

# **PROCLAMATION**

## **First Judicial District Bar Association**

### **NOVEMBER 2020**



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2020-2021

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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Samantha Lillehoff

Please enjoy the following interview with one of my most impactful mentors, Judge Terry Fox from the Colorado Court of Appeals, in which Judge Fox shares her thoughts and advice on the topic of mentorship.

**Who was your most influential mentor? What qualities made that person a good mentor?** Mentors can be context-dependent. In my youth, my most influential mentors were teachers. I have incredible fondness and respect for teachers. Without their guidance, encouragement, and confidence in me, I would not have lived the rich personal and professional life I've lived. As a law student, Professor Olga Moya—the first Latina law professor my law school hired—became my “forever mentor.” We remain dear friends, and we see each other every year. When I was sworn in as a judge in 2011, I was surrounded by mentors and mentees alike.



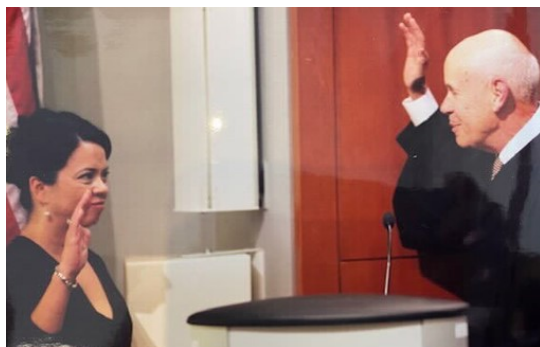
With Professor Olga Moya (2013)



With mentors Judge Christine Arguello and Barbara Brohl (former Colo. Dir., Dept. of Rev.)



With mentee Alex Harpp



In 2011, my mentor Judge Brooke Jackson swore me in.

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Mediation services: Family law cases, pre-litigation services, small claims matters, property disputes, neighbor conflict, property management issues, HOA claims.

Our mediation method: non-attorney mediators, self-represented participants, 3-hour sessions, \$75/hour and \$40 admin fee for each party.

**Searching for anyone with knowledge  
of a will prepared in 2013 for**

**THEODORE TOTEVE  
10232 Twin Spruce Road  
Golden, CO 80403**

**Please contact Lisa Sligar  
618-780-3391 (cell)**

# NEUTRALS YOU KNOW, PROFESSIONALS YOU CAN TRUST.

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Dispute  
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FIRST JD BAR ASSOCIATION

Virtual CLE Luncheon  
Tuesday December, 8, 2020  
First JD Members \$10  
Non First JD Members \$15

**JOE PICKARD Esq. & KEVIN MASSARO, Esq.**  
**Pickard Law, P.C.**

**The First Hour: Setting the Tempo  
in the Dissolution Case**

Virtual CLE  
Presented via Ring Central

You Must Register to Attend

<https://1stjd.org/events/#!event/2020/12/8/the-first-hour-setting-the-tempo-in-the-dissolution-case-joe-pickard-and-kevin-massaro>

OR

[admin@1stjd.org](mailto:admin@1stjd.org)

Information regarding attendance procedures  
will be provided after registration

1 General CLE Credit

## **The President's Column** **continued from page 2**

In each legal position I have held, I found and connected with wonderful mentors of various ages, ethnicities, and genders. I cannot name all my mentors for fear of omitting one, but they shared many excellent qualities; being generous with their time, willing to share their experiences, and challenging me to leave my comfort zone. Mentors have a way of recognizing qualities and qualifications in us that we sometimes do not see ourselves. Had mentors not encouraged me to seek a judicial position, I would not have accepted that challenge.

**What are some benefits of becoming a mentor? Why do you choose to mentor others?** I have benefitted so much from mentorship and sponsorship, so I feel a responsibility to mentor and sponsor young lawyers, law students, and college students. In my tenth year as an appellate judge, I'm also finding that aspiring jurists seek my advice and it is my joy to encourage and uplift anyone who wants to improve the judicial branch. I gain as much (or more) as a mentor from my mentees. Genuine friendships develop and I sincerely look forward to spending time with my mentees to learn about their accomplishments and help them with their challenges. Some of the mentoring I do concerns career choices or pivots, but other mentoring revolves around parenting and non-career topics.

