civil justice issues. We know that our community thrives when everyone is safe, housed, and economically secure. But unfortunately, civil justice problems stand in the way of those needs for many of our neighbors in Thurston County.

That's where you and the Rainer cup come in. The Rainer Cup is the manifestation of the combined efforts of a group of attorneys to hold a loft the holy grail of the Campaign for Equal Justice. It's a designation of how many attorneys in a single county contributed to the campaign. Last year 16% of all Attorneys in Thurston County donated. This year my comrades we are shooting for 32%! If we can get 32%, we will take the Rainer Cup from Skagit County and hold it a loft in our hands!

Why do this? Problems like child custody, family safety, medical debt, eviction, and other civil challenges are far too common in our community. Nearly three-quarters of low-income people in Washington face at least one legal issue each year – and the average family in poverty faces more than nine. This is largely because our civil court system is a complex maze that most people must navigate on their own. Only 24% of Washingtonians who need civil legal aid can access it.

Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services is our local civil legal aid program, serving more than 1,500 clients per year. The small staff leverages the generosity of the community to provide much-needed legal aid and representation, including housing casework and community clinics in Grays Harbor, Shelton, and beyond. In 2018, Thurston County attorneys dedicated more than 3,300 pro bono hours to the program.

I call upon you to continue building support for this critical legal aid program. YOU can help us at the upcoming **Olympia Beer & Justice event on October 2 at the Washington Center for the Performing Arts**. Hosted by the Campaign for Equal Justice, our state's coordinated annual fund drive for civil legal aid. Justice Debra Stephens will be our featured speaker and we are also adding karaoke this year. So, come by ready to enjoy drinks and snacks and sing a song. And there's a twist: depending on how much you donate, I (will regret this) sing any song you want during karaoke!

We know legal aid is the way to end our civil justice crisis, and there is a growing commitment in the legal community, here in Thurston County and around the state, to devote the time and money necessary to provide equal justice for all, but we are far from closing the justice gap.

Owada Law - Church Rietzke Johnson - Puget Law Group – Connelly Tacon & Meserve-Law Lyman, Daniel, Kamerrer & Bogdanovich, and Rogers Kee Card & Strophy -

have already committed to joining us for the event. We're grateful for all of you who support the Campaign for Equal Justice and the many dedicated attorneys who donate their time to fill the gaps in our justice system. Please join us on October 2<sup>nd</sup> to help families in need in Thurston County and across our state. Learn more about our movement for justice at [www.legalfoundation.org](http://www.legalfoundation.org).

Sincerely,

Larry Jefferson  
Campaign for Equal Justice Board Member  
Past-President Thurston County Bar

### TCBA is on Facebook!!

Join the **private** TCBA group at the link below where you will see information about the TCBA events and CLEs:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/810480342493440/>

You can also "like" the TCBA **public** page at the link below, but we will only be posting limited events open to non-members on the public page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/thurstoncountybar/>

### Are you receiving emails from the TCBA?

If not, please check your spam folder to see if the TCBA emails are going directly there and then ask your IT Staff to unblock the two TCBA emails addresses:

[tcba.info@gmail.com](mailto:tcba.info@gmail.com) and  
[info@thurstoncountybar.com](mailto:info@thurstoncountybar.com)

## TCBA & Other Upcoming Events

**Half Day Diversity CLE:** Tuesday, September 10, 2019 from 11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at Hotel RL. See more information on page 6.

**TCBA Member Luncheon and CLE in September:** The next TCBA Member Luncheon and CLE will be on Friday, September 20, 2019 at 11:30 a.m. at Hotel RL. Topic: A Whirlwind Overview of Indian Country presented by the Honorable Thor A. Hoyte.

**October 2019:** A Half Day Trial Part IV CLE will be held in October. More information will be emailed soon.

**Swearing-in Ceremony:** The Swearing-in Ceremony is on October 3, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. at Thurston County Superior Court. Happy Hour afterwards at Well 80 Brewhouse (back room).

**TCBA Members Luncheon and CLE in October:** The October Member Luncheon and CLE will be on Friday, October 18, 2019 at 11:30 a.m. at Hotel RL. Topic: TBA

**November 2019 Issue of the Legal Brief:** The deadline to submit articles and advertisements for the November 2019 Legal Brief is October 22, 2019. Please email them to Heather Ligtenberg at [tcba.info@gmail.com](mailto:tcba.info@gmail.com).

**Save the Date:** The Annual TCBA Holiday Lunch will be on Friday, December 13, 2019 at 12:00 p.m. at the Olympia Golf & Country Club. More information to come.

