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Evidence ‘clear-cut’

Probe turns criminal: DA names prosecutors.

Investigation into testing irregularities could result in indictments.

By Bill Rankin
branking@ajc.com

The inquiry into test tampering in Atlanta Public Schools became a criminal investigation Tuesday with the appointments of two special prosecutors by the Fulton County district attorney.

At a news conference, District Attorney Paul Howard announced the designation of Mike Bowers, a former state attorney general, and Bob Wilson, a former DeKalb County district attorney, as special assistant DAs.

In August, Gov. Sonny Perdue appointed the men to investigate alleged improprieties involving the 2009 Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests. The gift then deployed 50 agents — more than one-fifth of the agency — to interview APS teachers and administrators.

‘This team assembled by the governor has presented my office with clear-cut, direct, eyewitness evidence that student tests were impermissibly altered by Atlanta Public Schools employees,' the district attorney said.

Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard says he may impanel a special investigative grand jury to help with the criminal probe.

Bob Andres/bandres@ajc.com
Felony charges possible

Schools contact rape at

School employees," Ramey said.

"It is now our duty to deter- mining the extent of this wrongdoing and de- cide in which cases crim- inal prosecution may be appropriate." Ramey said.

GBI investigators and agents also will look into whether the schools had confronta- tions with agents and investiga- tors. GBI officials have said.

A Georgia law enforcement offi- cial said morning.

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In 2010, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and GBI joint investigation revealed that some students were being targeted for refusal to take part in AP exams, which led to a national outcry. The investigation also found evidence of sexual misconduct by some teachers.

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Georgia's chief law enforcement officer speaks at post

Bonnie Heater

The Garden City Chapter of the Federally Employed Women hosted a distinguished public servant at their November monthly meeting.


Prior to his appointment he entered private practice in 1992 as an associate with Hull, Towl, Norman and Barrett, now known as Hull, Barrett. In 1999, Tarver became a partner in the firm, practicing civil litigation with an emphasis on employment discrimination.

He was elected in 2005 to the Georgia General Assembly as a senator for Senate District 22. There he served on the criminal justice, judicial and public safety subcommittees to appropriations, and on the joint economic development subcommittee of regulatory reform. Tarver was re-elected in 2006 and 2008.

Tarver began his presentation by contrasting his role as a former senator in the Georgia General Assembly with his current position.

“I enjoy politics,” said Tarver. “It was exciting to me. This position is a political appointee, but I don’t play a role in politics now. I can go to political fundraisers, but I can’t endorse any political candidates. My current position is unusual in that I have two bosses. I work for the U.S. Attorney General of the United States and I also work for the president of the United States.”

Tarver currently has 28 attorneys who work for him in the 43 counties that make up the Southern District of Georgia. He is the chief law enforcement officer in the district. The office is made up of four divisions: the criminal, civil, administrative and executive.

During his presentation he talked about his staff and their legal experiences. He also elaborated on some of the priorities of the office. One of the issues his office is working to change is sentencing disparity. “We want to see that a person charged in California with a drug offense receives the same punishment as a person charged in Georgia,” said Tarver.

The next issue of concern the University of Georgia School of Law alumni is concentrating on is the rise in crime, drug and gun activities in the small rural communities of Georgia. “We have a lot of small rural communities in the Southern Districts and they are being overrun,” warned Tarver. “We have learned criminals are targeting smaller communities primarily because they face the same budget concerns as larger communities, but they are having a more drastic effect there. Some counties in the Southern District of Georgia have no law enforcement.”

According to the former Army officer, counties located close to large metropolitan areas such as Augusta and Savannah, have been identified and retained by the leadership of gangs who are sending out recruitment teams. “Teams of gang members from larger and more established gangs will travel from places such as Atlanta to smaller rural areas to recruit members to assist them in starting drug activities,” explained Tarver.
"We have several documented cases that indicate some of the criminal elements in the smaller counties are far better equipped than the local police officers," said the former Court Advisory Committee member of the U.S. District Court, Southern District of Georgia. "We are working closely with the rural communities to address some of their needs."

Besides addressing local concerns, Tarver’s office and staff are also focusing on national problems too. One involves the major drug trafficking that is going on in Mexico. The reason Georgia is playing a central role is that Atlanta has become one of the major hubs of drug trafficking and drug distribution in the country. "Our intel tells us if you live in Augusta, Savannah or any place in the state if someone is apprehended with some type of illegal drug or narcotics we have found most of the drugs have come from Atlanta," said Tarver.

One of the biggest problems facing drug cartels today according to Tarver is finding ways to get the huge sums of cash out of the country. They are trying different and innovative ways to move the drug money. Tarver pointed out, some of the cartels are loading up tractor trailers with the cash and are trying to drive it away. The good news is if the money is recovered, it's returned to the American people. "In 2009 through forfeiture actions we were able to recover $2.5 billion which we were able to put back in the U.S. Treasury," he said.

From the financial standpoint, we all know the economy is probably in the worst shape it has ever been in a while and that tends to cause an influx of financial problems and crimes, said Tarver. "As a result we have been tasked to pay more attention to mortgage fraud, financial fraud and schemes to get you away from your money."

"Our bottom line is that we are concerned about justice and not winning cases," explained Tarver.
By CHRISTINE VENDELA
The Kansas City Star

Kansas City police have started an internal investigation to determine if tactical officers acted properly when they broke into a home and threw a stun grenade that caught drapes on fire.

Police last month were serving a search warrant related to a homicide investigation when they stormed into the home of a south Kansas City neighborhood leader. Three women and a 2-year-old girl were inside.

JeTuan Jones said the use of force — breaking open her door and throwing a “flash bang” device past her niece’s head — was unnecessary, considering that the search warrant was for a cell phone used by her brother, who had moved out four months earlier and was in police custody.

After barging in, police realized her brother did not live there and left without searching, Jones said.

“All of that could have been avoided,” said Jones, who was not home at the time. “Whatever happened to good old-fashioned investigating?”

Such “police-state techniques” should be reserved for the most extreme cases, said a national expert on criminal procedures.

“What we’re talking about here is police throwing bombs into people’s houses,” said Donald E. Wilkes Jr., a law professor at the University of Georgia. “To use a device like this for a search warrant for a cell phone when a guy is locked up is unbelievable.”

Jones, a former police dispatcher and youth volunteer, has complained to the Kansas City Board of Police Commissioners and the Office of Community Complaints.

Police officials said they could not comment on the allegations because of their investigation.

Police board members expressed concern, saying that such incidents could undermine community relations and cooperation, further worsening detectives’ abilities to solve crimes, including homicides.

A Jackson County Circuit Court judge signed the search warrant that allowed police to enter Jones’ home Nov. 3. But police did not request — and the judge did not grant — permission to barge in unannounced.

Police usually give a judge specific reasons for conducting a “no knock” entry.

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that police generally must knock and announce themselves to give residents the opportunity to open their doors and avoid property damage. Courts have allowed police to break in unannounced when residents refuse to unlock doors, when police feel threatened or when police fear evidence is being destroyed.

Jones contends that officers did not announce themselves.

Police use flash-bang devices to temporarily disorient people and prevent possibly deadly confrontations, said Kansas City Police Capt. Steve Young, a department spokesman.

Complaints are rare, he said. Police have served more than 430 search warrants this year, mostly for narcotics investigations. The Office of Community Complaints has forwarded three complaints, including Jones’, to the police Internal Affairs Unit.

Jones’ brother attracted police interest after he began using a homicide victim’s cell phone. He told his sister he found the phone Oct. 29 while walking. He used it to call her house.

According to Jones, police began watching her house. They arrested her brother Nov. 3 as he walked to
That night, she saw police cars pull onto her street as she left home with her husband and one child. Minutes later, tactical officers charged her front door. Barking dogs prompted Jones' niece to open the door. Police outside yelled for her to get down.

She held up keys to signal that she could unlock the storm door, but an officer allegedly ordered her to get out of the way, punched out the window screen and threw in the flash-bang device. It landed near a door to the back patio, where it ignited a set of drapes and knocked over antiques.

The loud explosion and blinding light terrified Jones' 84-year-old, bedridden mother; 68-year-old cousin; 24-year-old niece; and 2-year-old daughter.

Tactical officers broke the wrought-iron storm door, stormed through the house, handcuffed the niece and cousin, and tried to get the elderly woman out of bed.

According to Jones, police later found the homicide victim's cell phone at the apartment where her brother had been staying. Police did not break in or use a flash bang there, she said.

"I'm just baffled," she said.

She wants police to pay for the damage to her house, which she estimated at thousands of dollars.

Police say they don't usually pay for damage if it is considered "reasonable."

To reach Christine Vendel, call 816-234-4438 or send e-mail to cvendel@kcstar.com.

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Decision to free rape suspect stirs anger

Nicole Godfrey voiced the same outrage felt by other Athenians when they learned a Clarke County Superior Court judge had freed an accused rapist just a few months before he allegedly raped again.

"It just floored me when I read about it in the newspaper," the 29-year-old Gaines School Road woman said. "How many times can someone be accused of rape before a judge considers him to be a threat to society and keeps him in jail?"

With his most recent arrest, 48-year-old Avery Christopher Bradford has been accused of rape or attempted rape five times since 1993, according to court documents. He was arrested on a rape charge in July 2009 and later released from jail without having to post bail.

Chief Judge Lawton Stephens couldn't comment on the case because it's pending in his court, he said.

Stephens ordered Bradford released from custody on his own recognizance in August after Bradford's case had gone un-indicted for more than a year. His attorneys successfully argued for a series of bail reductions that ended with an agreement with prosecutors to let Bradford out of jail on his own recognizance and with restrictions.

Bradford's 2009 rape case hasn't gone to a grand jury yet because of difficulties investigating the case, said District Attorney Ken Mauldin.

"Whether to go forward with a case depends on a number of factors, including the availability of the victim and the willingness of the victim to participate in the prosecution," Mauldin said.

The victim in the July 2009 rape case is homeless and it took a while to track her down, he said.

"There had been a good bit of effort over a number of months to find the victim, and we were only recently able to make that contact," according to Mauldin, who said the
"There had been a good bit of effort over a number of months to find the victim, and we were only recently able to make that contact," according to Mauldin, who said the victim has agreed to cooperate with prosecutors.

That assault happened under a bridge where College Avenue crosses the North Oconee River in East Athens. Police charged Bradford with rape, aggravated assault and two counts of aggravated sodomy.

An assistant district attorney had opposed bail, according to Mauldin, but Stephens set Bradford's bail at $40,000 - an amount that the indigent man couldn't afford.

The rape case still hadn't gone to a grand jury in November 2009, when Stephens granted a defense attorney's request to reduce bail, this time setting it at $20,000. Another bail reduction came in June, when Bradford had been in jail for nearly a year and his case remained un-indicted.

Stephens ordered Bradford released from jail on his own recognizance two months later, on Aug. 25, with the condition he remain at his father's home in Crawford and stay out of Clarke County except for medical emergencies, or to meet with his attorney or attend court appearances.

"Judge Stephens granted the OR bond only after both parties - the state and the defense - had agreed to the terms of the release," said Ryan Swingle, Bradford's public defender.

Bradford was basically under house arrest in Crawford, but the judge didn't order him to wear an ankle monitor because there are substantial fees for that service that Bradford couldn't afford, according to Swingle.

When Bradford was arrested again last Sunday, outraged people called and e-mailed the Banner-Herald and posted comments on the Internet, blasting the judge and prosecutor for having allowed the accused rapist to roam the streets again.

Bradford raped and sodomized a 31-year-old woman last Sunday in a home off West Broad Street, and choked and beat her unconscious, according to Athens-Clarke police, who charged him with rape, aggravated assault, aggravated sexual battery, aggravated sodomy and criminal trespass.

"Bradford has numerous criminal trespassing charges and probation violations against him, yet Judge Stephens, the assistant district attorney and the defendant's lawyer all felt that Bradford was not a threat to our community as long as they specified he was not allowed to enter Clarke County?" Godfrey said. "Surely he wouldn't commit such crimes in other counties."

Anger toward the judge and the district attorney's office is misplaced, said University of Georgia law professor Ron Carlson.
"Public officials certainly can be held responsible for their decisions, but the primary responsibility for this mistake appears to rest with the alleged action of (Bradford)," Carlson said. "There's a system that's operating out here, and it may have gone haywire in this case a bit, but by and large the system operates with a good deal of effectiveness."

But Carlson can see why people reacted so strongly to Bradford's case.

"I understand the public frustration in this matter, but there are circumstances over and above what happened here that often legitimate the release of a defendant before trial," he said. "There is a constitutional guarantee of a reasonable bail."

When setting bail, a judge will consider a suspect's criminal history to decide if he's a danger to society, Carlson said.

Though Bradford had been accused of rape or attempted rape several times, he's never been convicted of any of those crimes.

He was accused of rape and kidnapping in 1993, but prosecutors dismissed the charges after a judge declared a mistrial due to a deadlocked jury.

In 2005, police said Bradford dragged a woman into a vacant apartment and held her down by the throat in an attempt to rape her, but a grand jury found there wasn't enough evidence to indict him, according to court records.

In 2006, another grand jury indicted Bradford on two counts of aggravated assault and one count each of criminal attempt to commit rape and false imprisonment after he allegedly held a pen to the throat of a woman as he tried to take off her clothes to rape her.

A trial jury convicted Bradford of reduced charges of simple assault and simple battery, and a judge sentenced him to 18 months in jail and six months on probation.

Bradford also was convicted in 1995 for carjacking and robbery by intimidation, and served nine years in prison.

