

# DIXIE DIGEST

[www.alabama-als.org](http://www.alabama-als.org)

June 2024

## **A Message from our President**

*Sonia Smith, CLP*



What an exciting time to be a member of AALS!! We just ended a wonderful Annual Meeting, hosted by MALS and NOCA!! Kudos to every member who made our AALS weekend one for the record books, or should I say it was the Bees Knees!!! The CLE topics and speakers were all very helpful. The vendors and their products were very well received!! As far as our Mystery Dinner, I am still in the dark about who actually “done the shooting”! Will we ever truly know? Again, thank you MALS and NOCA, what a blast we had!

I hope each of us are doing our parts and have BEEN about Growing with AALS by promoting AALS to our co-workers, our employers, and others in our communities. If you are not certified, have you BEEN inquiring to see what all NALS requires to obtain it? If anyone ever has questions, or ideas to add to the growth of AALS please let an Executive Committee member know. I believe it is imperative to AALS that we reach out beyond our comfort zones and think outside the box to make AALS better than it was yesterday. As with any growth, there has to be nurturing, so what are you nurturing?

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at Fall Board. I know BLSA is already working diligently to lining up CLE speakers, and a meeting space. As soon as they are able they will be letting us know when and where we will be meeting.

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## **SECRETARY**

*Kristi Skipper, PP-SC*



I am honored to serve as your secretary this year, and I appreciate the trust placed in me by the members of AALS. We are going to have a great year GROWING together!

I have received some correspondence, copies of which are included in this report. I received letters from two of our speakers from Annual Meeting, and a note from Melissa Cooper thanking the members for the lovely gifts she received as outgoing President. I also received a text from Eric Anderson, who spoke to us at the Annual Meeting. He said, *“Thanks for the invite today. I enjoyed it very much. I had forgotten how enjoyable it can be to get out and speak like that. What a great group of people! Thanks too for the gift card. But thanks most of all for the notes. That’s the best thing ever! What a wonderful, thoughtful thing to do.”*

Notes like this make me even more proud to be associated with AALS. I look forward to seeing everyone at Fall Board Meeting!

Kristi,

I am overwhelmed by the thank-you notes from your members and also want to thank you for the Amazon card!  
The perfect gift for a librarian!

Please share this e-mail with your members to let them know how much I enjoyed meeting and talking to them

Tim

Tim Lewis, Director  
Alabama Supreme Court & State Law Library  
Heflin-Torbert Judicial Building, [300 Dexter Avenue](#)  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

(334) 229-0578



Transportation  
Security  
Administration

May 03, 2024

Kristi Skipper  
AALS Annual Meeting Chairperson  
Rushton, Stakely, Johnston & Garrett, P.A.  
PO Box 270  
Montgomery, AL 36101-0270

Dear Mrs. Skipper

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak during the AALS 2024 Annual Meeting and Educational Conference. I enjoyed sharing some of my experience with your group.

The participants were very engaged and asked many good questions. This allowed me to share a lot of helpful and entertaining information. I could have continued to talk with your assembly for hours.

Again, thank you for your invitation to participate. If I can ever be of assistance in the future please feel free to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Casey Ray".

Casey Ray  
Transportation Security Officer  
[Ray\\_Casey1@yahoo.com](mailto:Ray_Casey1@yahoo.com)  
(205) 585-4627

## TREASURER

Ed Clark, PP-SC



We are getting ready to finish the current term; please submit your expense reimbursement form to be at [ebc@phm-law.com](mailto:ebc@phm-law.com) or USPS mail to my attention at:

Ed Clark  
PHMMI  
22 Inverness Center Parkway, Ste. 600  
Birmingham, AL 35242

If you have a question about your committee budget, please email me. I look forward to seeing you at the AALS Annual Meeting and Educational Conference next month.

## PARLIAMENTARIAN

Babs DeKeyser, PP, PLS



Here I am again! I am serving as your state parliamentarian again this year. If you have any questions or see any changes that you think we should address, please send me email so your questions or concerns can be addressed.

We voted on many changes last fall. Some of those changes are scheduled to go into effect after annual meeting. I will be making those changes and will send them out as soon as I have finished them. I will also update the Manual of Procedures to reflect those changes.

See you at the Fall Board Meeting!

## CHAPLAIN

Judy Whigham, PP, PLS



I first want to say a huge thank you to the MALS and NOCA members for the awesome annual meeting in April. I never laughed so hard! Also, the CLE was incredible! Great job, ladies. It was perfection all the way!

Since Annual Meeting, I have been praying over the prayer requests that were made and have received additional requests that I am keeping in my prayers as well. I would ask that you text or email any new prayer requests, praises or other announcements or updates to me so that I can address each one appropriately.