Please refer to the "News & Events" section of our website for a full list of upcoming events:  
[www.thurstoncountybar.com](http://www.thurstoncountybar.com)

## Section/Committee Announcements...

### Criminal Law Section

The Criminal Law Section will meet on September 26th at 12:00 p.m. at Thurston County Superior Court.

Larry Jefferson and Wayne Graham are the Co-chairs of this section.

If you have any questions please contact Larry at [Larry.Jefferson@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:Larry.Jefferson@co.thurston.wa.us) or Wayne at [grahamw@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:grahamw@co.thurston.wa.us).

The section webpage is:  
<https://thurstoncountybar.com/sections/criminal-law-section/>

### Real Estate, Land Use and Environmental Law Section

Stay tuned for the date of the next section meeting. Heather Burgess is the Chair of this section.

If you have any questions please contact Heather at [hburgess@phillipsburgesslaw.com](mailto:hburgess@phillipsburgesslaw.com).

The section webpage is:  
<https://thurstoncountybar.com/land-use-section/>

### Family Law Section

The Family Law Section meets at 12:10 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Family and Juvenile Justice Center.

Meredith Gerhart is the Chair of this section.

If you have any questions please contact Meredith at (360) 350-6505 or [Meredith@gerhartlegal.com](mailto:Meredith@gerhartlegal.com)

The section webpage is:  
<https://thurstoncountybar.com/sections/family-law-section/>

### Young Lawyer Section

The Young Lawyer Section holds regular monthly meetings the first Wednesday of every month.

Ingrid Zerpa is the Chair of this section. Her email address is [Ingridzer@gmail.com](mailto:Ingridzer@gmail.com).

The section webpage is:  
<http://thurstoncountybar.com/sections/young-lawyer-section/>

## ***Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services***

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Please join us for the following CLEs throughout October! For locations and more information, please **RSVP** to Bonnie Aslagson ([attorney@tcvls.org](mailto:attorney@tcvls.org)) and specify which events you'll attend.

### **Competency in Working with Transgender and Gender Diverse People**

Presented in Partnership with  
Washington Women Lawyers Capitol Chapter,  
Government Lawyers Bar, and  
the Thurston County Bar Association  
Monday, October 7th, 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.  
Presented by: Dusty LaMay  
(Equal Justice Fellow: Trans Advocacy in Rural Places)

### **First Steps with Family Law Clients & View from the Bench: Preparing Motions and Declarations**

Monday, October 21st, 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.  
(light meal starting at 5:00 p.m.)  
Presented by: Christina Meserve and Chuck Szurszewski  
(Connolly Tacon & Meserve) and  
Honorable Indu Thomas  
(Thurston County Superior Court Commissioner)

### **Unlawful Detainer 101 2019 Landlord/Tenant Law Legislative Update & Overview of the Mobile Home Landlord Tenant Act**

Saturday, October 12th, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
(coffee and light breakfast starting at 8:30 a.m.)  
Presented by: Honorable Pat Morgan  
(Retired Mason County Court Commissioner),  
Kim Thornton (Attorney) and  
Carrie Graf (Northwest Justice Project)

### **Beyond Legal Advice: Community Services & Resources for Pro Se Litigants**

Wednesday, October 23rd, 5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m.  
(light meal starting at 5:00 p.m.)  
Presented by: Jody Suhrbier  
(Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County),  
Alisa Everson (Thurston County Family Court Facilitators),  
and Shelly Willis (Family Education and Support Services)

### **Implicit Bias, Traumatic Brain Injury & Trauma Informed Interviewing, and Best Practices for Advising/Representing Individuals with Mental Health Challenges**

Saturday, October 19th, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
(coffee and light breakfast starting at 8:30 a.m.)  
Presented by: Honorable Jonathon Lack  
(King County Superior Court Commissioner),  
Jason Quackenbush (Northwest Justice Project, and  
Jenna Norden & John Hansen  
(Thurston County Public Defense)

### **Ethics of Pro Bono Advice and Representation**

Wednesday, October 30th, 5:30 p.m.-6:45 p.m.  
(light meal starting at 5:00 p.m.)  
Presented by: Jeanne Marie Clavere  
(WSBA Professional Responsibility Counsel)

TCVLS is able to offer FREE CLEs thanks  
to a generous grant from the  
Community Foundation of South Puget Sound.



