



The Bar Letter

Your JOHNSON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION Magazine

MAY 2026



SUMMER CLE PREVIEW

Programs designed to help you learn, grow and lead.

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Celebrating civic education and community engagement.

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Promoting civic education and public understanding of the legal system.

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Johnson County Bar Association

The BarLetter, the official publication of the Johnson County Bar Association, covers legal news and issues of interest to our members. Articles are intended to generate ideas that readers can apply to their own practice. The BarLetter is distributed to over 1,400 attorneys, judges and legal professionals in Johnson County and the surrounding area. The publication of any advertisement or product information is not to be construed as an endorsement of the product or service unless the ad specifically states that there is such an endorsement or approval. The BarLetter is a non-partisan publication intended to inform our members, provide services to our members, and give members an opportunity to contribute to the association. Statements or expressions are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Johnson County Bar Association.

No paid political advertising, nor announcement of candidacy for elected office, shall be placed in The BarLetter. All advertisements shall be placed in The BarLetter at the sole discretion of the Johnson County Bar Association.

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Civic Education is a Cure!

BY DANIELLE ATCHISON

It has been such a fun couple of months! The JCBA hosted a wonderful Bench Bar program in early April. We held several networking opportunities, including Pickleball at Serv, JCDS Clean Up Days throughout the County, and traditional networking happy hours for our sections and in honor of Celebrating our 10th Judicial District Court. Thank you to everyone who attended, participated, and sponsored these events. We are a very proud and busy bar association – thank you for keeping that going.


On top of our regularly scheduled programming, on May 1 we held an inaugural Law Day event at the Johnson County Courthouse with close to 80 in attendance, including middle and high school students, judges, and practitioners. We heard from several Judicial speakers on the importance of the Rule of Law, of our profession, and of Law Day. The event was an opportunity for lawyers to reaffirm their oath to the State and Federal Constitutions and an opportunity for the Bench and Bar to connect with respect and recognition of our profession. It was also a space for middle and high school students in Johnson County to watch us do those things.

With the help of the Federal Bar Association Chapter for Kansas and Western District of Missouri, we were able to invite area students to meet and greet judges and practitioners and to take free civic education books back to their personal libraries.

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I am proud that JCBA is offering more civic education opportunities this year. It is well-documented that civic education is critical to maintaining a healthy democracy. A recent study published by the Pew Research Center found that only 17% of Americans say they fully trust our government. In 1958, when the study began, that number was at 73%. While trust in government is at an all-time low, polarization is at an all-time high with 8/10 U.S. adults saying that voters not only disagree on plans and policies but also cannot agree on basic facts.

I firmly believe the way through these issues is access to civic education. We lawyers are uniquely situated to offer this. One upcoming opportunity is this Summer! The Johnson County Bar Association is rolling out unbiased, history-based civic education programming around the August ballot question on whether merit selection should remain in Kansas for Supreme Court Justices. We will be visiting local community groups, libraries, etc. to share the history of our system and provide education to our community members.

This program, like much of what we do at JCBA, offers a true public service, and I hope you will join us. If you are interested in signing up to present or have an idea for a community organization we should reach out to, please email me or Tana! 





What's New at the JCBA

Over the past several weeks, JCBA has continued working on initiatives aimed at enhancing member engagement, improving accessibility to resources, and strengthening the overall member experience. A few recent updates include:

Member Hub Enhancements

Members can now more easily manage profiles, register for events, access invoices, and customize communication preferences through the online member portal.

Communication & Email Updates

JCBA continues refining communications to help ensure updates, event information, and announcements are timely, relevant, and easier to navigate.

Expanded CLE & Networking Opportunities

Additional CLE programming, networking events, and member engagement opportunities continue to be added throughout the year.

JCBA Job Board

The JCBA Job Board remains active as a resource for employers, firms, organizations, and legal professionals within the local legal community.

Sections & Committee Engagement

Members have increased opportunities to stay connected and involved through sections, committees, and volunteer participation.

Business Partners, Sponsors & Advertisers

JCBA continues strengthening relationships with business partners, sponsors, and advertisers, including both longstanding supporters and new partnerships that help expand member resources, event support, and professional opportunities throughout the association.

Ongoing Member Experience Enhancements

JCBA remains focused on continuing to strengthen member engagement, accessibility, programming, and overall value to the legal community throughout Johnson County.

Building on a Strong Foundation

BY TANA GRIFFITH

It was a pleasure meeting so many of you at the Bench Bar Conference earlier this spring. What a way to step into a new role, jumping in at full speed. Since then, I have had the opportunity to meet many more members through CLEs, networking events, committee meetings, happy hours, and other JCBA programs over the past several weeks.

The success of these events is a direct reflection of the many people who contribute to them. The Bench Bar Committee dedicated significant time and effort behind the scenes, the JCBA Board has provided steady support, and our volunteers continue to help ensure programs run smoothly throughout the year. From educational programming to social events and community outreach, it truly has been a team effort, and I appreciate the work that so many people put into making JCBA successful.

