

# Board of Trustee Candidate Statements – District A1-A2

## Maggie Benson



I am an employment lawyer in Littler Mendelson's Fayetteville office. I've served on the Arkansas Bar Association's Board of Governors, I am co-chair of the Bar's Professional Committee, and I co-chaired the inaugural Public Service Academy, presented by the Arkansas Bar and the Clinton School of Public Service. I also serve on the 2020 Eighth Circuit Conference Planning Committee.

I went to law school in Little Rock while getting my master's degree at the Clinton School. During that time, I worked with Legal Aid of Arkansas, the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, and the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico. I went to Hendrix College for undergrad; between Hendrix and law school, I worked for the U.S. House of Representatives.

I am an El Dorado native and a proud graduate of Little Rock Central High. I live in Fayetteville with my husband, Matthew. I would love the opportunity to continue working with the Bar as a member of the Board of Trustees, and would greatly appreciate your vote.

## Evelyn E. Brooks



Greetings to the members of the Arkansas Bar Association. I am running for one of the eight trustee positions in district A1/A2. My juris doctor degree is from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. I have a family law firm that now includes myself and two of my daughters. I have practiced law in Fayetteville for over thirty years specializing in workers' compensation and Social Security disability law. My firm continues to fight for disabled and injured workers in Arkansas. I am licensed in Arkansas and Oklahoma, and have spoken at various continuing legal education programs and at the annual Arkansas Workers' Compensation seminar sponsored by the Arkansas Workers' Compensation Commission. I am a member of the Arkansas Bar Association, the Arkansas Trial Lawyers Association, the Oklahoma Bar Association, the National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives, and the Washington County Bar association. Because of my history and long experience I believe I can contribute to the Bar and to the lawyers of Arkansas in a meaningful way, and I am enthusiastic about serving to support the lawyers of our state. I ask for your support as I seek this opportunity to serve you as a trustee of our Arkansas Bar Association.

## Sarah Jewell



I currently serve as a member of the ArkBar House of Delegates, and I hope to represent District A1-A2 on the new Board of Trustees to continue my service to the Arkansas Bar Association. I was the Chair of the 2020 ArkBar Mid-Year Meeting this winter, and I will Co-Chair the 2021 ArkBar Annual Meeting next summer. In 2018-2019, I served as the Chair of the Young Lawyers Section. During my term as YLS Chair, I served as a delegate to the ArkBar Board of Governors and as a delegate at numerous American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Assemblies. For the last several years, I have coordinated the YLS annual Wills for Heroes clinic, and I was appointed to committees including the Strategic Governance Task Force and the Legal Hall of Fame Task Force.

Board of Trustee Candidate Statements – District A3

## Kesha Chiappinelli



Kesha graduated from New York Law School and immediately entered the United States Air Force serving as a Judge Advocate General in California. Afterwards, she moved to Puerto Rico with her family where she took a hiatus from practice but found herself back in her home state of Arkansas after Hurricane Maria. Kesha worked for a small private practice in Little Rock which afforded her the opportunity to practice in a variety of areas. One of her biggest and most important projects was helping midwives and women in the community take part in state agency rulemaking regarding midwifery regulation. She drafted legislation with bi-partisan support and guided members of the community through the rule making process. Kesha prides herself on helping others and practices general civil law with a focus on helping women and their families.

## Jason Hendren



Jason B. Hendren graduated from Bentonville High School in 1990. He received his BA in English & Communications with honors from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville (1994), and his law degree with honors from the UALR William H. Bowen School of Law in Little Rock (1997). He practiced law in Little Rock for many years before returning home to Bentonville in 2009. He joined the firm of Wright, Lindsey & Jennings in 2015, and focuses his practice on litigation of medical malpractice, general liability and health care regulatory cases. He is a past president of the Arkansas Association of Defense Counsel, the Arkansas Bar Foundation (in which he is a Sustaining Fellow), and the UALR Bowen School of Law Alumni Association. He currently serves as member of the UALR Bowen School of Law Dean's Advisory Council and the national board of directors for DRI, as Southwest Regional Representative (AR, LA, OK, NM & TX). He has twice received gubernatorial appointments to serve as a Special Justice on the Supreme Court of Arkansas. He currently serves as a member of the Bentonville Schools Foundation. He is a member of the Benton County Bar Association. He has published in scholarly and trade journals on state and federal legal issues.

One of Jason's primary interests outside work is the study of history in general, and Arkansas history in particular. He served multi-year terms on the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History Commission and the Historic Arkansas Museum Commission. He received a gubernatorial appointment to the Arkansas History Commission in 2017, and was elected Chairman in 2018, 2019 and 2020. He is frequently invited to speak to students and at public events on legal and historical subjects. He and his wife Tracey are high school sweethearts and they have four children.

## Board of Trustee Candidate Statements – District A5

## Melanie Beltran



Melanie Beltran is an Associate Attorney at the firm of Sprott, Golden, & Bardwell. Prior to joining the firm, she owned and operated her own law firm in Clinton, AR which is where her office is located. She practices in real estate, estate planning, family law, and probate, including wills, deeds, trusts, preparing LLCs, and civil litigation, among other services. Mrs. Beltran graduated with Honors from UALR's Bowen Law School in 2014. In 2008, she graduated from UCA cum laude with a bachelor's degree in English. Mrs. Beltran is a member of the Arkansas Bar Association and President Elect of the Clinton Area Rotary Club. Mrs. Beltran is also on the literacy counsel board and an active member of her community. Mrs. Beltran is married to her husband of eleven years, Shawn. They have two children, Lily (10) and Hudson (4).

## Todd Watson



Dear Colleagues,

I am glad for this opportunity to serve as trustee for the Arkansas Bar Association, and appreciate your consideration. With all of the dramatic social and technological changes that have occurred in the last several weeks, this is an interesting and exciting time to be practicing law. The Bar Association has a vital role to play in providing stability and guidance, and I would be honored to devote myself to that mission.

I have been in private practice for seven years. My brother, Tim Watson Jr., and I co-own a small firm, the Law Offices of Watson & Watson, PLLC. We have offices in Newport and Fayetteville, and a small presence in Little Rock. Our father, Tim Watson Sr., is of-counsel/senior counselor to the firm. We also employ junior attorneys, and several assistants. I split my time between Newport and Fayetteville, and am developing a specialization in real estate law.

I am also a judge advocate with the Arkansas Army National Guard, currently serving at the rank of Captain. In March, I returned from a nine-month deployment in the Middle East, where I served as the Command Judge Advocate to a medical brigade, with field surgical teams and other medical assets spread throughout Afghanistan and the CENTCOM AOR. It was an excellent experience, and I learned a great deal about the prosecution of American foreign policy, but I am glad to be back.

My long term plan is to gratefully, respectfully, and energetically devote myself to the practice of law in our beautiful home state. If chosen to serve as trustee, I pledge to do so with complete devotion and seriousness of purpose. Thank you.