I am also putting together a contact database of member information, birthdates, etc., to send cards and messages electronically. To do so, I am relying on the NALS member directory for the information, so, please take the time to check each of your NALS contacts for accuracy and let me know if you updated your NALS contact. In closing, here's my email and phone number to keep me posted on any new or updated prayer requests or announcements: [jwhigham@joneswalker.com](mailto:jwhigham@joneswalker.com) and 251.689.9303 (cell/voice/text). Until I see you in the Fall, please take care and know that someone is praying for you.



## DIXIE DIGEST PATRONS 2024-2025

Melissa Cooper, CAP, BW, HR, OM, PM, RM, PLS	BLSA
Debby Holmes, PP, PLS	BLSA
Deborah Rutherford	BCALP
Susan Turner, PLS	NOCA
Alison Schemmer, PP, PLS	MLPA
Teresa Moore	BLSA
Myra Beckham, PP, PLS	BLSA
Harriet Piper	DCLSA
Barb Hanley, PLS	MALS
Babs DeKeyser, PP, PLS	MLPA
Kristi Skipper, PP	MALS
Judy Whigham, PP, PLS	BCALP

In Memory of Barbara Malone, PP, PLS  
by Judy Whigham, PP, PLS

In Memory of Talley Brathovd, PLS  
by Gina Harbison, PP, PLS

# Growing With AALS



## 2024-2025 AALS DIXIE DIGEST PATRON AD

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Ad  
(if different): \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Ext.: \_\_\_\_\_

Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Alt. E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please use a separate form for each ad; however, one check may be used for multiple ads if mailed together in the same envelope. Make check payable to AALS (\$10 per ad) and send with form to:

Penny Castleberry  
(205) 492-7768  
cheykaymom71@gmail.com  
140 Water Vista Lane  
Jasper, Alabama 35504

# CHAPTER REPORTS

## BCALP - Baldwin County

*Judy Whigham, PP, PLS*



Since Annual Meeting in Montgomery, BCALP did not have a meeting in May. For June we are planning to have a birthday party to celebrate BCALP's 33<sup>rd</sup> year since being chartered in 1991. We plan to hold a combination legal education and membership event on July 18<sup>th</sup> at the Original Oyster House in Spanish Fort. Attorney Sam Irby will be giving a presentation on the Corporate Transparency Act and Beneficial Ownership Information Report, which is the new federal law that became effective this year. For the membership portion of our meeting, we plan to give away two one-year memberships which are funded through the AALS Professional Development Grant awarded to BCALP at the winter board meeting in January 2024. Members of BCALP are looking forward to seeing everyone in the Fall.

We want to thank MALS and NOCA for a wonderful time at the Annual Meeting in Montgomery in April. "The Friends of Kristi" speakers were unique and entertaining in sharing their knowledge and we all enjoyed the exhibitors and vendors. We want to thank our outgoing President, Melissa Cooper, CAP, BW, HR, OM, PM, RM/PLS and her Board for an outstanding year and we all are looking forward to supporting our incoming President Sonia Smith, CLP and her board and look forward to another wonderful year.

Congratulations to the AALS Scholarship winners, Lelia Grace Kelly and Blayklee Swann.

BLSA is looking forward to hosting the 2024 Fall Board Meeting in September. Details will be forwarded once they are finalized.

## BLSA – Birmingham

*Kayla Bassett, PLS*



Happy Summer!

BLSA continues to meet monthly at Birmingham area restaurants. At our March meeting we selected our BLSA Officers for the term 2024-2026. President Melissa Cooper, CAP, BW, HR, OM, PM, RM/PLS; Vice President Ed Clark, PP-SC; Secretary Teresa Moore, PP, PLS; Treasurer Debby Homes, PP, PLS; Governor Kayla Bassett, PLS; and President Melissa Cooper, CAP, BW, HR, OM, PM, RM/PLS appointed Myra Beckham, PP, PLS as Parliamentarian.

BLSA made a donation to the 2023-2024 AALS Charity, Service Dogs of Alabama in the amount of \$100.00. For 2024-2025 AALS Charity of Community Food Banks, BLSA has chosen The Hub, which is a mission outreach service organization of Trinity United Methodist Church, Homewood, Alabama. BLSA members will be collecting items each month for donation to The Hub.



Webpage: [www.alabama-als.org](http://www.alabama-als.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/aalsalabama](https://www.facebook.com/aalsalabama)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/aalsinfo>

## DCLSA - DALLAS COUNTY

Harriett Piper, Governor Pro Tem

It was great to see ya'll at Annual and kudos to MALS and NOCA for a great meeting and a great eating. Timely topics presented by excellent speakers filled our weekend with lots of learning. BUT! I never did learn who killed – stabbed, shot, poisoned – Barb!

Teresa and I are excited about the new AALS year – and the new Board! President Sonia is passionate about AALS and under her leadership and with her imagination we can look for an exciting year. She **BEE** da bomb!