I also want to recognize the sponsors and business partners who continue to support the association and our members. Some of these organizations have partnered with JCBA for many years, while others are newer relationships we are continuing to build. Those partnerships help make many of our programs possible while also creating additional resources, connections, and benefits for our membership. I appreciate the investment these organizations make in the Johnson County legal community and look forward to continuing to strengthen those relationships moving forward.

On a personal note, stepping into the role of Executive Director has been both exciting and energizing. While I have prior experience working with bar associations, this position brings a new perspective and a greater opportunity to serve the legal community in Johnson County. I have approached the role with a focus on listening, learning, and getting to know both the organization and the people who make it strong.




Over the last few months, I have had conversations with attorneys from a wide range of practice areas and experience levels, along with judges, sponsors, law students, and community partners. One thing has become very clear very quickly; people care deeply about this organization and about maintaining a strong legal community in Johnson County.

I have enjoyed seeing the relationships, professionalism and sense of community that exist throughout the association. Whether it is volunteering at events, mentoring younger attorneys, serving on committees, sponsoring programs, or simply attending and staying involved, those contributions matter and are what continue to move the organization forward.

As we continue through the year, I look forward to building on the strong foundation already in place while continuing to support meaningful programming, member engagement, professional development, and opportunities for connection within the legal community.

Your input is always welcome. If there are ways JCBA can better support you, your practice, or your involvement with the association, I encourage you to reach out.

Thank you again for the warm welcome over these first several weeks. I look forward to continuing to work alongside all of you in the years ahead. 



Leadership in Action

BY MARISSA BELL

After more than a decade working in the legal field, I have seen one recurring theme ring true time and time again: leadership can take many forms.

Leadership isn't just heading up a group or organization. It's not just being the "boss." It's not automatic. It isn't something you can teach, necessarily. It's not so much a title, as it is an art form and a practice. We've all had "leaders" in our firms or organizations who didn't really get "it." Leadership is elusive- it's hard to pinpoint or define. But truly great leaders....well, you know them when you see them.

It's the quiet doers who are happy to pitch in or pick up the slack for a co-worker in need. It's those who set an example and tone for the office that others aspire to emulate and embody. It's someone who genuinely wants the best for their group or organization and encourages others to want the same by walking the walk, not just talking the talk. It's those who help others and work alongside them in the trenches without wanting or expecting recognition or anything in return.

Throughout my career, I've been blessed to work with numerous co-workers and attorneys who embody these very traits. I've learned so much from seeing how great leaders lead, and what they do each and every day- the big and the small things- to encourage others to follow in their footsteps. These things can be easy to miss. But if you take the time to look for it, you will see many amazing leaders working in every aspect of our Johnson County Bar. The difference these

leaders make in their organizations, and in this Bar as a whole, cannot be overstated.

When I think of leadership in action, I think of the stellar trustees on the Johnson County Bar Foundation Board that I have had the pleasure of serving with over the last seven years. As busy as they all are with work obligations and their families, they selflessly volunteer their time and talents to give back to the Bar community and those in need in our Johnson County community. The same goes for the leaders who serve on the Johnson County Bar Association Board and those who volunteer their time to help JCBA and JCBF carry out their missions through sponsoring events, CLEs, fundraisers, etc.

As we slow down a bit to enjoy some summer fun- trips to the pool, vacations, etc.- I encourage us all to look around and recognize the quiet doers, the leaders who make our organizations and our Bar community a little bit better day by day, task by task. And I hope we all aspire to do the same. 🏛️



SENIOR PROSECUTOR
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JERRY MERRILL

Firm name: Merrill Law



Photo from the 2026 Johnson County Bar Foundation Legacy Gala

Practice area/specialty/focus? Criminal Defense. I also serve as the Leawood Municipal Court Judge.

Favorite aspect of your job? Colleagues. I'm fortunate to interact daily with attorneys, judges, and courthouse staff across a number of jurisdictions on a daily basis. I feel lucky to have developed friendships with people I also happen to see while working.

Favorite hobbies? Golf - which is embarrassing to admit because my skill level is not remotely commensurate with the numbers of hours I've played. I also enjoy finding ways to spend time with my teenage son that he doesn't immediately consider lame.

A little-known fact that people would be surprised to know about you? I come from a family of ping pong players. Outside of college, I've never lived in a house without a ping pong table, and I will accept all challengers.

What made you want to become a Fellow and then eventually join the Board?

I attended Johnson County Bar Foundation events for years before I knew anything about the organization itself. Initially, I simply enjoyed the events and the sense of community they fostered amongst attorneys and judges.

Several years ago, during the Foundation's Legacy Event — its primary annual fundraiser — one of the highlighted charitable organizations particularly resonated with me. That's when I learned the Foundation provides substantial financial support each year to numerous nonprofit organizations doing meaningful work in our community.

