YEAR IN REVIEW





ALABAMA STATE BAR
415 DEXTER AVENUE
MONTGOMERY, AL 36104
334.269.1515 | WWW.ALABAR.ORG

2025-2026
YEAR IN REVIEW

4 LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

6 BOARD OF BAR COMMISSIONERS

7 ASB EVENTS

8 BAR BY THE NUMBERS

9 MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

10 MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL COUNSEL

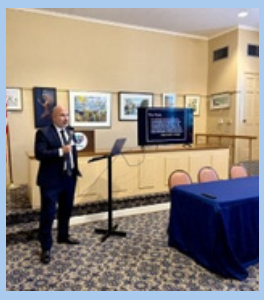
11 STAFF DIRECTORY

TACKLE BOX TOURS

We held four Tackle Box Tour events, where we helped attorneys enhance their legal “tackle box” with CLE sessions on ethics, criminal law sentencing, and state bar member benefits. The events were held in Moody, Fayette, Phenix City, and Andalusia.







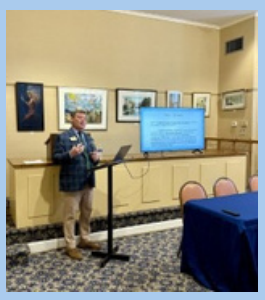


















Alabama State Bar

SUPPORTING WHAT MATTERS

SUPPORTING WHAT MATTERS: A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As this Bar year comes to a close, I am proud to look back on the work we have done together and grateful for the chance to serve alongside so many dedicated lawyers, judges, volunteer leaders, and staff members in the Alabama State Bar.

This year’s theme, Supporting What Matters, was more than a phrase. It reflected a responsibility we never take lightly: to serve our members, strengthen the profession, and protect the institutions that help uphold the rule of law. This year, we worked hard to make sure we did that work well.

For me, that work began with supporting and advancing the important initiatives launched by the presidents who came before me. Much of that work does not always happen in the spotlight, but it matters. It requires steady attention, continued investment, and a commitment to making sure good ideas keep moving forward long after they are first announced.

Over the past several years, the Alabama State Bar has made meaningful investments in lawyer well-being, access to justice, and rural practice. Drive4Five helped lead to a partnership with BetterHelp to provide mental health counseling and support for Alabama lawyers. Justice4AL has become an important resource for Alabamians seeking legal information and assistance. Harvesting Hope, which began as a Bar initiative focused on strengthening rural access to legal services, has grown into Harvesters of Hope, an independent nonprofit organization carrying that mission forward.

Each of these efforts reflects something deeply important about our profession. Lawyers serve best when they are supported, the public is better served when legal resources are easier to find, and communities are stronger when access to justice is not limited by geography or financial means.

This year also included important institutional work for the Alabama State Bar. We successfully worked to clarify the Bar's agency status as an agency of the judicial branch. This legislation formalized what we have long understood to be our role and helped provide greater clarity in areas such as procurement and operations.

It was an important step in ensuring that the Bar can continue to function consistently and effectively within the structure of Alabama's judicial system.

At the same time, we continued preparing for the future of lawyer licensure through the transition to the NextGen Bar Exam. Although implementation is still ahead, significant preparation is already underway. This transition requires careful planning, communication, and coordination to ensure that Alabama is ready for this important change in the way future lawyers are examined and admitted to the profession.

We also looked ahead to an opportunity to showcase Alabama on a national stage. In 2026, Alabama will host the Southern Conference of Bar Presidents for the first time in 17 years. This is more than a meeting. It is an opportunity to welcome bar leaders from across the region, highlight the strength of the Alabama State Bar, and share the many ways Alabama has helped lead — in the legal profession, in public service, and in the broader story of our state.

As I pass the torch to President-Elect Jana Garner, I do so with confidence in the future of this organization. The Alabama State Bar is well-positioned to continue supporting its members, strengthening public trust in the legal system, and advancing the work that matters most to Alabama lawyers and the people they serve. She will be an excellent leader.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your president and for the many ways you continue to support the work of the Alabama State Bar.