Stephens would have had the option of denying bail to Bradford in the 2009 rape case if either of the crimes he went to prison for had been classified a "serious violent felony" under Georgia law.

State legislators should consider closing that gap, which probably allowed Bradford to get a free pass out of jail, said Carlson, a legal scholar who has written books on evidence, trial practice and criminal procedure.

"My view is that legislative attention must be given to Georgia's bail law," he said. "The definition of 'violent felony' needs to be expanded. Allowing judges to curtail bail only in
the narrow circumstances of the present statute results in the kind of problem we see in (Bradford's) case."
More perfect harmony
The Indonesian language newspaper Republika quoted Alan Godlas, a professor of religion at UGA, in an article about an interfaith dialogue meeting in Athens.
Speaking about the need to show the world the “harmony among religious believers” in Islam and Indonesia, Godlas said, “Therefore, the frequency of exchange of visits by public figures, especially religious leaders in both countries, needs to be improved.”

Chattanooga Times Free Press
The most important evidence
A Chattanooga, Tenn., Times-Free Press article about a convicted murderer’s quest to prove his innocence quoted Ron Carlson, a professor of law at UGA. Carlson said a body is the single most important piece of evidence in a murder case and, when it is found, the details of what happened should become clear.
“Certainly, the physical facts of how the person was killed can be confirmed or rejected,” he said. “Discovery of the body usually helps the defendant or helps the state.”

Buying power
The Louisiana Weekly, in an article about the upswing in minority buying power during the recession, quoted Jeff Humphreys, director of the Selig Center for Economic Growth in the Terry College of Business.
“Despite the recession, the underlying growth trends for Hispanics and Asians in the U.S. are still very strong,” said Humphreys. “Minorities have a lot of economic clout, and these groups in particular are experiencing growth in buying power that greatly exceeds that of the general population.”

A positive atmosphere
The Florida Times-Union, in an article about how leadership changes in big hospitals in the state of Georgia have not stalled the efforts by the Medical College of Georgia and UGA to negotiate clinical jobs for their first class of doctors, quoted Barbara Schuster, dean of the MCG-UGA Medical Partnership.
“Even in the change of leadership, there is a positive atmosphere,” she said. “It’s a good thing.”

Porous paving
An article about alternatives to asphalt published by the National Resources Defense Council quoted a professor of religion at UGA, saying it is the single most important piece of evidence in a murder case and, when it is found, the details of what happened should become clear.

FACULTY PROFILE
Reliving history: Franklin examines philosophy of
By Philip Lee Williams
phil@franklin.uga.edu

An early autumn morning sifts through the windows of Stephen Berry’s office in LeConte Hall. Youthful and intense, he speaks of the American Civil War with excitement and a deep knowledge. And yet his words are at times unexpected, more involved with the philosophy of conflict than military tactics.

He speaks of history’s “pool of sadness,” the “tug of the past” and his “emotional interest in the weight of the past.” And yet Berry is anything but quietly thoughtful as he explains his passions for the Civil War. He is, by turns, self-deprecating, hilarious and professorial—a man whose passion is his profession.

Berry’s reputation as a scholar and teacher has grown steadily. His 2007 book, House of Abraham Lincoln & the Todds, A Family Divided by War, was a main selection of the Book of the Month Club and an alternate selection by the History Book Club and Military Book Club. His other volumes have received strong reviews, and he has under contract a book to come out in 2012 about Edgar Allan Poe.

“My early reading was the death of the young,” he said, laughing. “At first it was Egypt and the medieval days, but I began to realize we had a history here, too. And it seemed to me that the Civil War especially just had this moral sadness about it.”

After serving as an assistant professor at UNC-Pembroke from 2001-2007, Berry came to UGA. His wife, Frances, also works at UGA, as an assistant to the director of the Hugh Hodgson School of Music.

There is a growing attention to the war on the part of students, according to Berry.

“Students are just enormously interested in it,” he said. “Some are interested in military matters, especially given our engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan, others because they come from old Georgia families whose ancestors served in the war or were freed by the war, and others for all kinds of varied reasons. And of course the history of the war brings with it this

Stephen Berry, associate professor of history, is interested in how the war affect Americans’ sense of race, justice, freedom, fairness and tolerance.

Indeed, talk to Berry, and you hear him speak about the people involved in the Civil War years—how they can point to the point of war, what they believe and how they saw their own capacity for intrusiveness and love of count Lincoln remains a focus of his interest and in many ways the subject of his new book—Poe—is a kind of anti-Lincoln.

“I’m interested in the history the way people think and feel,” he said, “and what decisions they make for good or bad. Poe was, of course, a literary genius, but he was also a rea reprehensible man. Lincoln harnesses his melancholy and becomes a great man and president. Poe, on the other hand, had rages he couldn’t control, and finally lost himself to his demons a drank himself to death at age 40. We created the differences between Poe and Lincoln’s response to depression.”
Student sends support from Iraq

December 7, 2010 by DREW HOOKS
Filed under Academics, News

It’s 3 a.m. A group of guys are gathered together, thousands of miles away from home.

They turn on the TV and watch the Georgia-Georgia Tech game. Eventually they’ll have to go back to work — they’re on active duty in Baghdad.

Lt. David Reed, a University law student from Luray, Va., was among these distant spectators.

Lt. David Reed, a University student, cheered on the Dogs during the Georgia-Georgia Tech football game while on active duty in Baghdad.
duty in Baghdad. Courtesy Lt. David Reed

"We are definitely a pro-UGA unit," he said in a recent Skype interview. "We had a big crowd even though it was three in the morning."

Reed was a part of the ROTC program at his undergraduate university and transferred to the reserve forces in Athens when he chose the University for law school.

Coming to the University was not a difficult decision for Reed.

"I fell in love the first time and paid my deposit that day. I didn’t look any further," Reed said about a visit to the University during his senior year of college.

Being from Virginia, Reed said his decision to attend the University’s law school was a surprise to his parents.

"It was a shock," he said. "They were very supportive once they came down to see."

Toward the end of his first year of law school, Reed was rotated out of the Army reserves into active duty and was assigned to be deployed to Iraq.

He said the law school has been supportive and helped make his transition from school to active duty smooth by allowing him to finish his classes early.

Reed said he always wanted to go to law school and saw it as a way to help people. This same desire to help others is what Reed credits as making him decide to join the military.

He works between 12 and 16 hours a day, seven days a week, in a mission to help turn power over to the Iraqis.

"Helping and assisting here makes it real, and doing it on a daily basis brings in rewards," Reed said. "It’s a very interesting and historical time for Iraq."

Reed said he enjoys the Iraqi people and the culture there, even though the language has been eluding him.

"The language is a challenge," he said.

Reed said he plans on returning to the University to finish his law degree, but right now he sees his time in Iraq as a break from school.

"It’s a little bit of a break and an unusual situation," he said. "I look at it as a study abroad experience with a twist."

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- eNews & Updates

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Former Georgia Lt. Gov. Pierre Howard and Slate magazine’s Dahlia Lithwick will join the faculty of the University of Georgia School of Law spring semester 2011. Howard will serve as the Sanders Political Leadership Scholar, and Lithwick will hold a visiting professorship.

“We are very honored and excited Pierre Howard and Dahlia Lithwick have agreed to teach courses next semester,” Georgia Law Dean Rebecca H. White said. “We strive to offer our students a strong and varied curriculum. I am confident that by studying under either of these distinguished guests, our students will gain valuable insights into the role of law in our society that they otherwise would not have experienced.”

As a Sanders Scholar, Howard will teach a course on law and politics. He joins the Georgia Law faculty with a long and distinguished public service record, which includes representing the 42nd District of Georgia as a state senator for 18 years as well as serving as lieutenant governor from 1991 to 1999 and as a municipal court judge in Decatur. With a law degree and a bachelor's degree in French, Howard practiced law with his father before forming his own firm in 1976, four years after becoming a state senator. In 1993, he joined Alston & Bird, where he practiced until 1999 and became a Senior Faculty Fellow at the UGA School of Ecology. In 2009, Howard was named president of the Georgia Conservancy, the post he currently holds.

The Sanders Political Leadership Scholar position is named for Georgia’s 74th Governor and Georgia Law alumnus, Carl B. Sanders. It was created so law students could learn from individuals who have distinguished themselves as leaders in politics or other forms of public service.

Previous Sanders Scholars who have taught at the law school include: former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Newt Gingrich, former U.S. Sen. Wyche Fowler Jr., prominent media personality and political consultant Paul Begala, former Georgia Secretary of State Cathy Cox, former U.S. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Theodore ”Ted” W. Kassinger, former U.S. Sen. J. Maxwell ”Max” Cleland and former Georgia Supreme Court Justice George T. Smith.

Lithwick, a senior editor and legal correspondent for Slate magazine, will teach the class "The Media and The Courts" as a visiting professor. She writes the "Supreme Court Dispatches" and "Jurisprudence" sections for Slate, in addition to covering other legal issues. Her work also has appeared in Elle, The New Republic, Newsweek, The New York Times, the Ottawa Citizen and The Washington Post as well as on CNN.com. She is a frequent commentator for several National Public Radio shows, including "Talk of the Nation." She also is co-author of Me v. Everybody: Absurd Contracts for an Absurd World and I Will Sing Life: Voices from the Hole in the Wall Gang Camp. Lithwick earned her undergraduate degree cum laude from Yale University and her Juris Doctor from Stanford University. Additionally, she served as a judicial clerk for Chief Judge Procter Ralph Hug Jr. of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement,
The Georgia Department of Driver Services issued the following news release:

Jennifer Greene Ammons, Director of Legal and Investigative Affairs, Department of Driver Services (DDS) has been named one of Georgia's "Legal Elite for Government Affairs" in the most recent Georgia Trend magazine. This is the eighth annual listing of Georgia's top attorneys nominated and selected by their peers as champions in their respective fields.

Ammons serves as Director of Legal and Investigative Services at DDS. She manages a legal team whose duties include researching and reviewing applicable statutes, regulations and court decisions to ensure that the department is in compliance with all legal requirements in its daily operations. She also directs the Investigative Services Section staffed with P.O.S.T. certified law enforcement officers who investigate allegations of driver's license fraud and misconduct by the DDS' employees. Ammons also serves on important project teams dedicated to improving service delivery and the security of one of our state's most important processes.

"Jennifer is a steady, contemplative advisor as DDS strives to balance excellent customer service with homeland security. I not only value her legal expertise but also her dedication to the DDS values of communication, accountability, respect and ethics. She brings a high level of energy and enthusiasm to whatever assignment she tackles," commented DDS Commissioner Gregory C. Dozier.

Ammons began her career as an assistant district attorney in the Alcovy Judicial Circuit primarily assigned to the Newton County District Attorney's Office in Covington, Georgia. She then joined DDS' predecessor agency where she served as General Counsel. Ammons graduated with honors from the University of Georgia in 1991 with a degree in criminal justice studies. She received her juris doctorate from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1994.

Ammons is married to Charles Ammons, a deputy with the Newton County Sheriff's Office. They reside in Covington and have one daughter, Sarah Kate.
Editorial: Outrage over alleged rape can change law

Athens Banner-Herald
Published Tuesday, December 07, 2010

The anger and frustration in this community over 46-year-old Avery Christopher Bradford and how he moved (or, more accurately, slipped) through the local court system is palpable - and completely justified.

A Saturday story in this newspaper reported that Bradford had raped and sodomized a 31-year-old Athens woman on the morning of Nov. 28 in a Honeysuckle Lane home. He's now charged with rape, aggravated assault, aggravated sexual battery, aggravated sodomy and criminal trespass, according to the story.

As shocking and troubling as those charges are, the circumstances under which Bradford - who has a lengthy criminal history - was on the street and able allegedly to commit the Nov. 28 rape are at least equally disconcerting. Bradford already was facing charges of rape, aggravated assault and two counts of aggravated sodomy in connection with a July 2009 assault. He was, however, released from jail on his own recognizance in August of this year - just four months prior to his latest alleged rape - by Clarke County Superior Court Judge Waton Stephens.

According to Saturday's story, and to a Sunday story delving deeper into the circumstances surrounding Bradford's latest alleged crime, Stephens set a $40,000 bond for Bradford in August 2009. The bond was reduced to $20,000 in November of last year, as his public defender argued that Bradford couldn't afford to post a bond. Bradford was released on his own recognizance in August of this year, pursuant to an agreement with local prosecutors - who'd failed to indict Bradford more than a year after the July 2009 assault. Judge Stephens made Bradford's release conditional to his staying out of Clarke County except for medical emergencies, court appearances and meeting with his attorney.

Stephens told the Banner-Herald he wouldn't comment on the case because it's pending in his court. District Attorney Ken Mauldin told the newspaper his office has had some difficulty in tracking down the alleged victim of the 2009 assault because she is homeless. Prosecutors have, though, been able to contact the victim recently, and she has agreed to cooperate with the prosecution, Mauldin said.

Much of the public concern over the frustrating Bradford story has focused on the judge and the prosecutor's office, and whether either, or both, failed the public they were elected to serve. And, of course, residents of the local judicial circuit - comprising Athens-Clarke and Oconee counties - will have opportunities to render a verdict on that question by either running against, or voting against, the judge and the district attorney in upcoming election cycles.

But one thing that seems to be lost in the understandable frustration over Bradford and his latest alleged attack is that there is a legislative remedy for the circumstances that ended in the regrettable assault. In Sunday's story, University of Georgia law professor Ron Carlson pointed
In Sunday's story, University of Georgia law professor Ron Carlson pointed out that if the two crimes of which Bradford had been convicted in 1995 - carjacking and robbery by intimidation, for which he served nine years - were classified as serious violent felonies under Georgia law, Judge Stephens would have had the option of denying bond to Bradford for the 2009 incident.