The legal profession does not always enjoy the best public perception, and I am admittedly cynical at times. Being involved with an organization made up of legal professionals that provides real, tangible support to nonprofits doing incredible work in the community genuinely resonated with me. I've enjoyed every year I've served on the Board.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Johnson County Bar
foundation

Fellows make a commitment to financially support the goals and objectives of The Foundation through charitable contributions.

Click this [link](#) to become a fellow today!

CONTINUED

What value/benefit have you gained from your involvement with JCBF over the years?

When I first started practicing, I noticed that many of the older attorneys had a genuine pride in being part of the Johnson County legal community. Over time, I realized that sense of pride comes from more than simply practicing law — it comes from investing in the community and supporting the people and organizations that make it stronger.

My involvement with the Foundation has strengthened my appreciation for the legal community here and has allowed me to build relationships with attorneys and judges outside the normal day-to-day practice of law.

What is your favorite thing about being a Fellow/being on the Board?

The people. The Board is made up of genuinely good, fun, and dedicated people who care about the community and enjoy working together.

Advice for anyone considering becoming a Fellow/wanting to get involved with JCBF?

Come to the events. They are genuinely enjoyable, and you quickly realize the Foundation is doing meaningful work in the community. It's a great way to meet people within the legal profession while also supporting organizations that make a real difference.



Young Lawyers' Section News

BY JORDAN MORTON

The Young Lawyers Section of the Johnson County Bar Association continues to demonstrate that leadership is not a title, it is a practice. Whether in the courtroom, the community, or our own professional circles, young lawyers are uniquely positioned to shape the future of the profession through engagement, collaboration, and a willingness to step forward.


That spirit of leadership was on full display at our recent joint happy hour with the Kansas Bar Association. The event saw an outstanding turnout, bringing together attorneys in a relaxed and collegial setting. Beyond the conversations and connections, the evening served as a reminder that leadership often begins with showing up. Building relationships, exchanging ideas, and fostering a sense of community across organizations is the foundation for growth. The success of the event demonstrates the value of collaboration and the strength of our legal community when we work together.

As we look ahead, the Young Lawyers Section remains committed to providing opportunities for both professional development and connection. On August 20, YLS is hosting a joint CLE with the Senior Section, focused on identifying “red flags” that young attorneys should watch for in their practice. This program will be especially valuable, offering practical insights drawn from years of experience. Our panel will feature representatives from KALAP,

the Office of Disciplinary Administration, and attorneys in different stages of their careers.

This collaboration with the Senior Section reflects another key aspect of leadership: learning from those who have come before us. By engaging with more experienced attorneys, young lawyers gain not only knowledge, but perspective, which is an essential ingredient in sound judgment and effective advocacy.

Leadership also means taking initiative within our own ranks. Whether by attending events, volunteering for committees, or simply reaching out to a colleague, each of us contributes to the culture and direction of the Young Lawyers Section. The momentum we are building is a direct result of members who are willing to invest their time and energy into something larger than themselves. We are so grateful to have a community that pours into the Bar and the next generation of lawyers.

As the year progresses, we encourage all members to stay involved, attend upcoming events, and consider how they can play a role in shaping our section's future. Leadership opportunities are everywhere, they often just require a willingness to step forward. 



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JORDAN@ROTHDAVIES.COM

Young Lawyer Spotlight: Maria Davies



WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A JAG ATTORNEY?

Public service has always driven my career, but joining the military is deeply rooted in my family's heritage. Both sides of my family have a proud history of military service with a legacy stretching back as far as the World War I era. I am the fourth consecutive generation on my father's side to serve, and my maternal side shares a similarly deep heritage. While I advocate for victims/survivors daily as a prosecutor in Johnson County, I felt a calling to do more. I joined the Kansas Army National Guard JAG Corps to merge my legal expertise with my family's tradition, using my law degree to support our Soldiers and the broader military mission.

WHAT WAS YOUR CAREER PATH LEADING UP TO JOINING THE JAG CORPS?

Before commissioning, I built a strong foundation in litigation and appellate practice. As a prosecutor, I maintain a heavy daily courtroom docket that includes general felony, domestic violence, sex crimes, and high-level criminal cases. This role has provided extensive trial experience and the privilege of arguing before the Kansas Court of Appeals and the Kansas Supreme Court. Transitioning to the JAG Corps was a natural progression—taking the advocacy and leadership skills developed in the civilian courtroom and applying them to the military context.

WHAT KIND OF TRAINING DID YOU UNDERGO WHEN YOU FIRST JOINED?