THE ALLIANCE  
for Equal Justice  
MEMBER

## “In Re: Chris Coker”

By Chris Coker

1. Name and year admitted to Bar: Christopher John Coker, 1998
2. Areas you practice in: Employment law, municipal law, general civil/business litigation, some criminal.
3. I became a lawyer because . . . I wanted to pursue a graduate degree that would give me options, and I wanted to do something that allowed me to help people.
4. The hardest part of being a lawyer is . . . Dealing with people who can't seem to keep themselves out of problems over and over and over again. I don't like seeing people fail or get themselves into situations that, if they simply had taken a step back and thought for a second, could have been avoided. I really like fixing problems but get discouraged by some of the problems people create for themselves.
5. I would give this advice to a first-year law student: While it is cool to call yourself a “litigator”, under most circumstances a trial constitutes a failure of the lawyers to assist the parties in reaching a mutually acceptable resolution. Don't take a case just because a client has money or you might be entitled to ask for attorney's fees. If you think your client is a jerk, you are probably right. Life is too short to represent jerks.
6. Traits I admire in other attorneys: Common sense. Ability to communicate. Integrity. Common sense.
7. If I were not practicing law, I would be . . . Probably a high school biology teacher and football coach.
8. What is the first thing you will do when you retire? Find out from my wife Penny what she thinks we should do. Then probably do what she wants to do. Come fall I would hunt more and try to salmon fish more often.
9. If you could time travel, would you go to the past or the future? Why? I would go to the past. I would like to have seen the US when Lewis & Clark were doing their exploring. The nature and wildlife would have been amazing.
10. What words of wisdom would you pass on to your childhood self? Don't consider your first high school girlfriend a “serious” relationship. Learn to fix minor stuff on cars. That's about it.
11. What words of wisdom would you give to a young lawyer new to the profession? Be prepared for court hearings and don't be late. Always be completely honest with clients about costs and risks. See answer to #5 above.

Brief synopsis of you, your personal life, your work life, and any special awards or activities.

I've been in charge of this article for the Bar News for about two years now. It's been great, but I am retiring from the position and hope another member will step up and take over. I served on the TCBA Board for five years and want to encourage every member of the Thurston County Bar to strongly consider serving on the Board at some time during your career.

I have 3 solid and respectable kids and a great wife. I work with great lawyers and staff at my office, I enjoy coming to work and enjoy being a lawyer in Thurston County. Things are good.

Contact information (work phone and email).

*Christopher John Coker*

Attorney at Law

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Olympia WA 98507-7846

[cjcoker@ytlaw.com](mailto:cjcoker@ytlaw.com)

360.357.7791 Ext. 107

360.754.9268 (fax)

### TCBA Night at the Tacoma Rainiers Game



TCBA members and their families had a great evening of baseball from the Bullpen Lounge at the Tacoma Rainiers game at Cheney Stadium on August 3, 2019!

The attendees enjoyed all you can eat barbecue hamburgers and hotdogs along with unlimited soda and water. Beer and wine were available for the adults.



Mike DeWitt and his son's, Andrew and Benjamin enjoyed the event! Congratulations to Andrew for winning the grand prize in the raffle; 4 tickets to the Tacoma Rainiers Summit Club next season!



Congratulations to Ryan Babbit (above) for winning the Tacoma Rainiers baseball hat in the raffle!



It was a great opportunity to connect with friends and colleagues and their family members in a fun And relaxed environment. Thank you to the TCBA members who attended this event!



# News Release

## County Commissioners

John Hutchings - District One  
Gary Edwards - District Two  
Tye Menser - District Three

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, June 20, 2019

CONTACT: Jennifer Creighton, District Court Administrator, (360) 786-5225 or [jennifer.creighton@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:jennifer.creighton@co.thurston.wa.us)

### Presiding Judge of District Court Recipient of 2019 Outstanding Judge Award

OLYMPIA – Thurston County is proud to announce that District Court Judge Brett Buckley is the recipient of the 2019 Washington State Bar Association’s (WSBA) Outstanding Judge Award! The award is part of the WSBA ‘Acknowledging Professional Excellence’ (APEX) awards. The APEX awards honor legal luminaries across the state who champion justice, act with integrity and professionalism, and serve the public and their communities through the rule of law.

“I am proud to contribute to and be a member of an organization that has a laser focus on its mission of ‘Serving Justice through Serving People.’ That mission statement served as an impetus for our procedural justice initiative in which we invited out of state evaluators to observe how judges and staff relate to all community members, with the aim of uncovering any problematic overt or implicit bias issues,” said Buckley. “Willingness to be open to such scrutiny can only serve to increase the trust our community has in their justice system.”

Although the award is titled ‘Outstanding Judge’, Buckley sees the honor as a reflection of the entire court and the work they do everyday to improve the lives of the citizens of Thurston County. “We recently created a program we call our Court in Schools initiative where we schedule actual Small Claims calendars in Thurston County high schools. The aim is to expose students to real time learning in how the judicial branch of our government operates,” said Buckley. “On a related front, the court is also working to create the ability to live stream all its proceedings. The public is better served when the people doing the public’s work do so in the most transparent manner possible.”