"My view is that legislative attention must be given to Georgia's bail law," Carlson told the newspaper. "The definition of 'violent felony' needs to be expanded. Allowing judges to curtail bail only in the narrow circumstances of the present statute results in the kind of problem we see in (Bradford's) case."

Of course, one of the ways that laws are put on the books, or changed, is through public pressure on the state legislature. Those who are outraged over Bradford's latest alleged attack - and that should include all of us - would be well advised to start contacting legislators now and seeking changes in state laws on bail to prevent similar issues in the future.

Contact information for all of the state's lawmakers is available on the Georgia General Assembly's website, www.legis.state.ga.us.
The following information was released by the Georgia Department of Driver Services:

GeorgiaTrend's 2010 Legal Elite for Government Affairs

Jennifer Greene Ammons, Director of Legal and Investigative Affairs, Department of Driver Services (DDS) has been named one of Georgias Legal Elite for Government Affairs in the most recent GeorgiaTrend magazine. This is the eighth annual listing of Georgias top attorneys nominated and selected by their peers as champions in their respective fields.

Ammons serves as Director of Legal and Investigative Services at DDS. She manages a legal team whose duties include researching and reviewing applicable statutes, regulations and court decisions to ensure that the department is in compliance with all legal requirements in its daily operations. She also directs The Investigative Services Section staffed with P.O.S.T. certified law enforcement officers who investigate allegations of drivers license fraud and misconduct by the DDS employees. Ammons also serves on important project teams dedicated to improving service delivery and the security of one of our states most important processes.

Jennifer is a steady, contemplative advisor as DDS strives to balance excellent customer service with homeland security. I not only value her legal expertise but also her dedication to the DDS values of communication, accountability, respect and ethics. She brings a high level of energy and enthusiasm to whatever assignment she tackles, commented DDS Commissioner Gregory C. Dozier.

Ammons began her career as an assistant district attorney in the Alcovy Judicial Circuit primarily assigned to the Newton County District Attorneys Office in Covington, Georgia. She then joined DDS predecessor agency where she served as General Counsel. Ammons graduated with honors from the University of Georgia in 1991 with a degree in criminal justice studies. She received her juris doctorate from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1994.

Ammons is married to Charles Ammons, a deputy with the Newton County Sheriffs Office. They reside in Covington and have one daughter, Sarah Kate.
Deal names staffers, appoints department head

Governor-elect asks six executive department leaders to continue in current posts

GAINESVILLE, Ga., (December 7, 2010) - Gov.-elect Nathan Deal today named positions on staff, as well as additional announcements on leaders who will continue their service under his administration.

Bart Gobeil, deputy chief operating officer

Gobeil, 37, currently serves as chief of staff to Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle. Prior to joining the Cagle's office, he served as director of government relations at AGL Resources, an Atlanta-based natural gas company and as the legislative liaison and public information officer for the Georgia Public Service Commission. He also worked on the staff of the late U.S. Sen. Paul Coverdell, first as Southeast Georgia regional representative and later as a legislative assistant in the Washington office.

Gobeil is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts - Amherst. He and his wife, Elizabeth, live in Atlanta.

Stephanie Mayfield, press secretary

Mayfield, 27, currently serves as press secretary on the Deal Transition Team. Prior to working on Deal for Governor's general election campaign, the Alpharetta native served in the Georgia delegation in Washington for more than four years, including time with then-Congressman Deal, U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss and Congressman Tom Graves. She began her career in government with the Energy and Commerce Committee in the U.S. House.

Mayfield is a 2005 graduate of the University of Alabama where she earned her degree in advertising and public relations. Mayfield is the second hire in Deal's communications shop.

David Cook, commissioner, Department of Community Health

Cook has served as the executive director and CEO of the Medical Association of Georgia since 2001. Cook came to MAG in 1995 as MAG's general counsel and director of advocacy. Since then he has been a leading advocate for physicians on the state and national level.

He established the Physician Institute for Excellence in Medicine, dedicated to helping physicians enhance their clinical practice and improve patient safety and serves on its Board of Directors. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Physician Advocacy Institute, the American Medical Association's Advocacy Resource Center and the Georgia Medical Political Action Committee. He has served as president of the American Society of Medical Association Counsel and received the American Medical Association's Meritorious Achievement Award in 2009.

Previously, Cook served as legal counsel to the state Senate Judiciary Committee and chief of staff to the President Pro Tempore, Nathan Deal, of
the state Senate. From 1992 to 1995, Cook served as then-Congressman Deal's chief of staff in Washington.

Cook is a 1982 graduate of the University of Georgia School Of Law and a 1976 graduate of Georgia Southern University. He and his wife of 22 years, Beth, are the parents of two sons, Lowell, 22 and Andrew, 18.

Those who will continue service under Deal in their current roles include:

Rob Braswell, Commissioner, Georgia Department of Banking & Finance 
Nancy Cobb, Executive Director of OneGeorgia Authority 
Greg Griffin, State Accounting Officer 
Kelly Henson, Executive Secretary of Professional Standards Commission 
Susan Ridley, Director of Financing & Investment of the Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission 
Teya Ryan, President and Executive Director of Georgia Public Broadcasting

E-mail: weeklypub1@comcast.net
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Back to Top
* SCOTUS could be prepared to uphold Arizona immigration law. Apparently federal law has about the same peremptory effect as the Cravath bonus. [WSJ Law Blog]

* Dahlia Lithwick will be teaching a class at the University of Georgia School of Law. Emory must feel a little bit like Cravath right now; I bet they didn't see this good fortune going to a competitor. [Atlanta Journal Constitution]

* New York City is not one of America's most obscene cities, those sounds coming out of the corner offices in your non-Cahill firms notwithstanding. [Business Insider]

* Law professors protest over the plight of unskilled hotel workers. Finding a place that doesn't exploit its labor force is like trying to find a Cahill in a haystack. [National Law Journal]

* Wikileaks reveals some disturbing o-boy parties. Wish we had some Wikileaks about the cables Evan Chesler is sending right now. [The Legal Satyricon]

* Depositions are a time to man up, not shrink back like Cravath during bonus season. [What About Clients?]
For every bill that's voted on, every speech that's given and every meeting on a politician's hectic schedule, there's usually a staffer who's done all the legwork to make it happen. The best staffers make their bosses look good every day and help them craft strategy and policy. They usually toil in the background, standing in the back of the room during press conferences and slipping out the back doors when their bosses are done talking in front of the cameras.

The top staffers in Congress are worth their weight in gold - and they also act as gatekeepers and liaisons with lobbyists, other members of Congress and special interests.

Heading into the 112th Congress in January, the top issues will be the budget and taxes, and major deals will be hashed out in the budget committee, the House Ways and Means panel and the Senate Appropriations Committee. In both chambers, if you're a lobbyist, advocate or junior member, it will be critical to know who's running the floor show for Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.).

With that in mind, these are the top Hill aides to watch in the coming year:

Gary Myrick

Floor director for Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid

Gary Myrick has for several years been Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's right-hand man - and now he's poised to have an even bigger influence on the Democratic agenda in the next Congress. For the past four years, Myrick has served as Reid's chief of staff, helping develop strategy and policy - and often serving as the main liaison between Democratic senators and the majority leader. But in the next Congress, Myrick will be the lead Democratic aide on the Senate floor, serving as secretary for the majority, where he'll be in charge of helping work through the arcane rules of the upper chamber and move bills through the world's most deliberative body. Myrick has been known on Capitol Hill for his expertise on the legislative process, so allies say the new role...
suits him well. Myrick joined Reid's office in 2003, when Reid was whip, and he moved up to the deputy chief of staff position in 2005 before becoming the Nevada Democrat's top aide.

Alexis Covey-Brandt

Floor director for returning House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.)

Despite a low profile outside the Capitol, Alexis Covey-Brandt is one of the most recognizable and trusted aides for Democratic lawmakers during frenzied floor votes, at meetings of House leaders and in the behind-the-scenes machinations that determine which bills, large and small, make it to the floor. After eight years of rising steadily up the ranks of Hoyer's whip and majority leader operations, the Haverford College grad's deft touch quietly helps keep legislative trains moving and vote counts accurate.

Janice Mays

Democratic staff director, House Ways and Means Committee

As Democratic staff director for the House Ways and Means Committee since 1993, Janice Mays has probably had more influence for a longer period of time than any other congressional aide. The Washington Post profiled her earlier this year as "the most powerful woman in Congress you've never heard of." Despite her friendly and open style, she is the prototypical publicity-shy staffer. With her broad knowledge of the diverse tax, health, welfare and trade issues that the committee handles, Mays juggles the many personalities within the committee and the special pleaders from the outside as she whispers advice to Democratic lawmakers. Although the committee was weakened internally by ethics violations that forced Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) to step down as chairman this year, she ensured that the committee's expertise remained a House resource. Mays graduated from Wesleyan College and the University of Georgia law school before joining the Ways and Means staff in 1975.

Austin Smythe

Republican staff director, House Budget Committee

With incoming House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) stepping forward as the central congressional player in the debate over reducing federal deficits, committee staff director Austin Smythe will play a vital role in advising him and preparing options and arguments for the panel. A graduate of the University of Texas, Smythe was a top Republican aide for the Senate Budget Committee in the 1990s. He served in George W. Bush's White House as executive associate director of the Office of Management and Budget. From there, he joined Ryan's staff in late 2007 and has become something of an alter ego to the budget wonk. During a panel discussion on Ryan's budget "road map" this summer at the Brookings Institution, Smythe vigorously rejected criticism of excessive spending cuts and held firm against tax hikes. Like his boss, Smythe told the audience, "We need to be on a positive note, ... and recognizing that we need to do something on [the deficit] is just critically important."

Jon Traub

Republican staff director, House Ways and Means Committee

Jon Traub will serve as staff director for the House Ways and Means Committee and its incoming chairman, Dave Camp (R-Mich.). With the close collaboration between Camp and incoming Speaker John Boehner, Traub has joined GOP leadership staff discussions to prepare for the many tax issues that have piled up in recent years - including income tax rates, the fate of capital gains and estate taxes and the alternative minimum tax. Like Camp, Traub has operated mostly behind the scenes. But he is positioned to use his expertise on health
and corporate tax issues to restore the influence of Ways and Means. After
serving as a top aide to Louisiana Rep. Jim McCrery, he handled tax issues for
the Securities Industry Association before returning to Capitol Hill in 2007,
when McCrery became the panel's top Republican. A native of Minneapolis, Traub
graduated from Haverford College and the University of Virginia law school.

Barry Jackson

Chief of staff for House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio)

Barry Jackson, incoming House Speaker John Boehner's chief of staff, is the
ultimate behind-the-scenes player in Washington.

He doesn't pose for photos, hardly sits for interviews and is a strong hand
in the House Republican Conference's policies. He's a former Bush administration
official - he served as Karl Rove's deputy on the other side of Pennsylvania
Avenue. Jackson, an Ohio native, has been with Boehner since early in his
political career. He helped usher the Republican majority into power in 1994,
serving as a communications guru for the Contract With America. In 2000, he
helped get George W. Bush elected president, organizing governors to barnstorm
the country for the Texan.

This time around, he's involved with crafting the 2010 agenda. He's not
liked in every corner of the House; some see him as abrasive. But his power will
only increase in the new Congress with his longtime boss in control of the
House.

LOAD-DATE: December 9, 2010

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DLA Piper Expands Chicago Office with Prominent Private Equity Group

Chicago - Addition of Experienced Partners Strengthen Firm's Private Equity Practice in Chicago, the United States and Abroad

DLA Piper today announced that David H. Lee, Robert C. Davis and Fred W. Blakeslee II have joined the firm's Private Equity practice as partners in the Chicago office. The group joins the firm from Mayer Brown LLP.

Representing private equity funds, as well as public and private companies, the team focuses on handling sophisticated business transactions around the globe which involve private equity investments.

"David, Rob and Fred have developed a high-profile private equity practice which includes significant experience handling transactions in the US and Asia, as well as a variety of other regions around the globe," said Steve Napolitano, chair of DLA Piper's US Private Equity practice. "Beyond our presence in the United States, DLA Piper's unique global platform, including our offices in Hong Kong, Beijing and Tokyo, matches well with the international needs of their clients."

"The addition of these highly regarded partners is the latest milestone in the strategic growth of our private equity and transactional capabilities in Chicago, as well as nationally," said David Mendelsohn, chair of DLA Piper's Chicago Corporate and Finance practice. "In particular, their arrival strengthens our leveraged acquisitions experience and will also be a nice complement to our already strong Mergers and Acquisitions practice."

"We look forward to the contributions of this accomplished team as we continue to expand the Chicago office with lawyers looking to leverage our global platform," explained William Rudnick, managing partner of DLA Piper's Chicago office.

About the Lawyers

David H. Lee focuses his practice on complex business transactions, including mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, leveraged buyouts, and venture capital and minority equity investments.

Fluent in both English and Korean, Lee has handled a wide variety of transactions on behalf of private equity sponsors and has advised clients on matters valued from several million dollars to more than $2 billion.

Lee received a J.D. from Northwestern University School of Law and a B.A. from the University of Chicago.

Robert C. Davis focuses his practice on private equity leveraged buyouts, mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, and growth equity investments. He has handled transactions ranging from several million dollars to more than $1 billion and has represented closely held companies, public companies and numerous private equity funds.