Frederick G. Helmsing, Jr.
150th President of the Alabama State Bar



BOARD OF BAR COMMISSIONERS

Jeff Utsey
1st Circuit

Randy Bozeman
2nd Circuit

Elizabeth Smithart
3rd Circuit

Kyra Sparks
4th Circuit

Kesa Johnston
5th Circuit

Josh Hayes
Scott Holmes
6th Circuit

Will Broome
7th Circuit

David Langston
8th Circuit

Tamara Neeley
9th Circuit

Jimbo Terrell
Stephen Still
Andrew Nix
Freddy Rubio
Ashley Peinhardt
Conrad Anderson
Sharon Stuart
Ryan Robichaux
Brandy Robertson
10th Circuit

Leslie Moore
10th Circuit
Bessemer Cutoff

Ralph Holt
11th Circuit

Carmen Howell
12th Circuit

Edwin Lamberth
Lisa Cooper
Evan Parrott
Steve Nicholas
Suntrease Williams-Maynard
13th Circuit

Robert Richardson
14th Circuit

Bobby Poundstone
Pat Sefton
Joel Connally
Leon Hampton, Jr.
Felicia A. Long
Wallace Mills
15th Circuit

Brad Cornett
16th Circuit

Hunter Compton
17th Circuit

Clay Carr
Julius Shanks
Doug Smith
18th Circuit

J. Pratt Austin-Trucks
19th Circuit

William Lee
20th Circuit

Kirk Garrett
21st Circuit

Manish Patel
22nd Circuit

Mark Debro
Doug Martinson
Robin Wolfe
David Holt
23rd Circuit

Ron Strawbridge
24th Circuit

Chrissy Riddle
25th Circuit

Jorja Loftin
26th Circuit

Greg Price
27th Circuit

Steven Savarese
Lang Floyd
Lynn Perry
28th Circuit

Sally Bowers
29th Circuit

John Rea
30th Circuit

Edgar Black
31st Circuit

Matthew Carter
32nd Circuit

Lee Knowles
33rd Circuit

Jeff Bowling
34th Circuit

Bob McMillan
35th Circuit

Jerome Thompson
36th Circuit

Kelly Davidson
Artie Vaughn
37th Circuit

Deborah Dunsmore
38th Circuit

Mitchell Shelly
39th Circuit

Tyler Sims
40th Circuit

Jeff Sherrer
41st Circuit

Angela Kennedy
At-Large, Place 1

Raymond Bell
At-Large, Place 2

Holly Sawyer
At-Large, Place 3

Al Vance
At-Large, Place 4

Sebie Sellers
At-Large, Place 5

Lisha Graham
At-Large, Place 6

Leila Watson
At-Large, Place 7

Mitch Kemmer
At-Large, Place 8

John Stamps
At-Large, Place 9

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL


Fred Helmsing
President


Tom Perry
Past President


Jana Garner
President-Elect


Jeff Bowling
Vice President


Terri Lovell
Secretary


Raymond Bell
Executive Council


Joel Connally
Executive Council


Will Lee
Executive Council


Mark Boardman
Parliamentarian


Devan Byrd
Ex-Officio


Christen Butler
Ex-Officio


George Parker
Ex-Officio

To view the board minutes from the Board of Bar Commissioners meetings, go to www.alabar.org/board-of-bar-commissioners/board-minutes/ or scan the QR code here.

Solo & Small Firm Seminar

In collaboration with the Alabama Law Foundation, we hosted our first seminar designed to give solo and small firm practitioners the tools and strategies they need.



Milestone Luncheon

We honored our 50-year members on September 4, 2025 at the second annual Milestone Luncheon. Nearly 80 members who were admitted to the Alabama State Bar in 1975 joined us at Ross Bridge for the special event.



Admission Ceremony

On October 23, 2025, we celebrated our new admittees at the Admission Ceremony in Montgomery.



Law Day

We celebrated Law Day on May 1, 2026. Alabama lawyers spoke to over 2,000 students across the state.



Leadership Forum

We announced the lawyers selected for Leadership Forum Class 20. Leadership Forum is recognized as a dynamic and highly effective program for nurturing and developing leadership skills and values among a select group of qualified, promising attorneys each year.



Pro Bono Celebration Month

Each October, we celebrate the work of our pro bono lawyers and highlight the impact they have on their communities.



BAR BY THE NUMBERS
2025-2026

19,960
ACTIVE MEMBERS

1,361
MEMBERS ADMITTED IN PAST 3 YEARS

1,045
MEMBERS ADMITTED FOR 50+ YEARS

MEMBER DEMOGRAPHICS

62.8% MALE
37.2% FEMALE

17% 36 OR YOUNGER
50% 37-59 YEARS OLD
33% 60 OR OLDER

36 OR ↓: 48% MALE | 52% FEMALE
37-59: 60% MALE | 40% FEMALE
60 OR ↑: 76% MALE | 24% FEMALE

6,465
Members involved in one or more of the ASB's **33** sections

960
Members serving on one or more of the ASB's **29** committees & task forces

12 NEW MEMBER BENEFITS ADDED

2025 BAR EXAM STATS

- **875** TOTAL EXAMINEES
- **44.23%** PASSAGE RATE
- **119** ADMITTED BY UBE
- **97** ADMITTED BY RECIPROCITY

2,292
FREE ETHICS OPINIONS* ISSUED BY ASB'S ETHICS COUNSEL TO MEMBERS
*INFORMAL

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

- **1,238** Complaints Received
- **1,278** Complaints Screened Out
- **143** Formal Investigations