Training is conducted in phases. I completed the Direct Commission Course (DCC) at Fort Benning, Georgia, in early 2026, focusing on Soldier skills and leadership. As of May 2026, I am finishing the Judge Advocate Officer Basic Course (JAOBC) at the Army's graduate-level law school in Virginia. DCC was rigorous. During our Situational Training Exercise (STX), I served as the Student Company Commander for a portion of the exercise. In that leadership role, I was responsible for my peers as we operated on minimal sleep, establishing tactical assembly areas multiple times a night, and reacting to simulated ambushes while practicing with our weapons and gas masks. The course culminated in a six-mile ruck march. I pushed through significant physical discomfort to finish alongside my peers. After completing the mission and seeking a medical evaluation, I discovered I had finished the march on a broken pelvic bone. It taught me profound lessons about resilience and commitment to the team, and I was honored to receive a cadre-selected award for growth and resilience.

WHAT SKILLS ARE MOST CRITICAL FOR SUCCESS AS A JAG ATTORNEY?

Adaptability and perspective are paramount. Fortunately, the fast-paced conditions of a prosecutor's office translated well to the JAG Corps. The military has also sharpened my perspective. At JAOBC, we undergo advanced training in sex crimes and domestic violence law through a trauma-informed lens, which overlaps heavily with my civilian practice. Furthermore, acting as Defense Counsel in a mock trial during training was incredibly beneficial; viewing the law from that vantage point inherently makes me a more well-rounded, objective advocate when I return to the civilian courtroom.

HOW DO YOU MANAGE THE BALANCE BETWEEN MILITARY OBLIGATIONS AND YOUR CIVILIAN LEGAL DUTIES?

Balancing an ADA docket with National Guard service requires strict time management, but it is entirely manageable with a supportive civilian employer. Ultimately, the two roles are symbiotic: Army leadership and resilience training make me a stronger civilian prosecutor, while my daily courtroom experience brings practical litigation skills directly to my military duties.

WHAT FINAL ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO LAW STUDENTS OR ATTORNEYS CONSIDERING JOINING THE JAG CORPS?


I highly encourage it. The military offers young attorneys immediate leadership opportunities and collaborative training environments that are difficult to find in the civilian sector. You will be challenged physically and mentally, but you will grow tremendously as both a legal practitioner and a leader. Most importantly, you gain the unique privilege of serving our service members.

2026 YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION SPONSOR



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6-HOUR CLE
JUNE 5, 2026
including ethics hours

 Friday,
June 5, 2026 |  8:30 AM –
3:30 PM |  Matt Ross
Community Center

8101 Martyr Street, Overland Park, KS

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM

Check In & Morning Networking

Coffee, light refreshments, and an opportunity to connect with fellow attorneys and legal professionals before the program begins.

9:00 AM – 9:50 AM

Piercing the Trust: Creditor Access to Asset Protection Trusts

Chris Dove

Asset protection trusts, including domestic asset protection trusts (DAPTs), are often viewed as strong barriers shielding a debtor's assets. This program examines legal vulnerabilities that may allow creditors and judgment holders to reach trust assets, including fraudulent transfer issues, creditor remedies, litigation strategies, and practical considerations in asset recovery matters.

10:00 AM – 10:50 AM

Hot Topics in Ethics

Ashlyn Yarnell

Recent formal opinions, ethical decisions, and proposed revisions to the Model Rules of Professional Conduct at both the national and local levels, including emerging ethical trends, unresolved issues, and practical guidance attorneys can apply in daily practice.

11:00 AM – 11:50 AM

Judicial Independence in Kansas

Hon. Norbert Marek

The history and development of judicial independence in Kansas, including the Missouri Plan, judicial selection methods, retention and election processes, and notable cases, reforms, and figures that have shaped the Kansas judiciary over time. The program also examines the historical role judicial independence has played in maintaining a fair and effective legal system.

REGISTER NOW!

We've Got You Covered CLE

June 5, 2026

11:50 AM – 12:30 PM

Lunch Break

Lunch will be provided for full day attendees. Participants are encouraged to use this time to network with fellow attorneys, speakers, sponsors, and members of the local legal community.

12:30 PM – 1:20 PM

The Ethics of Legal Writing in the AI Age

Prof. Steve Leben

The ethical and practical use of generative AI in legal research, drafting, and client work, including attorney responsibilities under the Kansas Rules of Professional Conduct related to competence, confidentiality, candor to the tribunal, and supervision. The program also examines ABA guidance, verification obligations for AI generated work product, and practical considerations when using AI tools in legal practice.

1:30 PM – 2:20 PM

Tenant Claims and Defenses Under the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act

Nick Blessing

Claims tenants may assert under the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, defenses available in eviction proceedings, recent Kansas case law involving eviction notice requirements, and practical considerations for attorneys representing tenants in housing disputes.



**SCAN OR REGISTER
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2:30 PM – 3:20 PM

Trial Tech Made Simple: Tools Every Lawyer Can Use

Will Hurst

The effective use of technology in trial presentations, including visual aids, digital evidence, timelines, graphics, videos, animations, and presentation structure to improve juror understanding and engagement. The program also examines practical courtroom considerations involving exhibits, recordings, evidentiary issues, and maintaining a complete trial record. Additional discussion focuses on adapting presentations to meet the expectations of modern jurors shaped by digital media and technology.