Davis received a J.D. magna cum laude from the University of Georgia School of Law, an M.B.A. from the Terry College of Business at the University of Georgia, and an A.B. from Duke University.
Fred W. Blakeslee II focuses his practice on private equity-leveraged buyouts, mergers, acquisitions, divestitures and growth equity investments. He received a J.D. cum laude from Northwestern School of Law and both a B.S. and B.A. from Ohio State University.

About DLA Piper’s US Private Equity Practice
DLA Piper’s US Private Equity practice represents private equity funds as well as their principals, management teams, institutional investors, financing sources and portfolio companies in all types of transactions and industries. Clients range from emerging managers to “unfunded” sponsors to traditional sponsors managing billions of dollars in committed capital. In this role, the firm’s US Private Equity practice has helped establish DLA Piper as the top-ranked global M&A legal advisor by deal volume during the first nine months of 2010, according to Mergermarket.

About DLA Piper (www.dlapiper.com)
DLA Piper has 3,500 attorneys in 30 countries and 69 offices throughout the US, UK, Continental Europe, Middle East and Asia. In certain jurisdictions, this information may be considered attorney advertising.

Posted on:
Tuesday, December 07, 2010 09:12 PM

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Big names headed to UGA law school

Associated Press

12:39 p.m. Wednesday, December 8, 2010

Two big names are coming to the classrooms of the University of Georgia School of Law this spring.

Former Georgia Lt. Gov. Pierre Howard is joining the faculty as the Sanders Political Leadership Scholar and will teach a course on law and politics. He served as lieutenant governor from 1991 to 1999 and is currently president of the Georgia Conservancy.


Online:

University of Georgia: http://www.uga.edu

Find this article at:

Lithwick, Howard to teach law classes

Slate magazine writer Dahlia Lithwick and former Georgia Lt. Gov. Pierre Howard will teach some spring semester classes in the University of Georgia School of Law.

Howard will serve as the Sanders Political Leadership Scholar and teach a course on law and politics. He served as lieutenant governor from 1991-99. He has been president of the Georgia Conservancy since last year.

Lithwick, a senior editor and legal correspondent for Slate magazine, will teach "The Media and the Courts" as a visiting professor. She writes the "Supreme Court Dispatches" and "Jurisprudence" sections for Slate, in addition to covering other legal issues.

Her work also has appeared in Elle, The New Republic, Newsweek and The New York Times.

Originally published in the Athens Banner-Herald on Wednesday, December 08, 2010.

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Our magic computers detect that you are either not logged in or registered with us. User registration is required before posting comments. Use the form below to log in.

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Thursday, December 09, 2010

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By Associated Press

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More states enter debate on sharia law

Updated 1h 49m ago

By Donna Leinwand, USA TODAY

Muneer Awad is challenging an Oklahoma constitutional amendment that bars judges from considering international law in state courts.

Muneer Awad's opponents label him "a foreigner" trying to change Oklahoma's laws.

Awad, 27, a recent University of Georgia law school graduate born in Michigan, says he's standing up for the U.S. Constitution. "I'm trying to defend the First Amendment," says Awad, director of Oklahoma's chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

MOSQUE LEADER: Imam behind N.Y. furor promotes pluralism

At issue is an amendment to Oklahoma's constitution passed overwhelmingly on Election Day that bars judges from considering Islamic or international law in Oklahoma state courts. Awad sued, and last week a federal judge temporarily blocked the law from taking effect while she determines whether it violates the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits establishment of a state religion.

Although Oklahoma's law is the first to come under court scrutiny, legislators in at least seven states, including Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee and Utah, have proposed similar laws, the National Conference of State Legislatures says. Tennessee and Louisiana have enacted versions of the law banning use of foreign law under certain circumstances.

Newt Gingrich, former speaker of the U.S. House, is pushing for a federal law that "clearly and unequivocally states that we're not going to tolerate any imported law."

Based on Quran

Islamic law or sharia, which means "path" in Arabic, is a code of conduct governing all aspects of Muslim life, including family relationships, business dealings and religious obligations. It is based on the Quran, or Muslim holy book, and the teachings of the Muslim prophet Mohammed. Islamic countries operating under the guidance of sharia may have varying interpretations of the code.

Awad says the Oklahoma law would prohibit a judge from probating his will, written in compliance with Islamic principles, or adjudicating other domestic matters such as divorces and custody disputes involving Muslims.

Supporters of sharia bans, including Frank Gaffney, president of the Center for Security Policy, say Islamic law is creeping into U.S. courts.

Earlier this year, for example, an appeals court in New Jersey overturned a state court judge's refusal...
to issue a restraining order against a Muslim man who forced his wife to engage in sexual intercourse. The judge found that the man did not intend to rape his wife because he believed his religion permitted him to have sex with her whenever he desired.

The case "presents a conflict between the criminal law and religious precepts," the appeals court wrote. "In resolving this conflict, the judge determined to except (the husband) from the operation of the State's statutes as the result of his religious beliefs. In doing so, the judge was mistaken."

Gaffney's think tank recently published a book that argues jihadists who want worldwide Islamic rule try to establish sharia courts to weaken democracies. "I think you're seeing people coalesce around legislation of the kind that was passed in Oklahoma," Gaffney says.

"In another time, this would be laughed out of the Oklahoma Legislature," Randall Coyne, a professor of constitutional law at the University of Oklahoma College of Law.

"There's no risk of Oklahoma falling under the sway of sharia law or any other law other than American law for that matter. It's fear mongering at its worst."

"It's just fear mongering tinged with anti-Islamic sentiment," he says.

Oklahoma's attorney general will ask an appeals court to lift the injunction and allow the law to take effect.

Constitutional expert Erwin Chemerinsky, dean of the law school at University of California-Irvine, says the Oklahoma law won't stand because it discriminates against one religion and violates the requirement for "full faith and credit," which requires Oklahoma courts to enforce judgments from other states and countries.

"There is no blossoming of sharia law in Oklahoma," says Chemerinsky. "There's no risk of Oklahoma falling under the sway of sharia law or any other law other than American law for that matter. It's fear mongering at its worst."

Americans have no reason to fear sharia law in America, says Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, which advocates for religious freedom.

However, Lynn says he expects to see more attempts to ban sharia law regardless of the outcome in Oklahoma.

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SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 3A
LENGTH: 889 words

HEADLINE: States enter debate on sharia law;
Are bans like Oklahoma's necessary, constitutional, anti-Islamic?

BYLINE: Donna Leinwand

BODY:

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South Carolina legislators proposed a resolution in April that says state courts "shall not look to the legal precepts of other nations or cultures. Specifically, the courts shall not consider Sharia Law" or other international laws.

In Utah, Rep. Carl Wimmer, a Republican from Salt Lake County, withdrew his bill to ban foreign law after he learned that it could harm banking and international businesses. "My bill was just too broad," he says.

Wimmer says he's concerned about "increasing amount of judges who continue to look to foreign law and foreign courts to make their decisions."

"It's not an issue in Utah," he says, "but I wanted to make sure it doesn't become an issue in Utah."

'Just fear mongering'

Ibrahim Hooper, spokesman for CAIR, sees the laws as an indication of growing anti-Muslim sentiment. "I've never seen it like this, even after 9/11," Hooper says. "In another time, this would be laughed out of the Oklahoma Legislature."

Islamic principles are interpreted differently in different parts of the world, Hooper says. "We have not found any conflict between what a Muslim needs to do to practice their faith and the Constitution or any other American laws," Hooper says. "We are, in fact, relying on the Constitution as our last line of defense."

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On the move


Special Saturday, Dec. 11, 2010

REBECCA CRUMRINE

New job title: Shareholder

Employer: Davis, Matthews & Quigley P.C.

Work experience: An Augusta native, she joined DMQ in Atlanta in 2005.

Education: Bachelor of arts from The University of the South; master's in education from the University of Georgia; juris doctorate from the University of Georgia School of Law.

ALLISON LEONARD

New job title: Director of career services

Employer: Miller-Motte Technical College

Work experience: She was previously employed by Allegro Print and Imaging.

Education: Bachelor of science in business management from Georgia Tech

PAMELA WOOD

New job title: Administrative assistant

Employer: Executive Partners of Aiken/Augusta

Work experience: She was previously employed by Meybohm Realtors.

GINA WEEKS

New job title: Community sales leader

Employer: Washington Commons

Work experience: She was previously employed by Element National Management.

MARILYN MERCADO
New job title: Site agent at Walton Farms subdivision

Employer: Executive Partners of Aiken/Augusta

Work experience: She was previously employed by Meybohm Realtors.

TERRY STILL

New job title: Realtor

Employer: Executive Partners of Aiken/Augusta

Work experience: He was previously employed by Prudential Beazley Real Estate.

JENNIFER MILLER

New job title: Site agent at Hitchcock Crossing

Employer: Executive Partners of Aiken/Augusta

Work experience: She was previously employed by Keystone Home Builders.

NORMA SIMPSON

New job title: Site agent at Walton Farms and Spirit Pointe

Employer: Executive Partners of Aiken/Augusta

Work experience: She was previously employed by Meybohm Realtors.

Links:
Arlington, Va., Dec. 13, 2010 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- BNA Tax & Accounting announces that the 2010 Franklin C. Latcham Award for Distinguished Service in State and Local Tax Law honors Judge Bill Thompson, the Alabama Department of Revenue's chief administrative law judge. The award was presented Dec. 13 at a meeting of the BNA Tax & Accounting Multistate Tax Advisory Board in New York City. The Latcham Award is named for Franklin C. Latcham, former Advisory Board chair and founder of BNA Tax Management's State Tax Portfolio Series.

(Logo: http://www.newsroom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20090114/DC59060LOGO-b)

(Logo: http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20090114/DC59060LOGO-b)

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"He has an incredible work ethic and desire for independence, even though he is an employee of the Department of Revenue," said Bruce P. Ely, partner in Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP, based in Birmingham, Ala. "He has achieved a national reputation for clarity of rulings and decisions on some of the major issues facing state tax practitioners today."

"He is a great judge, an inspiration to all of us and our field is better because of his many, learned, thoughtful opinions," said Paul Frankel, chairman of the Multistate Tax Advisory Board and partner in Morrison & Foerster LLP.

"Judge Thompson is a very well-respected and valued employee of the Alabama Department of Revenue," said Cynthia Underwood, acting commissioner of revenue. "He is regarded by many of his peers as a leader and authority on state and local tax law. On behalf of the Alabama Department of Revenue, I congratulate Judge Thompson on receiving this prestigious award, and I'm proud to be associated with him."

Judge Thompson is a 1973 graduate of Auburn University and received his J.D. from the University of Alabama in 1976. From August 1976 until 1983, he was assistant counsel for the revenue department and handled its corporate and personal income tax cases. Judge Thompson received the Alabama State Bar's Award of Merit in 1997 and currently serves on the advisory board to the Paul J. Hartman State and Local Tax Forum.

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About BNA Tax & Accounting

BNA Tax & Accounting is the foremost source of tax and accounting research, news, practice tools, and guidance for tax attorneys, CPAs, corporate tax managers, estate planners, and financial accountants. For more than 50 years, BNA Tax & Accounting has offered practitioners expert insights and guidance on every significant issue in tax and accounting planning and compliance. Written by practitioners for practitioners, BNA's award-winning Portfolios offer topic-driven, in-depth guidance on transactions designed to help tax professionals achieve new levels of excellence and client service. For more information about our products and services, visit BNA Tax & Accounting online at www.bnatax.com.

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LOAD-DATE: December 14, 2010
Morris, Manning & Martin Continues to Grow: Five Attorneys Join in Two Weeks

Atlanta, Morris, Manning & Martin, LLP, an AmLaw 200 law firm and a leader in the corporate technology, capital markets and healthcare arenas, is pleased to announce the addition of three associates:

- Kristie E. Panta, a recent LLM graduate and formerly of Hunter, Maclean, is joining the firm's Healthcare Practice.
- Nicole C. Johnson, formerly of Paul Hastings, is joining the firm's Corporate Technology Practice.
- Athena Mitchell, also formerly of Paul Hastings, is joining the firm's Capital Markets Practice.

On December 1, MMM announced the addition of counsel and the establishment of its Funds & Alternative Investments Practice. Bradford R. Lewis, formerly of DLA Piper, joined the firm in its Raleigh-Durham office and Jason K. Gordon, formerly of Paul Hastings, joined the firm's Atlanta office.

"To end 2010 on a series of very positive notes will give us a great deal of energy as we focus on growth in 2011," offered Louise M. Wells, Managing Partner. "We developed and are executing our strategic plans. The people we are attracting are excited to be part of the momentum as we begin celebrating our 35th Anniversary."
Judge rejects health care law

By Craig Schneider and Katie Leslie
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

6:24 p.m. Monday, December 13, 2010

A key provision of the Obama health care overhaul was struck down Monday by a federal judge in Virginia, just days before another judge will hear a similar legal challenge by Georgia and several other states.

U.S. District Judge Henry Hudson said the law's requirement that all Americans have health insurance or pay a penalty is unconstitutional. He is the first federal judge to invalidate a part of the sweeping overhaul of the American health care system.

The law has been upheld by two other federal judges in Virginia and Michigan. Several other lawsuits have been dismissed and others are pending, including one filed in a Florida court by 20 states, including Georgia. The issue ultimately will be decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Hudson ruled that Congress exceeded its legal authority by forcing Americans to purchase health insurance.

"An individual's personal decision to purchase — or decline to purchase — health insurance from a private provider is beyond the historical reach of the Commerce Clause" of the Constitution, Hudson wrote. The Commerce Clause is the section of the Constitution that empowers Congress to regulate businesses that operate across state lines.