This closing paragraph is a request for you, my friends, to keep me in your prayers for a safe procedure and speedy recovery. Jun 10<sup>th</sup> I'm scheduled for arthroplasty, acetabular and proximal femoral prosthetic replacement. Now, doesn't that sound exciting! In plain English I'm having a total hip replacement. I'm kind of sad to see the old hip go. It's one of the few original parts I have left. But she served me well – we've gone many miles together, done many things (some we probably shouldn't have) together and she didn't break when I fell off the bar while dancing!

Signing off now and I'm counting on seeing all ya'll at Fall Board – Hip, Hip, Hooray!



## MALS – Montgomery

Barb Hanley, PLS



Well with Annual Meeting now a roaring success, the verdict is in and “Kristi....why can't I....” did the deed and all Barb can say is watch out for your friends...you might think they are the cats “meow” but WOW or should I say OW-when they want you dead (poison my hooch, filled me full of lead with a “water” pistol and stabbed my get-away sticks) your dead. On to brighter news...a potential member (or two) has expressed interest in joining or re-joining NALS/AALS/MALS. We are so excited and wasn't it great to see Debbie Whitman, PLS again. We would like to express our thanks to NOCA – Margaret Dawson, PLS and Susan Turner, PSA for assisting in the 61st Annual Meeting of our Association. For the summer months, MALS hopes to have a couple of zoom meetings and maybe even one by the pool. It's a tough life when your meeting is at a pool. We can't wait to see everyone at the Fall Meeting and yes, Kristi and I will still be traveling companions, roommates, but I am hiding all sharp objects and sleeping with one eye open.



## MLPA – Mobile

Alison Schemmer, PP, PLS



MLPA – Mobile Danielle Baker, ACP What a fun and busy Spring MLPA has had!

While we were patiently waiting to attend AALS Annual Meeting, we had our monthly meeting downtown at Crockmires! The Jury Administrator for the U.S. District Court Southern Division, Shelley Barko, and her predecessor, Samantha Lyles, spoke to us regarding Federal jury service. I thought I knew everything about jury service and oh boy was I wrong! We would highly recommend having someone in your area to speak on this subject!

April showers brought us to our next monthly meeting! We were happy to have Luke Nixon, Esq. and Bobby Weinacker, Esq. from Vicki Lundy's office, Phelps Dunbar, come and speak to us about Probating an Estate. One hour was not nearly long enough for all the information they were able to provide and we hope we can get them to come back to get into even more! Not only did we have our wonderful speakers, but we also installed our 2024-2025 MLPA Officers! Congratulations to our 2024-2025 EC! We know you will do a great job and look forward to an awesome year!

Did someone say murder or mystery? It was both when we went to Montgomery, Alabama for AALS 2024 Annual Meeting and Educational Conference! Thanks to all who attended and helped us have a roaring time with some informative CLEs, solving a murder mystery (poor Barb), and reconnecting with old and new friends. We also remembered our dear friends and AALS members who helped make us who we are today!

May bloomed and we started with David Martin, Esq. from the Martin Law Firm speaking at our luncheon meeting. Mr. Martin spoke on ERISA plans and provided us with a very informative handout.

We hope you all have a safe, fun, and relaxing summer!



## NALS OF CENTRAL ALABAMA

*Susan Turner, PLS*

What an awesome annual meeting in Montgomery! It was great to be a part of the planning for the meeting and once again, Kristi and Barb did an wonderful job of pulling all the parts of the meeting together. It was great to see everyone there!

The lineup of CLE speakers, food and the Roaring 20's party was the best! So many of you dressed up for the event and Barb did a wonderful job with the Murder Mystery. Who would have known that Kristi would murder Barb!

We all know a lot of thought, planning, frustration and effort is put into planning any and all of the meetings that are planned and organized throughout the year by the hosting chapters! Every meeting has its parts and goals: to provide quality CLE for education; offer networking for members from different parts of the state; and, to have a good time with some great friends that we have come to know over the years! If you haven't been to a state meeting or attended one lately – please join everyone at the Fall Board Meeting. You won't be disappointed!



## NALS Mission

engage | inspire | enhance | promote

**Engage** legal professionals on their terms.

**Inspire** legal professionals to want more.

**Enhance** the careers of legal professionals.

**Promote** legal professionals and the legal support industry.



# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## SCHOLARSHIP

*Kayla Bassett, PLS*

At the AALS Annual Meeting held in Montgomery Alabama on April 27, 2024, a motion was made and passed to award two AALS Scholarships. This year's recipients of the AALS Scholarship are:

Lelia Grace Kelly is the granddaughter of DCLSA member Teresa Kelly. Lelia is a Senior at John T. Morgan Academy in Selma, Alabama. Lelia plans to attend Auburn University in the fall with a major in Marketing and Communication. Lelia is an exceptional young woman, intelligent, talented, outgoing, and ambitious. Her motto is "Service Over Self" and she lives her motto every day. We are proud to award her the 2024 AALS Scholarship.