Register for the full day or half day program options.

Approved for CLE credit in both Kansas and Missouri for a total of 6.0 hours, including 2.0 hours of Ethics and Professionalism.

Attendance is limited and advance registration is required.





Law Day 2026 Brings Legal Community Together for Civic Celebration

The Johnson County legal community gathered on May 1 at the Johnson County District Courthouse to celebrate Law Day 2026 with a morning focused on civic education, the rule of law, and professional responsibility. The event was hosted through a collaboration between the Johnson County Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association, and the Johnson County District Court.

Attorneys, judges, law students, and local students attended the program, which emphasized the importance of public trust in the legal system and civic understanding within the community.

The program included remarks from members of both the state and federal bench, along with a reaffirmation of the attorney oath. Danielle Atchison provided opening remarks on behalf of the JCBA. Retired Kansas Supreme Court Chief Justice Lawton Nuss participated in the ceremony, while Jennifer H. Wieland provided remarks representing the federal judiciary. Judge Erica Schoenig helped lead the program and played an important role throughout the event.

A proclamation recognizing the importance of the rule of law, signed on behalf of the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners, was also recognized as part of the event.

Approximately 80 attendees participated, including nearly 50 students from local schools. Students received civics themed books through support from the Federal Bar Association, helping encourage civic engagement and legal education among younger generations.

The JCBA appreciates the judges, volunteers, community partners, and attendees who helped make the event possible and continue supporting public understanding of the legal system and the rule of law.



Chief Justice
Nuss (Ret.)



Danielle
Atchison



Hon. Erica
Schoenig



Jennifer Wieland
U.S. Magistrate
Judge



JUDICIAL EVALUATIONS MATTER



**BY ROBYN BUTLER
PARTNER, WALLACE SAUNDERS**

Every other year, the Johnson County Bar Association conducts judicial evaluations for judges serving in the 10th Judicial District. These evaluations are one of the most important services the bar provides both to the legal community and to the public.

The process is designed to gather meaningful feedback from the attorneys who regularly appear before our district court judges. Attorneys are asked to evaluate only the judges they have personally appeared before, and all responses remain anonymous. The evaluations are then compiled into reports to help provide a broader picture of judicial performance, professionalism, temperament, preparedness, and courtroom management.


Because judges are limited in the way they publicly campaign or advocate for themselves, voters often have limited information available when judges appear on retention ballots. Judicial evaluations help provide additional insight grounded in actual courtroom experience and professional interaction.

The attorneys who practice before these judges are in one of the best positions to provide informed feedback about the day to day operation of the courts and the judiciary. Judicial evaluations help provide information grounded in actual courtroom experience rather than assumptions or limited public exposure.

The goal of the evaluation process is to provide fair, thoughtful, and comprehensive feedback that can be valuable both to the public and to the bench itself. The process also serves as an important opportunity for constructive feedback and continued improvement within the judicial system.

This year, the JCBA again encourages all attorneys who appear before judges in the 10th Judicial District to participate in the evaluation process. Broad participation is critical. The more responses received from attorneys across different practice areas, courtrooms, and experiences, the more accurate and meaningful the evaluation data becomes.

Strong participation helps ensure the feedback reflects the experiences of the legal community as a whole rather than only a small segment of practitioners. Whether your practice involves civil litigation, criminal matters, domestic cases, probate, juvenile, or municipal work, your perspective matters.

The judicial evaluations will be opening soon, and attorneys will receive additional information regarding participation instructions and submission deadlines. JCBA encourages attorneys to complete their evaluations before the survey closes so the reports can reflect the broadest and most comprehensive feedback possible from the Johnson County legal community. 



UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 4
JCBA & KCMBA
Solo/Small Firm
Networking Event

This is a great opportunity to connect with colleagues from both organizations in a relaxed setting, expand your network, and build relationships across the Kansas City legal community.

Whether you are a solo practitioner or part of a small firm, come grab a drink, meet new faces, and catch up with familiar ones.

JUNE 5
We've Got You Covered
6 Hours CLE

Need CLE hours? We've got you covered. Join us for a full day of programming designed to help you meet your annual requirements while gaining practical, relevant insights you can use in your practice.

This six-hour CLE will take place Friday, June 5, 2026, from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the Matt Ross Center in Overland Park.

JUNE 9
Young Lawyers
Section Networking
& Happy Hour

The Young Lawyers Section invites members to join us for an evening of networking and conversation at K-Macho's Mexican Grill and Cantina in Olathe.

Whether you are new to the profession, looking to expand your network, or simply hoping to reconnect with colleagues outside the office, this event offers a relaxed opportunity to spend time with members of the Johnson County legal community in a casual setting.

JUNE 11
Chill with the
Civil Bench

An informal opportunity to connect with members of the civil bench. Whether you are newer to practice or a seasoned attorney, this is a chance to build relationships and ask questions. Bring your own lunch if you'd like. Come as you are, drop in, and stay as long as your schedule allows.