**How would you suggest that a person interested in mentoring law students or attorneys get started?** Mentoring does not have to be part of a formal program—although there are plenty of opportunities to mentor on a short-term or long-term basis through organizations like Law School Yes We Can, Latinas First, the National Association of Women Judges, the Colorado Women's Bar Association (CWBA), the Colorado Bar Association's Attorney Mentoring Program (CAMP), the specialty bar associations, and others. Mentoring can begin by simply showing a genuine interest in a student or a lawyer. Ask questions and get to know the person. If you learn that a young lawyer or law student is brimming with excitement about alternative energy law and if you know a lawyer practicing in that area of law, make an introduction. I have found over the years that most people want to help others. Many of the mentoring relationships I enjoy today started there and have evolved. I thank all those lawyers who have been responsive to those introductions (before and after I joined the bench).

**Do you have any helpful tips specific to the successful mentorship of racially, ethnically, socioeconomically, etc. diverse mentees?** As the first in my family to graduate high school, college, and law school, I did not know any lawyers or judges to seek out as mentors. I stumbled upon my first law mentors and learned from every subsequent mentoring relationship. For prospective mentors, I would encourage lawyers and judges to engage actively with diverse mentees. Approach a diverse law student if you attend a law school function. Offer her your card and invite her to coffee. The student or the young lawyer may be reluctant to intrude on your conversation or to ask for your time. If you offer your time, that offer will be treasured. Just a few years ago, CU Law held a round-table mentoring event for law students. Lawyers (and judges) in the community served as mentors and they could select a table with a set topic. I purposefully selected the table for first-generation lawyers because I can relate to many of those students. Some, but not all, of the students were ethnically diverse or came from economically disadvantaged families. I was delighted that I could share my journey in law with these students who were clearly seeking guidance.

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I found one of my favorite diverse mentees—a young man from Ethiopia—by volunteering to coach a World Scholar's Cup Jeffco junior high school team (and continued to coach the diverse team into a Jeffco high school). I coached many of the same students in a GlobalQuest competition in Jefferson County.



High School competitors

One of the team members (the young man in a suit and on the left above) expressed an interest in law and asked to volunteer for me during high school. He returned to intern for me this past summer as he continues his studies at Colorado College. We are currently working on an article together. I have absolutely no doubt he will be an amazing law student and a fine lawyer thereafter. It will be my privilege to mentor him for as long as he allows me to do so.

**What are common mistakes that mentors should avoid? What are common mistakes that mentees should avoid?** I'll start with the mentee mistakes. The first mistake is to assume that a prospective mentor does not have time for the mentee. All of us can make time for coffee. So, start with an invitation to have coffee (recently, I've received numerous requests from students and young lawyers to have a Zoom meeting—how easy is that!). Another common mentee mistake is failing to follow-up, and promptly. If a lawyer gives a student or a young lawyer his card, he is inviting a follow-up conversation. Mentors are not immune from mis-steps. The most common may be failing to prioritize the mentor relationship. You can make a mentorship fit into your life with just a bit of planning and active engagement. For example, if I am planning to attend a CWBA membership event, I'll invite one or more of my mentees to join me. That creates a perfect opportunity for me to introduce them to others in the legal community and I have the benefit of interacting with the mentees and visiting with my beloved CWBA colleagues.

**What are some good qualities you look for in a mentee?** Mentees that have stood out to me are those that take ownership of the relationship and initiate interaction. Mentors appreciate hearing from the mentee through text or email even if a meeting is not on the calendar. Additionally, mentees that invest in the relationship by accepting and incorporating feedback are generally the most successful. The final thing is to remember that mentoring is building a relationship, it is not a job interview.