The Virginia decision has no immediate impact for consumers, because the judge did not grant the plaintiffs request to suspend implementation of the law. Mandates that took effect in September remain in place, including requirements that insurers cover dependent children until the age of 26 and eliminate lifetime limits on coverage.

Opponents of the law hailed the ruling, specifically the invalidation of the requirement that everyone have health insurance, known as the individual mandate.

"Good timing," said Gov. Sonny Perdue's spokesman Bert Brantley on the Virginia ruling. "It obviously gives our case even more credibility."

Supporters of the health care overhaul stressed that Judge Hudson's ruling is just one among a series of contradictory decisions. They said they believe the Supreme Court will uphold the law.

"This is still the law of the land," said Cindy Zeldin, executive director of Georgians for a Healthy Future.
On Thursday, Pensacola federal judge Roger Vinson, who surprised constitutional scholars when he declared in October that that lawsuit can go to trial, will hear motions for summary judgment in the Florida case.

Like the lawsuit that was the basis for Monday's ruling, the Florida challenge focuses on arguments against the individual mandate. It also addresses the assertion that the law will financially burden states with an explosion of Medicaid cases.

"I don't think any state can afford it," Gov.-elect Nathan Deal said Monday, vowing to continue Georgia's fight against the law. "It will be for our state billions of dollars."

The state Department of Community Health has estimated that the additional cost to the state would start at $100 million to $200 million a year, eventually reaching more than $500 million a year. Supporters of the law say the federal government will bear some of the costs and that the state is capable of covering the rest.

Fazal Khan, an assistant professor of health care law at the University of Georgia, said he sees similarities in the ways Judge Hudson and Judge Vinson are treating the cases, which could indicate a ruling favorable to Georgia. Both judges declined initial motions to dismiss the case, and both expressed reservations about the individual mandate. In October, Judge Vinson wrote that the requirement "is simply without prior precedent," adding that "people have no choice and there is no way to avoid it."

Health care overhaul has stirred strong debate in Georgia, including unsuccessful attempts by the state Legislature to block the federal action. While supporters of the law have accused the state of dragging its feet on implementation, state officials say they are moving forward.

The Virginia ruling could influence public opinion, creating pressure for Congress and the president to rethink the plan, said Wayne Oliver, vice president of Newt Gingrich's Center for Health Transformation. Without the individual mandate, there would be no effective mechanism for covering more than 30 million uninsured Americans — including about a million in Georgia. If that provision is struck down, other aspects could follow, Oliver said.

The Virginia and Florida cases are among about two dozen legal challenges around the country to the health care overhaul. Opinions differ as to how the issue would come before the Supreme Court. Some legal experts predict that the cases will be combined; others say a single case will reach the court first and become the template against which all subsequent cases are weighed. In any case, experts expect the high court to rule on the law before the 2014, when the individual mandate would take effect.
UGA law graduate to clerk for US Supreme Court

Associated Press - December 14, 2010 2:14 PM ET

ATHENS, Ga. (AP) - A University of Georgia law school graduate has been selected to clerk for the U.S. Supreme Court.

Brian C. Lea will serve as a judicial clerk for Justice Clarence Thomas, a Georgia native, for the October 2011 term. Lea is the fifth UGA law graduate selected in the last seven years to be a clerk for the nation's highest court.

Lea is an attorney for DLA Piper’s Atlanta office. Before that, he was a clerk for Judge Ed Carnes on the U.S. Court of Appeals.

He graduated from UGA in 2009.

Online:

University of Georgia: http://www.uga.edu

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ATHENS, Ga., Dec. 14 -- The University of Georgia issued the following news release:

University of Georgia School of Law 2009 graduate Brian C. Lea will serve as a judicial clerk for Justice Clarence Thomas of the U.S. Supreme Court for the October 2011 term. Lea is the fifth Georgia Law graduate selected in the last seven years to clerk for the U.S. Supreme Court.

"This is a tremendous achievement for Brian, and we are extremely proud of him," said Dean Rebecca H. White. "A U.S. Supreme Court clerkship is considered one of the most elite appointments a law school graduate can obtain. Brian's selection is a testament to his outstanding academic ability and accomplishments, and I am confident he will do an outstanding job.

"Our students have had great success in recent years in being chosen for these very prestigious positions," she added. "It is gratifying to see their talent, hard work and dedication recognized and to know the school provided them with an excellent foundation in the law."

Lea graduated first in his class from Georgia Law, where he received numerous awards and honors for his academic achievements, served as an articles editor of the Georgia Law Review and was inducted into the Order of the Coif. He served as a judicial clerk for Judge Ed Carnes of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit before joining DLA Piper as a litigation associate in the firm's Atlanta office. He plans to remain with the firm until his Supreme Court clerkship begins next year.

"I cannot think of a greater honor and privilege than clerking for our nation's highest court," said Lea. "I am humbled to have this opportunity and am thoroughly looking forward to working for Justice Thomas as he addresses the most important legal issues in our nation."

Lea added that his selection would not have been possible without the help and guidance of Carnes, White and Georgia Law professors Peter B. "Bo" Rutledge and Lonnie T. Brown, among others. "Each of those people really stepped up to the plate to help me, and I am extraordinarily grateful," he said. "I very much enjoyed my time at Georgia Law. The quality of the educational experience at the school is outstanding, and the faculty regularly goes above and beyond the call of duty for students. It was a terrific three years."

Earlier this fall, The New York Times examined the schools from which U.S. Supreme Court clerks obtained their law degrees and ranked Georgia Law third
among public law schools and 11th overall for the time period 2005-2010.

For more information about UGA's School of Law, see www.law.uga.edu. For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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HERTY & BOCOCK DRIVE
ATHENS, GA 30602-6018
UGA Law grad to clerk for U.S. Supreme Court

Atlanta Business Chronicle

Date: Tuesday, December 14, 2010, 10:26am EST

The University of Georgia School of Law 2009 graduate Brian C. Lea on Tuesday was named a judicial clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas for the October 2011 term.

Lea is the fifth Georgia Law graduate in the last seven years to clerk for the U.S. Supreme Court.

Lea graduated first in his class from Georgia Law, where he received numerous awards and honors for his academic achievements, served as an articles editor of the Georgia Law Review and was inducted into the Order of the Coif.

He served as a judicial clerk for Judge Ed Carnes of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit before joining DLA Piper as a litigation associate in the firm's Atlanta office. He plans to remain with the firm until his Supreme Court clerkship begins next year.

"I cannot think of a greater honor and privilege than clerking for our nation's highest court," Lea said, in a statement. "I am humbled to have this opportunity and am thoroughly looking forward to working for Justice Thomas as he addresses the most important legal issues in our nation."
FRONT ROYAL -- Randolph-Macon Academy has announced a new vice president for development.

Catherine "Kittie" Abell has been chosen for the position, according to a news release from Director of Public Relations Celeste Brooks.

Abell is the current director of advancement at the Epstein School located near Atlanta. Abell, a graduate of Franklin and Marshall College, previously worked at the Schenck School, University of Georgia Law School and the Shepherd Hospital Center. Abell also has served as a U.S. congressional legislative assistant and a development consultant.

Abell is replacing Suzanne Shaw, who is retiring after five years, according to the release. Abell is tentatively scheduled to start work in early January.
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
December 15, 2010 Wednesday
Main Edition

SECTION: METRO NEWS; Pg. 5B
LENGTH: 1270 words
HEADLINE: County by county
BYLINE: Steve Visser, Bill Rankin, Larry Hartstein, Ernie Suggs, Megan Matteucci, April Hunt, John Thompson, Tammy Joyner; Staff, For the AJC

BODY:

Atlanta

Chief to meet with Citizens Review Board

Atlanta Police Chief George Turner is expected to meet with the Atlanta Citizens Review Board at noon today. The board, which investigates citizen complaints against officers, called the meeting to address his failure to respond to its recommendations on discipline. Board executive director Cristina Beamud said Turner volunteered to meet with the board, which voted this month to subpoena him. On Tuesday, the chief also responded to the board reports, one which had awaited his response since April, Beamud said.

Atlanta lawyer to clerk at U.S. Supreme Court

Atlanta lawyer Brian Lea has been selected to serve as a clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas during the court's October 2011 term.

Lea, who graduated first in his class from the University of Georgia School of Law in 2009, will be the school's fifth former student to clerk on the court in the last seven years, UGA said.

Mother, daughters rescued from house fire

A fire broke out at 1:10 a.m. Tuesday in a two-story, wood-frame house on Joseph E. Boone Boulevard --- two doors from Fire Station 16 in northwest Atlanta.

Firefighters kicked in the front door and found three people inside suffering from smoke inhalation, Fire Capt. Jolyon Bundridge said. The mother was found semiconscious, and her daughters, ages 20 and 10, were unconscious, officials said. All three are in stable condition, Bundridge said.

Center leases land from church for garden

Wheat Street Baptist Church, in the heart of Atlanta's Old Fourth Ward neighborhood, has leased four acres of inner city land to the Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture to build an organic vegetable garden. With the help of City Council Member Kwanza Hall and the Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation, TLW will soon bring fresh vegetables to the inner city community.

ERNIE SUGGS

DeKalb

CEO to unveil 2011 budget proposal today

DeKalb County CEO Burrell Ellis will present his proposed 2011 budget to the County Commission this afternoon.
Ellis puts the budget together, but the commission has the final approval. A final vote is scheduled for early next year.

Officials say Ellis will likely call for a property tax increase to meet an anticipated $55 million shortfall in the budget.

Commissioner Lee May, chairman of the budget committee, said the commission will not approve a tax hike until the CEO reorganizes the government and makes drastic cuts in spending. MEGAN MATTEUCCI

Acting finance director a finalist for position

Acting DeKalb County Finance Director Joel Gottlieb is the finalist for the permanent position.

On Tuesday, CEO Burrell Ellis recommended Gottlieb for the position. The county commission's budget committee will interview Gottlieb before the commission votes on the appointment next week, commissioners said. MEGAN MATTEUCCI

Commission appoints four to MARTA board

The DeKalb County Commission appointed four residents to the MARTA board on Tuesday. The newest MARTA members include real estate attorney Wendy Butler, real estate agent Harold Buckley Sr., Buckhead Community Improvement District executive director Jim Durrett and Citizens Trust Bank executive vice president Frederick Daniels Jr. The MARTA board is made up of 11 voting members, including four who live in DeKalb. MEGAN MATTEUCCI

Retiring judge to join Emory as a fellow

DeKalb County Superior Court Judge Robert J. Castellani retires at the end of the year but he is not taking much of a breather.

He is joining Emory University's Center for the Study of Law and Religion on Jan. 1.

Castellani, who served as a judge for 26 years, was a 1966 honors graduate of Emory law school. As the Spruill Family Senior Fellow in Law and Religion, he plans to research how religious and spiritual values influence legal decisions. He also will teach legal ethics. STEVE VISSER

Principal dons tutu to help raise money

A principal wearing a tutu helped raise $795 for DeKalb County's International Community School. Parents pledged money in exchange for Principal Laurent Ditmann wearing a pink tutu and ballet slippers while standing on the side of Covington Highway. The result was extra cash for the school's arts show and lots of laughing drivers Friday morning, said Brian Carr, a school volunteer. The art show is scheduled for March. MEGAN MATTEUCCI

Stone Mountain's Walk and Wine on Saturday

A holiday wine tasting that encourages people to visit various shops in Stone Mountain will be held in the village this weekend. The Walk and Wine will be held Saturday in participating shops and galleries. Also featured will be Barry Brown, author of "Crossroads of Conflict," and George Colletti, who wrote "Stone Mountain, the Granite Sentinel." The free event is 6 to 8 p.m. throughout downtown. For information, visit www.stonemountainvillage.com. APRIL HUNT

Southside
South Fulton, Clayton, Fayette, Henry

East Point residents to pay more for electricity

Starting in January, East Point electric customers will pay a power cost adjustment fee of an additional $7.07 per 1,000 kilowatts of use.

For the average East Point customer with a use of 832 kilowatts per month, the increase is about $5.88 per month. The East Point City Council also authorized the implementation of a $7 discount per month on electric utility services for eligible senior citizens.

JOHN THOMPSON, FOR THE AJC

Fulton schools awarded grant for $80,000

An $80,000 grant is headed to Fulton County Schools' Early Childhood Department from the state agency overseeing Georgia's public pre-kindergarten programs, officials announced Tuesday. The grant --- one of 113 awarded statewide --- will provide one transition coach for the school system. LeMell Cobbs, a former resource coordinator for Fulton's pre-k program, will work in that capacity to help youngsters transition into pre-k and then kindergarten. This year, about 1,590 children attend pre-k classes in 41 of Fulton's 59 elementary schools. NANCY BADERTISCHER

Ron Clark Academy to get new athletic field

An earth-friendly playground and athletic field for the students at Ron Clark Academy is closer to reality, thanks to a donation from the Ovie Mughelli Foundation. The groundbreaking was Tuesday for the facility at 228 Margaret St., S.E. in Atlanta. JOHN THOMPSON, FOR THE AJC

Leadership graduates recognized for work

Two graduates of the Clayton County Grass-roots Leadership Institute were recognized recently for their achievement in the 13-week course.

Joy Tellis Cooper, owner of a nonprofit foundation for homeless kids, won a $650 scholarship to "Leadership Clayton," another leadership class. The scholarship comes from the Clayton County Chamber of Commerce.