UPCOMING EVENTS

➤ JUNE 12

KALAP Volunteer Training CLE

This training provides practical tools to help attorneys and legal professionals. Whether you are interested in volunteering or simply want to better understand how to support colleagues, this session offers valuable, real world insight.

➤ JUNE 17

Juvenile Law Update & Resource Navigator CLE

Join the Johnson County Bar Association for a morning CLE program focused on current juvenile law developments and practical tools for connecting clients and families with local resources.

➤ JUNE 18

World Cup Social



Join the Johnson County Bar Association and the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association for a joint summer happy hour during the World Cup in Kansas City.

➤ JULY 21

All Bar Networking and Happy Hour at Transport Brewery

Join the Johnson County Bar Association for an all bar networking happy hour at Transport Brewery. This is a relaxed opportunity to connect with colleagues across the legal community.

Thank you to Goza & Honnold Trial Lawyers for sponsoring this event.





UPCOMING EVENTS

➤ AUGUST 6

Kansas Legal Services Expungement Clinic

Kansas Legal Services will host an Expungement Clinic at the Johnson County Courthouse to assist eligible individuals with reviewing options for clearing qualifying criminal records.

Volunteer attorneys and legal professionals may be available to help participants determine whether they may qualify for expungement relief.

➤ AUGUST 20

Early Practice Red Flags and Professional Risks CLE

This practical CLE will focus on recognizing professional and ethical red flags when seasoned attorneys, supervisors, or colleagues appear to be struggling, cutting corners, failing to follow professional guidelines, or creating potential risk for themselves, clients, or others in the office.

➤ SEPTEMBER 2

Bar Breakfast Featuring Mike Kelly



Join the Johnson County Bar Association for the September Bar Breakfast featuring Mike Kelly of the Johnson County Commission. This monthly breakfast brings together members of the legal community for timely updates, meaningful conversation, and an opportunity to connect with colleagues.

➤ OCTOBER 21

Bar Association Turkey Shoot

Join the Johnson County Bar Association for the Turkey Shoot at Powder Creek Shooting Park.

This annual event is a great opportunity to enjoy an afternoon outdoors, connect with colleagues, and take part in a long-standing bar association tradition.

Thank you to our sponsor Foulston Attorneys at Law.



**RSVP
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ICYMI: A LOOK BACK AT THE LAST FEW MONTHS!



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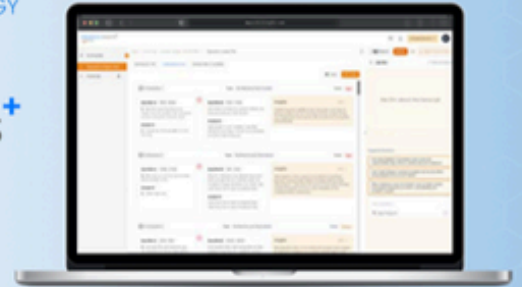


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AUTHORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

If you are interested in writing for the BarLetter and having your article published, please contact Tana Griffith, Executive Director at: tgriffith@jocobar.org

It is a great way to introduce yourself to our members, increase your visibility and connect with potential clients and colleagues.



JOHNSON COUNTY BAR
association

Follow your Bar Association on Social Media

Love the BarLetter? Stay Connected Online!

If you enjoy flipping through BarLetter and catching up on photos and highlights from our many events, don't forget—you can stay connected with us all week long on social media! We're active on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Threads, sharing updates, behind-the-scenes moments,

and upcoming opportunities to get involved. Follow us to keep the conversation going—and if something catches your eye, don't hesitate to "like," comment, or share. Your engagement helps us celebrate our community and grow it even stronger!





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DOCKET REASSIGNMENTS EFFECTIVE JUNE 1, 2026

The Johnson County District Court has announced several upcoming docket reassignments that will take effect Monday, June 1, 2026. These changes impact civil, criminal, and domestic divisions and will affect case assignments throughout the court.

Among the updates, Judge Rhonda Mason (Division 4) will transition to a combined civil and criminal docket, assuming civil cases previously assigned to Judge Catherine Triplett (Division 21) while also beginning to receive criminal cases from first appearances. Judge Joann Woltman (Division 11) will assume Division 4's prior civil docket and has recently relocated to Courtroom 6E. Judge Triplett will take over the civil docket formerly assigned to retired Judge Hauber (Division 7). Division 7 will transition to handling domestic and family law matters previously assigned to Judge Woltman, with Senior Judge coverage in place pending the appointment of a new district court judge.

Attorneys and court users are encouraged to verify judicial assignments prior to hearings or filings, as some divisions may retain a limited number of currently assigned cases. The court anticipates reassignment updates will begin appearing in the case management system beginning the evening of May 28 and be completed by May 31.

For the most current case assignment information, visit the Kansas District Court public case search website at casesearch.kscourts.gov.