PRIVATE REPRIMANDS	24
PUBLIC REPRIMANDS	10
SUSPENSIONS	13
DISBARMENTS	6
SURRENDER OF LICENSE	0
DISABILITY TRANSFERS	6
BOARD HEARINGS	10

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROGRAM

131 ATTORNEYS ACCEPTING CASE ASSIGNMENTS
37 CLINICS HELD

44.5
AVERAGE NUMBER OF PRO BONO HOURS WORKED PER ATTORNEY

LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE

11,233 REFERRALS IN 2025
43 REFERRALS PER DAY

49 SIDEBAR NEWSLETTERS EMAILED TO AN AVERAGE OF **14,987** ASB MEMBERS EACH WEEK

CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

1,118
attorneys presented CLEs

29
live Zoom CLE courses hosted by ASB

5,990
hours of live CLE credit awarded **for free** to members

16,321
CLE courses completed on our TopClass portal

Finance Department

In FY 25, the finance department managed approximately

$9.7 million
in cash receipts for the ASB and its related foundation entities

$8.8 million
in cash disbursements for the ASB and its related foundation entities

ALABAMA LAWYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

148
attorneys & students currently served

44
new clients added

1,004,233 WEBSITE VISITS
14,244 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWING

THE ALABAMA LAWYER IS MAILED TO **ALL 50 STATES & 20 COUNTRIES**

58% EMAIL OPEN RATE

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Behind the Numbers: The Work of Serving Alabama Lawyers

Each year, the Alabama State Bar's annual report gives us an opportunity to pause and reflect on the work of the past Bar year. By measuring this work through the numbers, it provides us with a snapshot of where we are. We can count the members we serve and the programming we offer. The data can reflect our engagement with volunteers, the multitude of free CLE programming offered, and it can show how the initiatives we have advanced have positively impacted our members. These numbers are important because they show the reach and extent of the Bar's work.

But numbers are mere statistics that can only tell part of the story. Behind each of these numbers is a person, most likely a lawyer. Our lawyers are using their wisdom and training to provide guidance to their clients. Our lawyers are giving of their time in pro bono efforts across our sixty-seven counties. Our lawyers are serving as leaders in their communities, whether it be on the Little League field, in a house of worship, or in a civic organization. Their involvement is impactful and meaningful and can never be accurately captured in a statistic.

But it is their work that makes our work at the Alabama State Bar possible. As the legal profession continues to evolve, the Bar must continue to respond with useful resources, clear communication, and steady leadership. Every day we must show up to support our members and this profession. This report shows an organization committed to doing the necessary work and doing it well with professionalism and purpose.

As we close one Bar year and begin another, I am grateful for the lawyers who serve their communities, for the officers and commissioners who lead with thoughtfulness and integrity, for the section and committee leaders who give their time and energy, and for the staff of the Alabama State Bar, whose dedication supports this work.

I am also grateful to President Fred Helmsing for his steadfast leadership, dedicated service, and for the kindness he has shown this past year. Fred has led with professionalism and an unassuming sense of humor whenever the situation called for it. Quietly and kindly, he has propelled this Bar forward in meaningful ways.

As much as it has been a privilege to work alongside Fred, it remains an absolute honor of mine to continue to work alongside you, our members. I thank you for this opportunity to serve and to help make our profession the best it can be. I look forward to continuing this good work in the coming year.

Terri B. Lovell
Executive Director
Alabama State Bar



MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL COUNSEL

Artificial Intelligence and the Practice of Law

Artificial intelligence continues to change the way lawyers work. From drafting and research to document review, summaries and client communication, AI tools are becoming part of daily law practice for many attorneys. Used responsibly, these tools can improve efficiency and help lawyers better serve their clients. Used without proper oversight, they can create serious problems.

This year, the Office of General Counsel released **Artificial Intelligence Use: Best Practices Under Existing Professional Conduct Rules**, the Bar's first AI-focused ethics guidance for Alabama lawyers. The guidance makes one point clear: AI does not replace a lawyer's professional responsibilities. Instead, it places longstanding duties like competence, confidentiality, supervision, candor to the court, reasonable fees, and communication with clients, and applies them to a new and rapidly changing setting.