Kimberly Allen, author of the "Clayton Talk" blog in The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, received the M.E. "Mike" Glanton Sr. Servant Leadership Award, named after a state representative. It includes $250. TAMMY JOYNER

Groups raise $35,290 for Real Men Wear Pink

Four Henry County community groups raised $35,290.93 for Henry Medical Center's Real Men Wear Pink Campaign.

The groups and their donations were Chick-fil-A at Eagle's Landing, $971.93; Tanger Outlet Mall, $32,509; Tussahaw Elementary School, $1,200; and Westbury Health and Rehabilitation Center, $610.

The money will be used to further the hospital's breast awareness initiatives. TAMMY JOYNER

Hapeville's film festival to start Feb. 11

After a successful run in the fall, Hapeville is gearing up for the second run of its film festival.

The Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers series kicks off with a
UGa Law Grad to Clerk at Supreme Court

UGA Law Grad to Clerk at Supreme Court
By Tim Bryant @ December 15, 2010 4:19 AM Permalink | Comments (0)

A University of Georgia law school graduate will serve as a Clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. 2009 UGa College of Law alum Brian Lea becomes the fifth University law student in the past seven years to serve as a clerk for a Justice on the nation's highest court.

Tags: Brian Lea | Clarence Thomas | U.S. Supreme Court | University of Georgia
HEADLINE: Alabama Law Judge Bill Thompson Receives BNA Tax & Accounting Award For Distinguished Service in State Tax.

BODY:

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the Multistate Tax Commission.

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12/20/2010 9:25 AM
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UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA LAW SCHOOL
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Assistant DA to target drugs
By Todd Truelove
The Toccoa Record

Maggie Hastings, 25, is the new assistant district attorney prosecuting drug cases for the Mountain Judicial Circuit, which includes Stephens, Habersham and Rabun counties.

A graduate of Clemson, Hastings said she completed law school at the University of Georgia.

She said she had a goal to set a standard where drug dealers with multiple offense would be sentenced to prison for life without parole.

"We've got a lot of people with multiple possession with intent to distribute charges," said Hastings.

According to the district attorney's office, over the past two years 650 cases have been opened on offenses relating to drug charges in the three-county circuit — 355 in 2009 and 295 in 2010.

In Stephens County, 151 drug-related cases were opened in 2009 and 117 more so far in 2010.

Hastings said the circuit was fortunate to have the resources available from the Narcotics Criminal Investigation and Suppression team (NCIS).

She follows in the legal footsteps of her father, Robin Alley, and grandfather, George Alley — who were both criminal trial attorneys in South Carolina.

Hastings took over the circuit's drug cases in November, but formerly served with the circuit as a law student from 2009-2010.

"I tried three cases as a law student and won them all," she said.

Those cases included charges relating to an arson case, a car theft accusation and a family violence incident.
Hastings is married to Jonathan Hastings.
UGA grad to clerk for Supreme Court justice

By JOE JOHNSON - joejohnson@onlineathens.com
Published Saturday, December 18, 2010

A University of Georgia law school graduate will serve as law clerk for Justice Clarence Thomas when the U.S. Supreme Court begins its next term in October.

Brian C. Lea is the fifth UGA law school grad to be selected to clerk for a Supreme Court justice in the past seven years.

"I cannot think of a greater honor and privilege than clerking for our nation's highest court," Lea said. "I am humbled to have this opportunity and am thoroughly looking forward to working for Justice Thomas as he addresses the most important legal issues in our nation."

After graduating first in his class in 2009, Lea clerked for Judge Ed Carnes of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Lea is now a litigation associate with DLA Piper and plans to remain with the law firm's Atlanta office until his job as Thomas' clerk begins.

Clerking for a Supreme Court justice is the most prestigious appointment a new lawyer can obtain, and hundreds of candidates apply each time there is an open position, according to UGA law school Dean Rebecca White.

"These are highly sought-after positions, and the competition to secure a clerkship is quite intense," White said.

Clerks work closely with justices, researching the law, helping to draft opinions and recommending which cases the Supreme Court should consider, she said.

Earlier this fall, The New York Times examined which schools turned out the most Supreme Court clerks over a recent five-year period and ranked UGA third among public law schools and 11th overall.

Prior to Lea, Merritt McAllister of UGA law school's class of 2007 clerked for Justice John Paul Stevens. She is now with the high-power law firm King & Spalding.

Anne Dupre graduated from UGA in 1988, clerked for Justice Harry Blackmun and later returned to the law school as a professor.

"Almost all of our other Supreme Court clerks are now in private practice, although I suspect some ultimately will follow professor Dupre's path into the legal academy," White said.

Originally published in the Athens Banner-Herald on Saturday, December 18, 2010

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Susu says so long to Chatham school board

By Jenel Few
Created 2010-12-18 01:00
School board bids farewell to longtime member

Summary:
The Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools Board has lost its sass.

Susu says so long to Chatham school board

The December board meeting was the last for Susu Cox. After 12 years the scrappy, outspoken District 1 School Board Representative did not run for re-election.

"This is an end of an era for the Chatham County Public Schools," said Board President Joe Buck.

The board presented Cox with red roses, a watch and a certificate of appreciation at the start of the December board meeting.

Cox was first elected in 1998. Long before she joined the board she was a concerned public school parent who sat in the audience and kept an eye on how district money and programs were being handled. She served on several district committees to provide community input and was eventually encouraged to make her school board participation official. Although small in stature she put up a big fight when it came to raising school property taxes.

"Susu you know your stuff," said fellow board member Alexander Luten. "You are a person who doesn't take any foolishness."

Every year Cox made sure the district budget had adequate funding for art, music, gifted services, specialty programs and student travel. Whenever school board discussion involved anything related to rainy day funds, Title I Programs or block scheduling Cox was sure to demand the floor. Everyone knew to brace themselves for a really, really long speech.

Few will ever forget the district's probationary period with its accrediting agency in 2004 or
Cox's dogged determination to battle the forces that entangled her in accusations of misconduct. Since then the board has overhauled its policies and earned School Boards of Distinction status. But the debacle almost cost the school system its accreditation and resulted in a recall campaign. It was a turbulent time, but Cox stood her ground. During one heated community meeting she fearlessly faced off with a jeering crowd.

"Wait a minute," she said, steely-eyed. "This is my meeting. I want to answer your question ... We don't need to have the hooting and hollering."

Cox overcame the criticism, accusations, probation and even the recall attempt. She ultimately determined the time and terms of her school board departure.

"Susu and I have a special bond because we have gone through so much together," said a tearful board member Lori Brady. "It's been a difficult road and you have survived the true test of time lady. I'm really going to miss you."

Cox was overcome by emotion. But, true to form, she wasn't dissuaded from speaking her mind.

"It is a commitment and a true cause that all of us share, including all of the staff members and the board members," Cox said as she stood before the crowd at her final board meeting. "I know what you each put into it. I don't know if many others do."

The December Savannah-Chatham County Board of Education meeting was the last for Susu Cox. [1]
New face in the First District

Savannah lawyer Julie Wade will represent the First District on the Savannah-Chatham Public School Board.

District 1 includes to the north, Ardsley Park, south to Burnside Island and east to the Isle of Hope area and Whitemarsh Island. Wade grew up in Marietta and graduated from the University of Georgia School of Law and is a member of the Georgia and Savannah Bar Associations. She is a graduate of Leadership Savannah and serves on the Board of Directors of the Historic Savannah Foundation. She and her husband, Drew, have three young children.

"When we moved here, we were told repeatedly that public school is not an option for families seeking a good education for their children. We have learned that simply is not true," Wade said. "Our children are receiving a fantastic education in the public school system. While we still have a lot of work to do, I ran for school board to be a part of that change and to make sure that every family has a public school option."

Wade is a product of public schools and said she believes they can work. She believes her critical thinking skills and legal background will help her make well reasoned, knowledgeable decisions on the board.

"I am also a mom and the only school board member with young children, so I am seeing firsthand the elementary level education and have a vested interested in our school system in the long term," she said.

She hopes her board service will lead to increased community participation, greater use of technology in the classroom, and a greater investment in early literacy.

"We must recruit, train, and supervise principals and teachers with special skills to educate and to improve performance in these schools," Wade said. "We need to get our youngest children reading on grade level. And we must stand firm on discipline issues to eliminate distractions to the children that are there to learn."

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Greene associate at Bogart law practice

Attorney Marie Greene recently was named an associate with the Lavender, Baker & Slider law firm in Bogart, after being sworn into the state Bar of Georgia.

For the past two years, Greene worked with the Bogart law firm as a law clerk while she worked on her law degree at the University of Georgia. After graduating in May, she began studying for the bar exam, which she took in July. She received her results in October, and was sworn in and accepted to the state Bar in November.

She graduated summa cum laude from the University of Georgia with degrees in both speech communication and public relations prior to pursuing her law degree. She was active in both the moot court and mock trial teams while in law school winning the Best Oralist award at the Intrastate Competition in 2008, the regional competition at the National Moot Court Competition in Atlanta in 2009, and finished as a quarterfinalist in the National Competition in New York City in this year.

She has experience in and currently is handling cases in the areas of family law, criminal defense, real estate law, business organization, nonprofits and real estate disputes.

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Two more lawyers leave Epstein Becker & Green

Trenches, from page 1

Marting said her clients include Gwinnett Hospital System, DeKalb Medical, Medical Center of Central Georgia, Bayada Nurses and Acadia Healthcare.

“I was the only one doing certificate of need work at Epstein Becker. I’ve stepped into a team here, which is so nice,” she said, adding that she is working with an associate, Jennifer E. Tyler, and a paralegal, Kari Lesser, familiar with certificate of need matters in Atlanta and that the Birmingham-based firm has people in other offices handling that work as well.

Marting said she is “born and bred on hospitals.” She spent five years working as a medical technologist in the blood banks at the American Red Cross in Washington and Shands Hospital in Gainesville, Fla., before deciding to go to law school at the University of Florida.

Marting had practiced at Powell Goldstein, now Bryan Cave, for her entire career before joining Epstein Becker in July 2007, after key defections from Powell Goldstein caused its health care practice to scatter.

Knowlton also joined Epstein Becker in 2007, from Stites & Harbison. Before that, she, like Marting, practiced at Powell Goldstein.

Knowlton said Miller & Martin has a larger environmental and litigation practice to support her practice. “I needed to move to have more help on my cases,” she said. “That need became acute for a couple of clients, and I joined Miller & Martin right before Thanksgiving.”

Knowlton said Georgia Tech is one of her largest clients. She handles property management issues for the university, she said, and represents other large landowners as well as manufacturing companies, which she declined to name.

In addition to environmental and litigation attorneys who can assist her in her practice, Knowlton said Miller & Martin has a base of manufacturing clients, which she called “the sweet spot for an environmental attorney.”

Knowlton reported more activity in the manufacturing sector. “I’m seeing a stepped up level of transactions for companies that aren’t overextended,” she said. “There are a lot of Midwestern companies buying up industrial property and manufacturing facilities in Georgia.”

She added that she’s started doing environmental due diligence on a mergers and acquisition deal since joining Miller & Martin last month. Knowlton said environmental attorneys in general are busy these days because of the increase in due diligence work on deals plus regulatory work as a result of increased enforcement.

Epstein Becker’s local managing shareholder, M. Maxine Hicks, and chairman, Douglas A. Hastings, did not respond to requests for comment.

Patent attorneys Robert A. Hodges and David E. Huizenga joined Pabst Patent Group as of counsel from Arnall Golden Gregory in mid-November. Two scientific advisers made the move with them, Jonas Jarvholm and Sandra A. Sciascia-Zirger, as well as an associate, Leslie Maisano.

Hodges and Huizenga joined Arnall Golden in spring 2008 from Needle & Rosenberg, an intellectual property boutique that became part of Philadelphia-based Ballard Spahr that June.

Hodges said that he and Huizenga had worked with Patrea L. Pabst, the principal of Pabst Patent Group, at Arnall Golden, where they started their careers before joining Needle & Rosenberg.

“T’ve trained Bob and David 10 years ago when I was a partner at Arnall Golden,” said Pabst, adding that she was “delighted” to have them join her firm. Pabst said the firm handles health care and chemistry patents and practices patent prosecution, counseling and litigation for universities, startups and investment firms.

With the new additions, she said the firm has six lawyers and six patent agents.

“We’ve been swamped with work this year and are very busy,” she said, adding that the firm has hired three staff since the beginning of the year.

Hodges said he and Huizenga both handle biomedical and biotechnology patents. Their clients include Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute, based in La Jolla, Calif., the Medical University of South Carolina and Vicor Technologies Inc., a biotech company making cardiac diagnostic products in Boca Raton, Fla.

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Donald J. Palmisano Jr., the general counsel and director of government relations for the Medical Association of Georgia, will become the group’s executive director on Jan. 10. Palmisano succeeds David A. Cook, who has been appointed by governor-elect Nathan Deal as commissioner of the Georgia Department of Community Health.

Patent lawyer Jeffery B. Arnold has joined Cantor Colburn as a partner from Yoss (formerly Adorno & Yoss). Arnold focuses his practice on chemistry patents, including new drug applications for generic drug companies, chemical manufacturing processes, flooring products and medical devices. Arnold was a member of the Army Judge Advocate General’s Corps before entering private practice. He was a chemical engineer with Texaco before becoming a lawyer.

T. Cullen Stafford has joined Ford & Harrison as an associate. Stafford received his J.D. from Emory University Law School this year.

Arnall Golden Gregory has elected seven new partners: affordable housing practitioner Althea J.K. Broughton in the real estate practice; Sean P. Fogarty in the corporate practice; Michael F. Holbein in the bankruptcy and litigation practices; Edward A. Marshall and Scott A. Wandstrat in the litigation practice; and Keith A. Mauriello and Robert T. Strang III in the health care practice.