Blayklee Swann is the granddaughter of former MALS member Debbie Whitman. Blayklee is a Senior at Daphne High School in Daphne, Alabama. Blayklee plans to attend Jacksonville State University majoring in Music Education. Blayklee is an exceptional young woman, intelligent, talented, outgoing, and ambitious. Her dedication to becoming an educator and band director is refreshing. We are proud to award her the 2024 AALS Scholarship.

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## AALS Member of the Year

*Debby Holmes, PP, PLS*

I was very honored to have been the recipient of the AALS Member of the Year Award in 2023. Our judges reviewed the nominations and selected the winner for 2024. Below is a brief selection from the chapter's nomination letter:

"For as long as I've known this person, my nominee has freely volunteered in numerous community related organized activities but also gives time, effort, and money to individuals and other matters when this nominee sees a need. My nominee does not seek attention or recognition but is happy to work behind the scenes and I believe is driven by doing "what's right" and "what needs to be done." My nominee is always willing to take on the most menial task, with no hesitation and no complaints, when this nominee's intellect and ability far exceed the requested task."



It was my honor to announce Margaret C. Dawson, PLS of NOCA as the recipient of the AALS Member of the Year for 2024.

## COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS 2023-2024

COMMITTEE	CHAIR/CO-CHAIR	EMAIL
Audit Committee (2024-2025 Books)	Deborah Rutherford Tena Mathews, PP, PLS Debby Holmes, PP, PLS	<a href="mailto:drutherford@cwalawfirm.com">drutherford@cwalawfirm.com</a> <a href="mailto:capreesmom@aol.com">capreesmom@aol.com</a> <a href="mailto:debby@assetlaw.com">debby@assetlaw.com</a>
Audit Committee (2024 Annual Meeting)	Gina Harbison, PP, PLS Teresa Moore, PP, PLS Harriet Piper	<a href="mailto:gharbison@pci-nsn.gov">gharbison@pci-nsn.gov</a> <a href="mailto:teresam357@bellsouth.net">teresam357@bellsouth.net</a> <a href="mailto:harrietpiper@yahoo.com">harrietpiper@yahoo.com</a>
Bylaws, Standing Rules & Procedures Manual	Babs DeKeyser, PP, PLS	<a href="mailto:babs.dekeyser@att.net">babs.dekeyser@att.net</a>
Certification	Alison Schemmer, PP, PLS	<a href="mailto:aks6451@aol.com">aks6451@aol.com</a>
Corporate Sponsors	Ed Clark, PP-SC	<a href="mailto:ebc@phm-law.com">ebc@phm-law.com</a>
Dixie Digest Patron Ads	Penny Castleberry	<a href="mailto:pacastleberry@csattorneys.com">pacastleberry@csattorneys.com</a>
Dixie Digest	Margaret Dawson, PLS	<a href="mailto:aalsdixiedigest@gmail.com">aalsdixiedigest@gmail.com</a>
Finance	Ed Clark, PP-SC	<a href="mailto:ebc@phm-law.com">ebc@phm-law.com</a>
Funding	Magan Bedwell Laneay Yates, ALP,	<a href="mailto:mwb@cunninghambounds.com">mwb@cunninghambounds.com</a> <a href="mailto:laneayPLS@hotmail.com">laneayPLS@hotmail.com</a>
Installation	Myra Beckham, PP, PLS	<a href="mailto:myrabeckham@bellsouth.net">myrabeckham@bellsouth.net</a>
Legal Education (Banner & Tablecloth)	Melissa Cooper, PP, PLS	<a href="mailto:scrapbookskippy@yahoo.com">scrapbookskippy@yahoo.com</a>
Marketing/Membership	Julie Nims	<a href="mailto:jnims@raineslawfirm.com">jnims@raineslawfirm.com</a>
Member of the Year	Margaret Dawson, PLS	<a href="mailto:thistldome@gmail.com">thistldome@gmail.com</a>
New Member of the Year	none	
Nominations & Elections, Credentials	Tracy Creel	<a href="mailto:traceycreel@gmail.com">traceycreel@gmail.com</a>
Resolutions	Judy Whigham, PP, PLS	<a href="mailto:jwhigham@joneswalker.com">jwhigham@joneswalker.com</a>
Scholarship	Kayla Bassett, PLS	<a href="mailto:kjbassett55@outlook.com">kjbassett55@outlook.com</a>
Student Chapter Liaison	none	
Technology	Danielle Baker	<a href="mailto:danielle@longandlong.com">danielle@longandlong.com</a>
Web Page	Margaret Dawson, PLS	<a href="mailto:thistldome@gmail.com">thistldome@gmail.com</a>