The safest approach is not to avoid AI altogether, but to use it thoughtfully, with clear guardrails. Lawyers should understand the tools they are using, protect client information, verify AI-generated work, supervise staff use, communicate with clients when appropriate, and ensure that professional judgment remains with the lawyer.

READ THE FULL AI ETHICS GUIDANCE

Scan the QR code to read **Artificial Intelligence Use: Best Practices Under Existing Professional Conduct Rules**, released by the Alabama State Bar Office of General Counsel.

AI Use Checklist for Alabama Lawyers

Before using AI in a client matter, have you:

- □ Confirmed that the AI tool is approved and has appropriate data protections?
- □ Reviewed the tool's data-retention and training policies?
- □ Removed identifiable client information or obtained client consent?
- □ Crafted prompts with the proper context, jurisdiction and applicable rules?
- □ Reviewed AI-generated content and applied your own legal judgment?
- □ Verified every citation, statute and factual statement against authoritative sources?
- □ Checked court rules and standing orders for AI disclosure requirements?
- □ Documented the AI tool used, the task performed and the verification steps taken?
- □ Confirmed that no legal judgment or client advice was delegated to AI?
- □ Reviewed any AI-generated client communication before it was sent?
- □ Ensured that staff use of AI was properly supervised by an attorney?

The checklist included with this report is intended to be a practical resource for Alabama lawyers as they evaluate and use AI in their practices. It is not a substitute for the Rules of Professional Conduct, but it offers a useful starting point for asking the right questions before relying on AI in client work.



As this technology continues to evolve, the Office of General Counsel will continue to help Alabama lawyers navigate these issues with clarity, care and attention to their professional obligations.

Roman A. Shaul
General Counsel
Alabama State Bar

STAFF DIRECTORY

ADMINISTRATION
Terri Lovell, Executive Director
terri.lovell@alabar.org
Chad Coker, Director of Operations
chad.coker@alabar.org

ADMISSIONS
Karen Laneaux, Director of Admissions
karen.laneaux@alabar.org
LaDonna Vinson, Admissions Coordinator
Sonia Douglas, Administrative Assistant
Michelle Woodham, Administrative Assistant

ATTORNEY LICENSING
Cathy Sue McCurry, Attorney Licensing
cathysue.mccurry@alabar.org
Amy Fawcett, Administrative Assistant

COMMUNICATIONS
Melissa Warnke, Director of Communications
melissa.warnke@alabar.org
Olivia Walker, Communications Coordinator

ETHICS DIVISION
Tripp Vickers, Ethics Counsel
tripp.vickers@alabar.org

FINANCE
Merinda Hall, Director of Finance
merinda.hall@alabar.org
Ann Keller, Administrative Assistant

INFORMATION SYSTEMS
Hunter Harris, Information Systems Manager
hunter.harris@alabar.org

LAW PRACTICE MANAGEMENT
Jillian Evans, Practice Management Advisor
jillian.evans@alabar.org

LAWYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
Shannon Knight, Director & Case Manager
shannon.knight@alabar.org
April Allen, Administrative Assistant

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL
Suzi Huffaker, Legislative Counsel

LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE
John Dunn, LRS Representative
john.dunn@alabar.org

MEETINGS & EVENTS
Robyn Bernier, Meetings & Events Coordinator
robyn.bernier@alabar.org

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL
Roman Shaul, General Counsel
roman.shaul@alabar.org
Jeremy McIntire, Deputy Chief General Counsel
Mark Moody, Assistant General Counsel & Compliance Counsel
Autumn Caudell, Assistant General Counsel
Justin Jones, Assistant General Counsel
Stacey Moseley, Disciplinary Clerk
Angie Burkhalter, Paralegal to General Counsel
Angie Head, Paralegal
Carol Mott, Client Security Fund Coordinator
Julie Lee, Receptionist

SECURITY & FACILITY
Matt Mara, Security & Building Manager
matt.mara@alabar.org
Stephanie Oglesby, Receptionist
stephanie.oglesby@alabar.org

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROGRAM
Hilaire Armstrong, Director of VLP
hilaire.armstrong@alabar.org
Michael Granger, VLP Clinic Coordinator
Jordan Gilmore, Intake Clerk
Natasha Ware, Intake Clerk



ALABAMA STATE BAR
415 DEXTER AVENUE
MONTGOMERY, AL 36104
334.269.1515 | WWW.ALABAR.ORG