Brian C. Lea, a litigation associate at DLA Piper, will serve as a law clerk for Justice Clarence Thomas of the U.S. Supreme Court for the October 2011 term. Lea clerked for Judge Edward E. Carnes of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals before joining DLA Piper. He is a 2009 graduate of the University of Georgia School of Law, where he graduated first in his class. Lea is the fifth UGA Law graduate chosen as a Supreme Court clerk in the last seven years, according to a statement from UGA.
FSB FisherBroyles welcomes John Snyder, Union County District Attorney

Charlotte - FSB FisherBroyles, a Limited Liability Partnership, is pleased to announce Union County District Attorney John Snyder will launch the North Carolina litigation group in January 2011.

John is a graduate of Wingate University and Regent University School of Law. He is a member of the Charlotte chapter of the Inn of Court, Charlotte Leadership Forum and prior to serving as the State’s youngest District Attorney he practiced in both State and Federal court. "FSB's business model is groundbreaking in its approach to delivering value to the client with nationally renowned lawyers. I am honored to have been selected to join FSB where the core values of excellence, service and achievement are the hallmarks of the firm. In a field where people pride themselves on the idea that "perception is reality," FSB seeks to employ a substantive approach to the real needs of its clients in a cost effective business model."

Gideon Moore, Managing Partner of FSB's Charlotte office stated, "John's impressive background and reputation as a litigator make a natural fit for FSB's Law Firm 2.0® model of excellence. John's unique abilities and talents will serve our clients in North Carolina and around the country in securing results consistent with their needs. John has achieved a statewide reputation for excellence in how he has performed as a District Attorney, and he is very excited to bring that reputation to FSB."

Further press inquiries can be made to Gideon Moore at (704) 708-4067 and at www.FSBlegal.com.

About FSB. Founded in 2002, FSB FisherBroyles is a full-service, national law firm of 60 lawyers with attorneys in Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas, and New York. Conceived as the "Next Generation Law Firm™," FSB eliminates unnecessary overhead that does not add value to clients and instead offers a more cost-effective solution to brand-name clients such as AGL Resources, American Express, BB&T, Morgan Stanley, Porsche and Suniva.

FSB's co-founder James Fisher explains, "we believe that FSB's integrated cloud-based Law Firm 2.0® business model represents the beginning of a paradigm shift in the way law will be practiced in the future. It appears that the marketplace agrees with us." In September, Best Lawyers and U.S. News & World Report named FSB as a Tier 1 Atlanta firm for information technology law. In June, the Atlanta Business Chronicle named FSB as one of the top law firms in the city, and Business to Business Magazine recently included James Fisher and Kevin Broyles among its 2010 Top 25 Atlanta Entrepreneurs, making them the first law firm entrepreneurs to ever be recognized by the publication.

Other North Carolina Attorneys. Gideon Moore, Charlotte Office Managing Partner. Gideon Moore brings a breadth range of corporate, finance and real estate experience to the firm. He has significant experience in negotiating and drafting various complex documents related to stock and asset acquisitions and dispositions, commercial financing transactions and commercial real estate transactions. Gideon has represented an array of individuals, private companies, real estate developers, public companies and financial institutions in transactions ranging in value from less than $100,000 to over $50 billion. Gideon received his undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his law degree from Duke University School of Law where he was editor-in-chief of the Duke Law and Technology Review. He is licensed to practice law in both New York and North Carolina.
Ashley Tison, Charlotte Partner. Ashley Tison's real estate practice includes all aspects of commercial and residential real estate development and management. Ashley represents developers, builders, tenants and landlords in devising creative solutions for work-out and re-tooling scenarios to accommodate the current real estate economic trends. Ashley's corporate practice includes mergers and acquisitions, corporate and limited liability company formation and governance, and other organizational transactions. Ashley's corporate practice also involves private equity, venture and mezzanine capital access and deployment. Ashley regularly practices in the field of sports law, focusing on all aspects of representation for the athlete/entertainer/sponsor. Ashley received his undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and his law degree from the University of North Carolina School of Law where he was senior staff member of the North Carolina Journal of International Law and Commercial Regulation. He is licensed to practice law in both North Carolina and South Carolina.

Deborah Ausburn, Atlanta Partner (licensed in North Carolina).
With a successful U.S. Supreme Court argument and dozens of jury trials under her belt, Debbie Ausburn brings an unusual depth of experience to FSB's business litigation department. She handles a wide variety of contractual and tort issues for a diverse array of clients. She has defended numerous companies and small businesses in cases involving personal injury, professional negligence, breach of contract, insurance coverage, constitutional law, and other claims. Debbie's experience includes seven years as a federal prosecutor in western North Carolina, where she prosecuted crimes ranging from child abuse to drug trafficking to murder. She received numerous citations, and was lead counsel in several precedent-setting appellate cases. Debbie received her law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law, where she served on the Editorial and Managing Boards of the Georgia Law Review. She also authored a Student Note for the law review, and was elected to the Order of the Coif. She clerked for the Hon. J.L. Edmondson, Chief Judge of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, and is licensed to practice law in Georgia and North Carolina.

Rachel Huffstetler, Atlanta Partner (licensed in North Carolina).
Rachel Huffstetler concentrates her practice in Intellectual Property, specifically the prosecution of patents and trademarks both domestic and foreign. Rachel is a former Patent Examiner with the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office and specializes in the procurement of patent protection for her clients and has significant experience in the mechanical, electromechanical, textile, and chemical technologies. Rachel also has significant experience procuring design patent protection and procuring trademark registrations, both foreign and domestic. Additionally, Rachel is experienced in pre-litigation counseling including validity, non-infringement, and design around opinions. Rachel has worked with clients of varying sizes, from large corporations to start-ups, and with clients in diverse technological fields. Rachel is licensed to practice law in North Carolina and is also registered to practice before the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office.

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Katherine Shell came back home to Newnan for Christmas as a recent law school graduate, but she'll return to Washington, D.C., as a full-fledged attorney.

Superior Court Judge William F. Lee swore in Shell at the Coweta County Justice Center Thursday.

"One of the real pleasures I have as a Superior Court judge is to welcome new attorneys into the profession, and the pleasure is even greater when I am admitting someone I actually know," Lee told Shell just before she took her oath.

"I've known Katherine all her life. And I've known her family all my life," said Lee.

"I thought the world of her mother and her father is one of my closest friends," said Lee.

"It's important to me that the legal profession continue to be one that we can be proud of," said Lee. "I feel good about our profession with people like Katherine going into it."

After the oath Lee told Shell she was now certified to practice law in the state of Georgia.

"You are now a lawyer. Congratulations," Lee said.

The 2003 Newnan High School graduate said her cousin, Judge Seay Van Patten Poulakos, was a big influence on her decision to enter the legal profession. Poulakos participated in the swearing in ceremony by presenting Shell to Judge Lee.

"I'm happy to be home for a few days to spend some time with my family and friends," said Shell.

She said she likes to be home in Newnan, but she also enjoys the "excitement and energy" of the nation's capital.

"I love it," she said.

The 2010 University of Georgia Law School graduate now works for the U.S. Chamber for Legal Reform in Washington as a research analyst and a contract administrator for international policy.

"I've always been interested in the entire judicial system and ways to make it work efficiently to..."
represent the people," she said.

She said she's not sure where her career will take her, but that's one of the most exciting things about it.

"That's one thing I like about my career," said Shell. "It can go in a lot of different directions."

She said her father, Rhodes Shell, has been one of her inspirations.

"I think he is glad to be a part of this and just to see it happen," she said.

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People, Places & Things

Athens Banner-Herald
Published Saturday, December 25, 2010

Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology: University of Georgia counseling psychology professor Edward Delgado-Romero has received the American Psychology Association 2011 Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest, one of only six awards given by the 100,000-member organization. Delgado-Romero is a professor in the UGA College of Education department of counseling and human development services. Delgado-Romero teaches advanced theories, internship and advanced multicultural counseling in the counseling psychology doctoral program.

UGA law student selected to clerk for the U.S. Supreme Court: University of Georgia School of Law 2000 graduate Brian C. Lea will serve as a judicial clerk for Justice Clarence Thomas of the U.S. Supreme Court for the October 2011 term. Lea is the fifth Georgia Law graduate selected in the last seven years to clerk for the U.S. Supreme Court.

Lea graduated first in his class from Georgia Law, where he received numerous awards and honors for his academic achievements. He served as an articles editor of the Georgia Law Review and was inducted into the Order of the Coif. He served as a judicial clerk for Judge Ed Carnes of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit before joining DLA Piper as a litigation associate in the firm’s Atlanta office. He plans to remain with the firm until his Supreme Court clerkship begins next year.

ON THE LIST

Hannah Shivar of Athens was named to the President’s Club at Truett-McConnell College.

Lauren Brown and Megan Fulcher of Athens were named to the Dean’s List at Truett-McConnell College.

Courtney Barister of Canon; April Dutton, Cori Layton and Julie McBath of Carnesville; Hayden Salls of Colbert; Christopher Morris of Elberton; Jonathan Bell of Franklin Springs; Angela Reno,
Local lawyers make magazine 'elite' list

Athens Banner-Herald
Published Sunday, December 26, 2010

Georgia Trend magazine's December issue included the publication's Legal Elite, an annual compilation of the state's top attorneys as rated by their peers in the state bar.

To compile the list, Georgia Trend mailed ballots to a sampling of lawyers who are members of the state bar and whose practice areas correspond to categories featured in the magazine. Ballots also were garnered through the magazine's website.

Among the listing were Athens attorneys Ed Tolley under criminal law and Michael C. Pruett in tax/estates and trust.

Athens native Paul Oeland was listed under family law. Oeland earned his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Georgia and now practices in Conyers.

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Judicial watchdog agency's budget almost dry

By Bill Rankin
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

11:22 p.m. Tuesday, December 28, 2010

The state's judicial watchdog agency is poised to bring charges against several judges, but may not be able to do so because its budget is running dry, Executive Director Jeff Davis told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

The Judicial Qualifications Commission, the small state agency that investigates judges, has just $1,600 left in its budget for investigations and prosecutions through fiscal year 2011, which ends June 30.

In an interview Tuesday, Davis declined to identify the judges the seven-member commission may pursue, citing the JQC's requirement that cases remain confidential until formal charges are filed. If charges cannot be filed, the cases will be delayed, and a number of suspect judges will remain on the bench, he said.

The JQC's budget for the current fiscal year is $251,749. It has two full-time employees -- Davis and his administrative assistant. The agency's fixed costs total more than $225,000, leaving about $24,000 for investigations and prosecutions.

"We are in dire straits," Muscogee County Superior Court Judge John Allen, vice chair of the JQC, said. "Without money for investigations, we can't really function. We'd be a totally ineffective organization."

The JQC, charged with overseeing the state's roughly 1,800 judges, was created by a constitutional amendment in 1972. Over the past two years, it has been busy as numerous state judges have resigned in disgrace amid allegations of sexual improprieties, harassment, voter fraud and chronic absenteeism.

As more high-profile cases make the news, more complaints come pouring in, Davis said. The JQC received 489 complaints against judges during FY 2010. This fiscal year, the commission is on track to receive more than 600.

Not all complaints warrant intensive scrutiny, but complaints accusing judges of criminal conduct or serious ethical breaches are docketed by the JQC and investigated. Last fiscal year, the agency docketed 33 cases for further investigation. During the first six months of the current fiscal year, the agency has already docketed 56 cases, Davis said.

"It's absolutely critical that this agency operate and function," University of Georgia law school professor Ron Carlson said. "They've done a surprisingly effective job on a shoestring budget, but you can't expect this work to go on and the integrity of the judiciary to be guaranteed with the agency operating on a
Judicial watchdog agency's budget almost dry

A recent national survey by the nonprofit American Judicature Society showed that, of the 22 states that responded, Georgia spends the least for judicial investigations on a per-judge basis. Georgia spends $139 for every judge, the survey found. Five states spend more than $1,000 for every judge, with California, at $1,893, spending the most.

Cynthia Gray, director of the society's center for judicial ethics, said budgets can vary because of a number of reasons, such as the number of judges a state has, the number of complaints that are filed and whether an agency has to pay its own rent.

"This is an important issue that requires a commitment of funds and time," she said. "We're aware that most states are suffering severe budget challenges. But you get what you pay for."

As for the JQC, Davis said, "We're as bare-bones as you can get."

The commission recently moved its office from Covington to a bank office in Madison, where it uses an old vault to store sensitive files. The move saved about $1,000 a month in rent. "For our little agency, that was big, really big," Davis said.

For investigations, the JQC employs Richard Hyde, a former Atlanta Police detective who is also one of Gov. Sonny Perdue's special investigators in the Atlanta Public Schools test-cheating scandal. This year, Hyde was given authority by the JQC to confront judges with allegations and his investigative findings. He then gives judges the opportunity to resign before formal charges are filed.

Two Fayette County judges, for example, resigned abruptly this year after Hyde paid them a visit. Paschal English resigned after being confronted with disclosures he was having an affair with a public defender, and Johnnie Caldwell stepped down after being told he had been accused of sexually harassing a local attorney.

The JQC allows this arrangement, Davis said, because the commission's mandate is to protect the public from judges engaged in misconduct. "The sooner a judge can be removed from the bench, it serves the purpose of protecting the public and does so in a very efficient and effective manner," he said.

Hyde, who declined comment, charges $105 an hour for his investigations. But he submits bills for only half of his work and does not ask to be reimbursed for expenses, Davis said.