SUPREME COURT NEWS

KANSAS SUPREME COURT NOMINEES ANNOUNCED

The Kansas Supreme Court Nominating Commission has selected three nominees to send to Governor Laura Kelly for consideration in filling the Kansas Supreme Court vacancy created by the retirement of Justice Marla Luckert earlier this year.

The three nominees are:

Carl Folsom of Lawrence, district judge in Douglas County District Court

K. Christopher Jayaram of Lenexa, district judge in Johnson County District Court

Robert Wonnell of Olathe, district judge in Johnson County District Court

The governor now has 60 days to appoint one of the nominees to the Kansas Supreme Court.

Kansas uses a merit based judicial selection system established through a constitutional amendment approved by Kansas voters in 1958. The process includes public interviews, commission review, and gubernatorial appointment.

The Johnson County Bar Association is proud to see strong representation from the Johnson County legal community among this year's nominees.

For full details on the nomination process and nominees, visit [Kansas Judicial Branch News Release](#)



If you are a member and would like to announce a firm opening, promotion, or similar notice, please email Tana Griffith at: tgriffith@jocobar.org

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Seeking Volunteers and Community Partners

The Johnson County Bar Association's Civics Outreach Committee is expanding efforts to help educate the public about the Kansas judicial system and the proposed constitutional amendment that could change how Kansas Supreme Court justices are selected in the future.

Kansas voters may soon be asked to decide whether the state should move away from the current appointment system and instead elect Kansas Supreme Court justices through statewide elections. The proposal has generated significant discussion across the legal community and among civic organizations regarding judicial independence, campaign influence, public accountability, and the long term impact of judicial elections.

The Civics Outreach Committee is working to provide factual, nonpartisan educational information to community groups and voters so the public has a better understanding of the proposed amendment and what changes it could bring to the Kansas court system.

The committee is currently seeking attorneys and legal professionals interested in volunteering to assist with public education presentations, community discussions, civic forums, and outreach events throughout Johnson County and surrounding communities. Materials, talking points, and informational resources will be provided.

The committee is also looking for community organizations, civic groups, neighborhood associations, professional organizations, leadership groups, and other adult community audiences that may be interested in hosting an informational presentation or discussion.

Public understanding and civic engagement remain an important part of maintaining confidence in the judicial system, and the committee welcomes those interested in helping educate voters on this important issue.

If you are interested in volunteering or have ideas for potential outreach opportunities, please contact:

Katie McClafin
kmccclafin@mkmlawkc.com

Tana Griffith
tgriffith@jocobar.org



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Johnson County Bar Association members may place classified advertisements in both the BarLetter and on the JCBA website at no cost. Non-member listings may also be accepted for a nominal fee. Members may also submit their own website listings through the Member Hub for approval and publication. To place an ad or request additional information, please contact tgriffith@jocobar.org.

KCMO

- Office space available at 9001 State Line Road. Newly renovated with access to conference rooms and kitchenette. Includes reception, internet, copier, and fax. Potential referral opportunities available. Contact Sandy Norris at 816-524-3838 or sandy@lnslawkc.com.

LEAWOOD

- Office space available at College Blvd and Roe Avenue. Ideal for a solo practitioner sharing space with four other attorneys. Includes conference room, fax, copier, kitchen, and free parking. Easy access to I-435. \$500 per month. Contact 913-225-8112.

OLATHE

- Two office spaces available across from the Johnson County District Courthouse. \$800 per month includes receptionist, copier/scanner, telephone/voicemail, high-speed internet, and conference room access. Paralegal services available for an additional cost. Contact Morrison & Dersch, LLC at 913-780-6666.

WESTWOOD

- Full-service executive suites include receptionist, conference room, digital phone with voicemail, high-speed internet, all utilities paid, janitorial service, and free parking. Secretarial services, copier/scanner, and fax available. Several other attorneys in the building. Conveniently located just west of the Plaza in Westwood, Kansas. Contact Jeff Jones at 913-362-8990.

OVERLAND PARK

- Single office and executive suites available. Amenities include free coffee, conference room, Wi-Fi, and parking. Located in a prime downtown Overland Park location. Contact Mark Grover at mark@groverlawkc.com.
- Offices for rent in Old Downtown Overland Park in a remodeled historic building. Includes receptionist, free parking, reception area, kitchen, conference room, fax, scanner, copier, telephones, voicemail, and high-speed internet. Within walking distance of shops and restaurants. Office-sharing environment with fourteen attorneys. Contact James Shetlar at 913-648-3220.
- 10550 Marty Street, Suite 102. Office available for \$700 per month. Includes conference room access (\$50 per use), reception desk for support staff, kitchen, and unallocated parking. Convenient access to I-435. Contact Kevin at 913-290-0938 or cavlaw-44@gmail.com.
- Class A office space available for sublease in Corporate Woods, including up to three offices and one cubicle. Amenities include receptionist services, conference room, kitchen, free parking, high-speed internet, and copier access. Contact Marissa Wills at 913-333-3533.
- 12' x 15' office space available at I-435 and Nall Avenue. Includes receptionist, internet, conference rooms, and free parking. \$950 per month, with potential work-for-rent arrangements and referral opportunities. Contact Samantha Arbegast at 913-652-9937 or scr@theronanlawfirm.com.