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How would you suggest a law student, or an attorney find a mentor? Once the mentor is found, how should the law student or attorney cultivate the relationship with that mentor? Students and young lawyers need to be proactive in searching for mentorship opportunities. First, leverage resources available at each law school and through the bar association (including the specialty bars). Next, you don't need to ask a professor, a seasoned lawyer or judge the first time you meet her to be a mentor, but you can ask questions and find out if they are amenable to continue a conversation you start at a law school or bar association event. My law clerks are with me for two years. As they start their second year, I encourage them to ask lawyers who practice in the areas of law of interest to them to coffee or lunch to inquire about their career and to get advice about practicing in that area of law. Because my law clerks still have another year to clerk, the conversation can be a productive information-gathering chat without the pressure of asking for a job. I also expect my departing law clerks to mentor their successors and the successors to mentor my interns. This allows the mentoring family and support network to grow.

Can mentors benefit attorneys who would not consider themselves "new" attorneys? How? Anyone can be a mentor, and anyone can be a mentee. Any lawyer at any stage of his or her career can benefit from mentorship. As we progress in our careers, we need different perspectives. Even if you have been practicing law for five or ten years, perhaps you want to change your practice in some way. Seeking out the people who do the kind of work you would like to do is a very natural way to educate yourself about a new area of law, make a new friend, and possibly make a transition. One way I foster cross-mentorship is by inviting my current and former law clerks and interns to a Holiday Tea. I also invite amazing and inspirational attorneys to introduce to the clerks/interns. Even if new mentorships don't form (often they do), the clerks and interns know these attorneys are available and accessible resources.



Fox Holiday Tea

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What are the notable differences in mentoring relationships that started organically versus those that started as part of an organization or program that assigns mentors to mentees? How can folks effectively navigate those differences, if any? In my experience, I must work more consciously to foster the mentorships that start from an organizational setting. I have several mentees from the CAMP program. Because our introduction was through CAMP rather than through some other natural relationship—like a clerk/judge interaction—I need to be intentional about connecting with the mentees. I place the onus on myself to stay in regular contact with the mentees because I know they may be reluctant to reach out to me (I am, of course, totally open to that outreach).

**Any final thoughts?** Being a mentor and a sponsor should not be a one-time interaction. The best mentorships/sponsorships evolve over time and require attention by the mentor/sponsor and the mentee/sponsored person. Again, if you prioritize that relationship, it will thrive even if your mentee leaves the state, as some of mine have done. But, if you are lucky and there's mutual-admiration, the mentee will come see you when you happen to be in Chicago.



Reconnecting with a mentee (2015) in Chicago after she left Colorado for college



## **Update from the CLE Committee**

### **Steve Cook, Chair CLE Committee, 1st JD Bar Association**

Your 1<sup>st</sup> JD Bar Association CLE Committee has generally tried to put together topical CLE's of interest presented by other 1<sup>st</sup> JD Members and judicial officers to both educate attorneys and to provide an opportunity for brief socialization during our lunchtime CLE programs. When COVID first shut down our in-person luncheon CLE's which were typically held in the Lookout Mountain Room of the Jefferson County Combined Courts, we took a couple months off to stabilize our efforts and figure out what we could do to continue and help provide those educational opportunities for our members and maintain the opportunity for a little socialization as well.

With the assistance and guidance of our executive director, Vicki Malara, as well as with the support of the Officers of the 1<sup>st</sup> JD Bar Association, the Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors, we began our Virtual CLE's in July 2020 with the *2020 Colorado Legislature in Review*- presented by Andrew White, Esq., the CBA Director of Legislative Relations. We took a few months to get organized in our presentations with our new platform, RingCentral, before we began charging for the programs again which began in October. All in all, we feel that we have managed the new virtual setting satisfactorily. But in an effort to improve the experience, we would welcome any feedback you may have to share. Please feel free to reach out to myself or Vicki and let us know your thoughts.

So that you are aware, we are attempting to implement some of the following ideas and suggestions we have already heard about:

- Making the presentation more interactive by utilizing multiple presenters, Power Point, video presentations and breakout rooms
- Encouraging questions from the audience by use of the chat feature on Ring Central
- Encouraging the audience to have their video on so that we can see each other and not just a lot of empty screens. This has the caveat of appropriate dress code compliance of course.