The JQC still owes former state Attorney General Mike Bowers about $56,000 for his work as a special prosecutor, Davis said. In January, Bowers tried former Twiggs County Probate Court Judge Kenneth Fowler for misconduct in a case that ultimately led the Georgia Supreme Court to remove Fowler from office.

Davis said the agency is asking the Legislature for increased emergency funding of $50,000, solely for investigation and prosecution expenses through the current fiscal year.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Wendell Willard, R-Sandy Springs, said the JQC has done a fine job with limited resources. "There's no denying there's a crying need that they need more financial support," he said, "but the state is in an unbelievably difficult financial situation."
House Speaker David Ralston, R-Blue Ridge, agreed. Many state agencies have been operating on limited budgets the past two fiscal years, he said. "But we will certainly listen to the case the JQC has for supplemental funding and deal with it appropriately."

Out of office

Since early 2008, about 20 Georgia judges have resigned or been removed from office either under a cloud of suspicion or after being publicly accused of misconduct. The Judicial Qualifications Commission isn't necessarily involved every time a judge resigns. Among those who have left office are:

Fayette County Superior Court Judge Johnnie Caldwell, who resigned after being accused of making rude, sexually suggestive comments to an attorney.

Superior Court Judge James Cornwell Jr. of the Mountain Judicial Circuit, who resigned after allegations he went to Las Vegas with a woman whose divorce he signed and that he took his underage son to a strip club.

Fayette County Chief Superior Court Judge Paschal English, who resigned amid disclosures he was having an affair with a public defender assigned to his court. A deputy found them having sex in a parked car.

Twiggs County Probate Judge Kenneth Fowler, who was removed for requiring criminal defendants to prove their innocence and having defendants "buy out" of their community service by making deposits into a bank account he controlled.

Cobb County Chief Superior Court Judge Kenneth Nix, who resigned after being accused by a county prosecutor and investigator of inappropriately touching their bottoms.

Fulton County Chief State Court Judge A.L. Thompson, who resigned amid revelations electronic parking garage records showed he came to the courthouse just 56 days in a seven-month period.

Chief Superior Court Judge Ernest "Bucky" Woods of the Mountain Judicial Circuit, who resigned after being accused of contacting a female criminal defendant through Facebook.
Judicial probes stalled; Without money, panel can't investigate, remove errant jurists from office.

BYLINE: Bill Rankin; Staff

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"We are in dire straits," Muscogee County Superior Court Judge John Allen, vice chair of the JQC, said. "Without money for investigations, we can't really function. We'd be a totally ineffective organization."

The JQC, charged with overseeing the state's roughly 1,800 judges, was created by a constitutional amendment in 1972. Over the past two years, it has been busy as numerous state judges have resigned in disgrace amid allegations of sexual improprieties, harassment, voter fraud and chronic absenteeism.

As more high-profile cases make the news, more complaints come pouring in, Davis said. The JQC received 489 complaints against judges during FY 2010. This fiscal year, the commission is on track to receive more than 600.

Not all complaints warrant intensive scrutiny, but complaints accusing judges of criminal conduct or serious ethical breaches are docketed by the JQC and investigated. Last fiscal year, the agency docketed 33 cases for further investigation. During the first six months of the current fiscal year, the agency has already docketed 56 cases, Davis said.

"It's absolutely critical that this agency operate and function," University of Georgia law school professor Ron Carlson said. "They've done a surprisingly effective job on a shoestring budget, but you can't expect this work to go on and the integrity of the judiciary to be guaranteed with the agency operating on a shoestring."

A recent national survey by the nonprofit American Judicature Society showed that, of the 22 states that responded, Georgia spends the least for judicial investigations on a per-judge basis. Georgia spends $139 for every judge, the
survey found. Five states spend more than $1,000 for every judge, with California, at $1,893, spending the most.

Cynthia Gray, director of the society's center for judicial ethics, said budgets can vary because of a number of reasons, such as the number of judges a state has, the number of complaints that are filed and whether an agency has to pay its own rent.

"This is an important issue that requires a commitment of funds and time," she said. "We're aware that most states are suffering severe budget challenges. But you get what you pay for."

As for the JQC, Davis said, "We're as bare-bones as you can get."

The commission recently moved its office from Covington to a bank office in Madison, where it uses an old vault to store sensitive files. The move saved about $1,000 a month in rent. "For our little agency, that was big, really big," Davis said.

For investigations, the JQC employs Richard Hyde, a former Atlanta Police detective who is also one of Gov. Sonny Perdue's special investigators in the Atlanta Public Schools test-cheating scandal. This year, Hyde was given authority by the JQC to confront judges with allegations and his investigative findings. He then gives judges the opportunity to resign before formal charges are filed.

Two Fayette County judges, for example, resigned abruptly this year after Hyde paid them a visit. Paschal English resigned after being confronted with disclosures he was having an affair with a public defender, and Johnnie Caldwell stepped down after being told he had been accused of sexually harassing a local attorney.

The JQC allows this arrangement, Davis said, because the commission's mandate is to protect the public from judges engaged in misconduct. "The sooner a judge can be removed from the bench, it serves the purpose of protecting the public and does so in a very efficient and effective manner," he said.

Hyde, who declined comment, charges $105 an hour for his investigations. But he submits bills for only half of his work and does not ask to be reimbursed for expenses, Davis said.

The JQC still owes former state Attorney General Mike Bowers about $56,000 for his work as a special prosecutor, Davis said. In January, Bowers tried former Twiggs County Probate Court Judge Kenneth Fowler for misconduct in a case that ultimately led the Georgia Supreme Court to remove Fowler from office.

Davis said the agency is asking the Legislature for increased emergency funding of $50,000, solely for investigation and prosecution expenses through the current fiscal year.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Wendell Willard, R-Sandy Springs, said the JQC has done a fine job with limited resources. "There's no denying there's a crying need that they need more financial support," he said, "but the state is in an unbelievably difficult financial situation."

House Speaker David Ralston, R-Blue Ridge, agreed. Many state agencies have been operating on limited budgets the past two fiscal years, he said. "But we will certainly listen to the case the JQC has for supplemental funding and deal with it appropriately."

Out of office

Since early 2008, about 20 Georgia judges have resigned or been removed from
office either under a cloud of suspicion or after being publicly accused of misconduct. The Judicial Qualifications Commission isn't necessarily involved every time a judge resigns. Among those who have left office:

Fayette County Superior Court Judge Johnnie Caldwell, who resigned after being accused of making rude, sexually suggestive comments to an attorney.

Superior Court Judge James Cornwell Jr. of the Mountain Judicial Circuit, who resigned after allegations he went to Las Vegas with a woman whose divorce he signed and that he took his underage son to a strip club.

Fayette County Chief Superior Court Judge Paschal English, who resigned amid disclosures he was having an affair with a public defender assigned to his court. A deputy found them having sex in a parked car.

Twiggs County Probate Judge Kenneth Fowler, who was removed for requiring criminal defendants to prove their innocence and having defendants "buy out" of their community service by making deposits into a bank account he controlled.

Cobb County Chief Superior Court Judge Kenneth Nix, who resigned after being accused by a county prosecutor and investigator of inappropriately touching their bottoms.

Fulton County Chief State Court Judge A.L. Thompson, who resigned amid revelations that electronic parking garage records showed he came to the courthouse just 56 days in a seven-month period.

Chief Superior Court Judge Ernest "Bucky" Woods of the Mountain Judicial Circuit, who resigned after being accused of contacting a female criminal defendant through Facebook.

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Dogs’ bowl history includes some unforgettable games
10:27 am December 30, 2010, by Bill King

Has a Georgia team ever looked better than the Dogs did against Colt Brennan and Hawaii?
(Associated Press)

Skipper’s Knights might consider Friday’s Liberty Bowl game against Georgia their “Super Bowl” and the biggest game in Central Florida history, but from a UGA perspective it’s the same sort of scenario as last season’s Independence Bowl. In other words, not likely to go down in UGA annals as one of the Dogs’ more celebrated postseason match-ups.

Last year, as Georgia prepared to cap off another mediocre season with a mediocre bowl trip that nobody could get excited about (but which actually saw UGA sell more tickets than this year’s game!), I reminisced about my favorite bowl wins by the Dogs besides the obvious choice of the national championship win over Notre Dame. I opted for the Jan. 2, 1984, upset of the undefeated, No. 2-ranked Texas Longhorns in the game that spawned the oft-used phrase, “it’s still 10 to 9 in Dallas.”

This year, I decided to let some other UGA fans share their favorite bowl memories.

“I liked the total destruction of Hawaii in the Sugar Bowl best,” my brother Tim said of the Jan. 1, 2008, demolishing of the Colt Brennan media myth. “I think the Hawaii game was probably one of the most complete games UGA has played under Mark Richt.”

But Tim is also quite fond of the the black-britches 33-6 win over Wisconsin in the Jan. 1, 1998, Outback Bowl featuring Mike Bobo, Hines Ward and Robert Edwards versus Ron Dayne, and Bobo setting a completion record by hitting 92.8 percent of his passes that day.

I have to agree with Tim that Georgia looked terrific that night against Hawaii — so good they entered the next season as the nation’s No. 1 team. Too bad it’s been mostly downhill since then. And that Outback Bowl was probably the high point of the Jim Donnan era.

My other brother, Jon, says his favorite is the Dec. 30, 2006, Chick-fil-A Bowl we all attended, “where we came back to beat the Hokies! Charles Johnson was tearing them up.” Indeed, Johnson forced a fumble, had a
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couple of sacks and broke up a pass that night.

Preston Ridehuber led the Dogs in the Sun Bowl win over Texas Tech. (University of Georgia)

My old friend Dan goes back a bit further with his favorite Georgia bowl game: the Dec. 26, 1964, Sun Bowl game against Donnie Anderson and Texas Tech, a 7-0 win for the Dogs in Vince Dooley's first season. Dan's second pick is the Cotton Bowl win over Texas. And he's also quite fond of the Dec. 31, 1966, Cotton Bowl, "where Kent Lawrence (later police chief, law school classmate at UGA and last I checked state court judge) ran all over SMU," with 149 yards for the day, including a 74-yard touchdown run on the second play of the game.

But Dan adds: "Any bowl UGA wins is a good bowl. Also any bowl that GTU loses goes on my favorites list. As I've told you before, if al-Qaida had a football team and they played Tech, I'd pull for AQ."

So this year's Independence Bowl made Dan very happy. For the sixth year in a row.

My high school buddy Johnny also opts for the 10-9 win over Texas in the Cotton. "I loved that game," he said. "We did everything we could to both win and lose that game."

At the other end of the spectrum, Johnny remembers the Jan. 1, 1969, 16-2 loss by a supremely talented Georgia team to Arkansas in the Sugar Bowl, which "taught me that there is a whole lot more to coaching then playing the game. Coach Dooley really upset the team when he picked the Sugar Bowl. Hence the lack of enthusiasm by the UGA players in that game. What an ugly loss!"

Kent Lawrence's long touchdown run in the Cotton Bowl is fondly remembered.

(Cotton Bowl)

My childhood pal Carl says his pick is "by far the '66 Cotton Bowl. No. 34 notwithstanding, that '66 team was, in
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my opinion, Dooley’s best. They had some studs on that team; George Patton, Bill Stanfill, Lynn Hughes, Ronnie Jenkins, Kent Lawrence. I think the ’66 team was better overall than the ’80 team. If the ’66 bunch hadn’t stubbed their toe at Miami on a Friday night, they’d have gone undefeated.”

My friend Steve has two favorite bowl games, both of which he attended. The first is the Jan. 1, 1993, Citrus Bowl against against Kirk Herbstreit and Ohio State in Orlando. “Great win against a big-name school.” The other, Steve says, “would have to be the 1998 Outback Bowl in Tampa over Wisconsin. Mike Bobo was phenomenal. It was supposed to be very competitive, but we jumped on them early. Very fun win.”

And then there’s my old schoolmate Rusty, a lifelong Bulldogs fan, who goes against the grain by picking a Georgia loss as his favorite bowl.

“Although it was a total downer of a game, the [Jan. 1, 1977] Sugar Bowl when we played Pittsburgh is my favorite,” Rusty says, in part because the 1976 team is his favorite.

“We were underdogs in virtually every game and were behind by 14 points at the half in most (California, South Carolina, Florida come to mind), plus we shut out the Bear! We went to New Orleans arguably playing for the national championship — we were certainly playing the #1 team. I think #2 USC and #3 Ohio State were in the Rose Bowl and we were #4.

“Anyway, we got the living stew beat out of us at a game that was so early (11 a.m. if I remember right) I didn’t even feel hungover until the half.”

As for the game itself, Rusty recalls “we didn’t get beat so much by Tony Dor-SETT as by Matt Cavanaugh. One of few times we were totally outclassed in a bowl game. Despite all that, I have nothing but good memories. Went with good friends from law school (we were third-years). … Our first time in New Orleans and, as with most of my life experiences, the first is usually the best.”

Rusty remembers Pitt coach Johnny Majors and his entourage “coming into the piano bar at Pat O’Brien’s after the game. He didn’t realize that most of the people in the bar were Dogs fans but he figured it out when Mitch Delk got the pianist to play ‘Glory, Glory’ followed by ‘Rocky Top,’ then ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home.’ (Everybody knew he was going to leave Pitt for] Tennessee.) He and his group quickly got up and left. So, we may have lost the game but we totally won the party. Woof!”

Yes, even a losing bowl trip can produce great memories.

Feel free to share your own memories of bowl trips and your own favorite Dogs bowl games.

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