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ASSISTANT DISCIPLINARY ADMINISTRATOR

Office of the Disciplinary Administrator

The Office of the Disciplinary Administrator is seeking applicants for the position of Assistant Disciplinary Administrator.

This position involves professional investigative and disciplinary work supporting the attorney discipline system in Kansas. Primary responsibilities include conducting investigations, assisting with hearing preparation, and working collaboratively with investigative staff and attorneys within the office.

The selected candidate will independently manage assigned investigations while working closely with the Director of Investigations and the Disciplinary Administrator. Work is reviewed through reports and conferences.

This position serves at the pleasure of the Disciplinary Administrator.

Ideal candidates will value professionalism, fairness, ethics, and the important role attorney discipline plays in maintaining public trust and integrity within the legal profession.

Interested applicants may view the full position description and apply through the Kansas Judicial Branch careers page:

[Kansas Judicial Branch Careers Page](#)

KANSAS LEGAL SERVICES

Kansas Legal Services seeks Kansas-licensed staff attorneys to practice family law and general poverty law representing low income Kansans, and specifically, survivors of domestic violence. Casework will focus on solving civil legal problems that will increase the social and economic stability of the individual, primarily with family law matters. The office serves Franklin, Johnson, Leavenworth, Linn, Miami and Wyandotte counties.

KLS offers a professional and friendly work environment with integrity as our guiding principle. We are an equal opportunity employer with recruitment efforts focused on ensuring a diverse workforce.

The qualified candidate must have the following: a Kansas law license; excellent written and oral communication skills; and a desire and commitment to assist in the delivery of high-quality legal assistance to low-income people. To apply, please email your resume and cover letter to Alexandra English at englisha@klsinc.org.

The City of Shawnee, KS is hiring for a Senior Prosecutor. This position is responsible for legal work primarily in the areas of litigation of municipal court cases, legal aspects of codes enforcement issues, criminal and civil lawsuits involving the city, and cases in the District Court and before the Kansas Court of Appeals and the Kansas Supreme Court.

For additional information, visit the City's jobs page at www.cityofshawnee.gov

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ESTATE PLANNING & TRUST ADMINISTRATION ATTORNEY

Complete Estate & Probate Law, LLC

Complete Estate & Probate Law is seeking an associate attorney to join its growing estate planning, probate, elder law, and trust administration practice. This role offers meaningful client interaction, hands-on responsibility, and long-term growth within a supportive, team-oriented firm.

Salary: Up to \$100,000 annually (plus potential bonuses)

Key Responsibilities:

- Manage trust administration matters and meet deadlines
- Meet with clients to review estate planning documents
- Lead estate planning signing meetings
- Maintain organized workflows and manage cases independently
- Communicate clearly and compassionately with clients

Qualifications:

- Licensed in Missouri and Kansas (required)
- Strong communication and client-focused approach
- Organized, self-motivated, and able to manage multiple matters
- Interest in estate planning, probate, or trust administration
- Prior experience preferred, but training available for the right candidate

Benefits include: 401(k) with matching, health insurance, HSA/FSA options, PTO, life and vision insurance, and employee discounts.

This position is designed for long-term growth, with the opportunity to take on increasing responsibility as the firm transitions future caseloads.

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and resume to Rachel Jewett at Rachel@completelawkc.com

WALLACE SAUNDERS

Litigation Paralegal

Salary Range = \$52,000 - \$60,000
(based on experience)

Our Overland Park law office is seeking a paralegal to join our established and successful practice. The Paralegal will work directly with our attorneys in the Litigation Department to prepare for upcoming cases, prepare and respond to discovery, get involved in research and fact-finding projects and be responsible for maintaining and tracking all assigned case files. Our caseload is growing and the ideal candidate for this position is organized, professional, responsible, and committed to helping us meet all of our clients' needs.

Responsibilities & Preferred Skills:

- At least one year of experience as a litigation paralegal; Prepare medical summaries /chronologies; Assist attorney preparing for trial and at civil jury trials
- Utilize existing files and other research resources to develop information for pending cases; Maintain case file indexing system active archive for all ongoing and completed cases
- Create documents & reports for attorneys based on case specifications and attorney requests; Work with attorneys to develop legal arguments, motions and other case filings
- Industry recognized certifications a plus

Firm offers a package of benefits including medical, dental, vision, 401k and paid time off. Salary is commensurate with applicable experience. This position participates in an individual performance bonus incentive program.

Email resume to: Robyn Butler
rbutler@wallacesaunders.com



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The Johnson County Bar Association proudly recognizes members and firms who go above and beyond in supporting our legal community. Their commitment strengthens our programs, events, and professional connections throughout the year.



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