Judge Buckley noted this is only the second time this award has gone to a Thurston County judge. “This reflects well on our community that lawyers throughout the state value the creativity and forward thinking of the courts of Thurston County.”

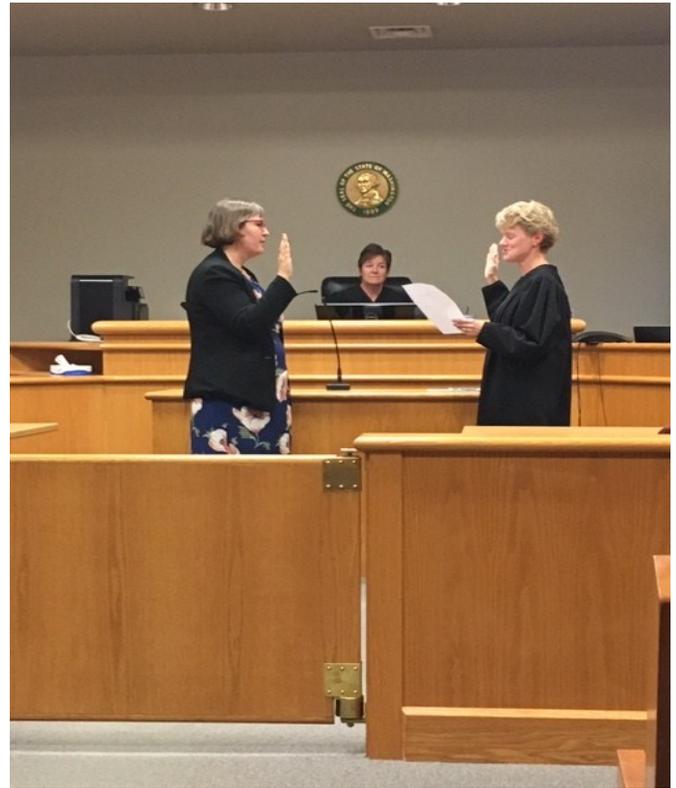
#### **About the WSBA**

The WSBA operates under the delegated authority of the Washington Supreme Court to license the state’s nearly 40,000 lawyers and other legal professionals. As a regulatory agency, the WSBA administers the bar admission process, including the bar exam, provides record-keeping and licensing functions, and administers the professional discipline system. You can learn more about the WSBA at <https://www.wsba.org/about-wsba/who-we-are>

## Congratulations to Thurston County Superior Court Commissioner Rebekah Zinn

By Heidi Raedel Magaro

On August 5, 2019, Commissioner Rebekah Zinn was sworn in to her new position as a full-time Commissioner of Thurston County Superior Court. It was a lovely event; the courtroom was filled and many stood to observe. Judge Mary Sue Wilson did introductions of the other judicial officers in attendance as well as recognizing important dignitaries in the audience. Judge Carol Murphy provided a summary of Commissioner Zinn's qualifications, experience, and legal training. Following that, Commissioner Zinn's children, Dahlia and Orin, and her husband Zachariah were invited up to help her with her robes. Commissioner Zinn then stated a few words from the bench and her children assisted her with her first use of her gavel. The event was followed by a brief reception at the courthouse and then a less formal reception at Amal Joury's home in the South Capitol neighborhood.



### Benefits to Establishing a Link from the TCBA Website to your own Website:

- ♦ The TCBA website is accessible through the major search engines, so potential clients looking for an attorney in Thurston County can easily find you.
- ♦ You can provide potential clients with information about you and your practice in an inexpensive, efficient and professional manner.
- ♦ The website is linked from the WSBA website so attorneys from outside of Thurston County can easily find attorneys here for various cases.
- ♦ It's FREE, courtesy of TCBA as a benefit for being a TCBA member.

If you would like to include your weblink on the TCBA website, please let Heather Ligtenberg know at [tcba.info@gmail.com](mailto:tcba.info@gmail.com)

### Free Constitution Day Program

at Saint Martin's University (SMU)  
September 17th from 7-9 p.m.  
in Harned Hall 110.

The topic will be  
*Free Press and Free Speech under Trump &  
the coming show trial of Julian Assange*

This will be a panel discussion with

Dr. David Price, SMU Professor of Sociology  
and Anthropology,

Vernon ("Bob") Partlow, former investigative reporter  
for Gannet News (including the Olympian and Bellingham  
Herald); contributing writer for Thurston Talk, and

Shawn Newman, attorney and SMU Lecturer/Instructor on  
various law courses, including civil liberties.