Finally, if you are like me, you probably have wondered about what happens to the money that you spend on those wonderful CLE's? I am happy to report that for 2020, the fees collected for CLE programming, as well as your local bar association dues, support your community in the following ways:

We provided \$12,420 to Metro Volunteer Lawyers which provides pro bono civil legal services in the Denver Metro Area to those in need who are living at or below 200% of federal poverty guidelines. MVL is co-sponsored by the Adams/Broomfield, Denver, Douglas/Elbert, and First Judicial District Bar Associations.

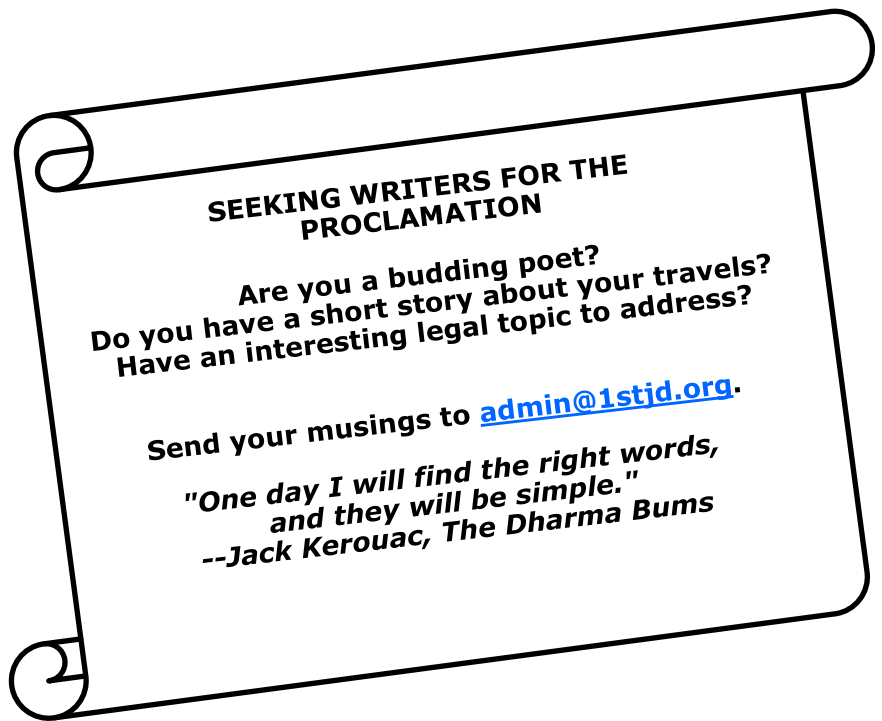
In addition, \$2500 was provided to each of the following organizations:

- Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center
- Ralston House Child Advocacy Center
- Justice & Mercy Legal Aid Center  
Family Tree

So you see, your support of the 1<sup>st</sup> JD Bar Association and the CLE programming directly and positively impacts your community. We want to take this opportunity to say thank you and that we hope you continue to offer your support in the future.

If any of you are interested in being a part of the CLE committee, please feel free to reach out to Vicki or myself. We would love to have you!

[steve@smithandcook.com](mailto:steve@smithandcook.com) or [vicki\\_malara@comcast.net](mailto:vicki_malara@comcast.net)



**From Diana Coffey, Clerk of Court**

Jefferson Combined Court has a new method for contacting the court – **Email Addresses!** Each team in the Clerk's Office and every Division now has an email address available for correspondence.

- Documents/filings will NOT be accepted through the mailboxes listed on the attachment.
- These mailboxes are simply for Q&A between you, the Clerk's Office, and Division staff.

The creation of these mailboxes was in response to feedback requesting this information from agencies and members of the bar, and in response to our recent budget-required staff reductions. Division staff are typically in the courtroom with limited access to their phones, so this is a way to provide staff with another mechanism to be responsive. Email response times should be within 24 hours. Please don't leave a voicemail AND send an email as we have multiple people responding to the phones and the mailboxes, and we certainly don't want to duplicate efforts. The mailboxes are up and running!

I consolidated all the contact info (Division/Team; Judicial Officer, Phone Number, Email Address, and WebEx info) into one document which I hope you find helpful - Gilpin Combined Court information is included as well.

You can find the new contact list at: <https://1stjd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Court-Information-11-2020.pdf>