



Spring 2017 Travel Experience

Speaker and Panelist Biographies

Session I

Lobbying for Higher Education in Alabama

Gordon Stone
Executive Director, Higher Education Partnership

"Gordon Stone has served as the Executive Director of the Higher Education Partnership since its inception in 1997. Under his leadership, the Partnership has grown from a fledgling organization fighting for a voice into a strong, member-rich association. Since the formation of the Partnership, Alabama has seen many improvements in higher ed. Gordon has used enthusiasm and passion to help successfully build the Partnership. He was raised on a cattle farm in Pine Apple, Alabama and graduated from Fort Dale Academy. Stone has a bachelors degree from Auburn University and a masters degree from Auburn University at Montgomery. While an undergraduate student, Stone was elected president of the student body for the College of Agriculture. In 1985, Stone was awarded a varsity letter as a player on the Auburn University football team. Stone is married to Ellen Mosley Stone, formerly of Ozark. They have two daughters, Sarah Grace and Emily. The family resides in Pike Road, Alabama and are members of First Baptist Church of Montgomery where he serves as a deacon and leads a mission team to New York and Miami. Gordon and his family live in the town of Pike Road, where he currently serves as the mayor of the town of Pike Road. Stone also serves as chief administrator for the Higher Education Leadership PAC and director of the Foundation."



Source: Higher Education Partnership website

Session II

Civil Rights and the Judiciary in Alabama

Judge Myron Thompson
Senior Judge, U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama

"Born in Tuskegee, Alabama, Thompson received a B.A. from Yale University in 1969 and a J.D. from Yale Law School in 1972. He was an Assistant Attorney General of Alabama from 1972 to 1974, and was then in private practice in Dothan, Alabama until 1980.

On September 17, 1980, Thompson was nominated by President Jimmy Carter to a seat on the United States District Court for the Middle District of Alabama vacated by Frank M. Johnson, Jr.. Thompson was confirmed by the United States Senate on September 26, 1980, and received his commission on September 29, 1980. He served as chief judge from 1991 to 1998. He took senior status on August 22, 2013.

In a 2014 ruling, Thompson ruled an Alabama law regulating abortion unconstitutional, in *Planned Parenthood Southeast, Inc., v. Strange* (also known as *Planned Parenthood Southeast, Inc., v. Bentley*), citing the undue burden standard."

Source: Wikipedia



Session III

Redistricting and Voting Rights

Dorman Walker

Mr. Walker litigates in federal and state trial and appellate courts, and before administrative agencies, including the Alabama Board of Adjustment and the Alabama CON Review Board. He is recognized for his expertise in civil rights, commercial, employment, and healthcare litigation, as well as his work in education and voting rights law. Mr. Walker advised the Alabama Legislature in drawing new districts after the 2010 census and is currently representing legislative leadership in litigation challenging the new districts, which is now before a three-judge federal court on remand from the United States Supreme Court.



Source: *Balch & Bingham LLP website*

Edward Still

"Edward Still has 30 years of experience in the field of redistricting and voting rights, including six years as general counsel to the Alabama Democratic Party, counsel for several Alabama cities in redistricting matters, representation of former Alabama Attorney General Bill Baxley in a major election contest, and representation of minority citizens in more than 200 cases under the Voting Rights Act."

"Mr. Still has litigated or advised clients on virtually every type of voting and election-related matter including the right to vote, the right to an absentee ballot, election contests, challenges to candidate qualifications, submissions under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, vote dilution suits under both the Constitution and Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, and campaign finance laws. He has represented clients on these matters in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, Virginia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Alaska, Nebraska, and Louisiana. He has drafted several election laws. His clients have included the Allegheny (PA) County Council, the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the House Majority Leader in Alabama, the Governor of Kentucky, and the Cities of Birmingham, Bessemer, and Tuskegee, Alabama.



He teaches a course of The Law of Politics (regarding elections, redistricting, and the right to vote) at the Birmingham School of Law."



"Mr. Still is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate (1968) of the University of Alabama, where he majored in Political Science. He pursued his law degree at the University of Alabama School of Law (1971), where he was a member of Bench and Bar Legal Honor Society, a finalist in the John A. Campbell Moot Court Competition, and a recipient of the James E. Morrisette Constitutional Law Award."

Source: *Edward Still Law Firm, LLC website*

Session IV

State Lottery and Gaming

Clinton Carter
Director, Alabama Department of Finance

"Governor Robert Bentley appointed Clinton Carter as State Finance Director on October 1, 2016. As the State's chief financial officer, Carter serves as an advisor to the Governor and the Legislature in all financial matters and is charged with protecting the financial interests of the State of Alabama. As the State's top finance official, he serves on various advisory boards and authorities and is responsible for the administration and oversight of the Department of Finance.

Prior to rejoining the Bentley Administration, Carter served as the Chief Financial Officer and the Vice President of Finance and Business Affairs at the University of North Alabama. In his capacity as CFO, Carter provided administrative oversight of the financial and operational matters of the University. He also served as Treasurer for the UNA Foundation.



Prior to joining UNA, Carter served as the Deputy State Finance Director with the Bentley Administration. In this capacity, Carter served as an advisor to the Finance Director and was responsible for numerous areas of oversight and administration within the Department of Finance. Additionally, Carter spearheaded the Governor's efforts on the Road to a \$Billion program, a cost-savings initiative that generated over \$1.2 Billion of annual savings to the State of Alabama.

Prior to entering public service, Carter was the Director of Corporate Development, Mergers and Acquisitions at Intergraph Corporation, a leading global provider of engineering and geospatial software. At Intergraph, Carter helped lead the company through its \$2.1 billion sale to Stockholm-based, Hexagon AB. Carter also worked previously in investment banking and finance with Merrill Lynch and Ernst & Young. Carter holds an MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania where he was a Joseph Wharton scholar and a BBA in Finance & Accounting from the University of North Alabama. He also completed the Institute for Educational Management program at Harvard University. Carter is a Certified Public Accountant.

Personally, Carter is married to the former Rebecca Porter from Florence and is the proud father of triplets, Caroline, Elizabeth and Henry."

Source: Alabama Department of Finance website



Sen. Bobby Singleton
Alabama State Senator, District 24 (D-Greensboro)

"Senator Bobby Singleton is serving his third term in the Senate. He was elected on January 25, 2005, to fill the unexpired term of former Senator Charles Steele. He served in the Alabama House of Representatives for one term. He has served as the past Chair of the Legislative Black Caucus.

Senator Singleton currently sits on the following committees: Tourism & Marketing-Vice Chair, Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry, Fiscal Responsibility & Economic Development, Finance & Taxation-General Fund, Judiciary and Local Legislation. He is also a member on the Alcohol Beverage Study Commission, Alabama Public Pension Committee, Housing Finance Authority Legislative Oversight Committee, Joint Legislative Prison Committee, the License Plates Legislative Oversight Committee, and Joint Legislative Task Force for Budget Reform. He was recently appointed by the governor to serve on the Gaming Commission and he serves on the Alabama Healthy Food Financing Initiative Study Commission, a new commission. He serves on the Community Action Board of West Alabama.

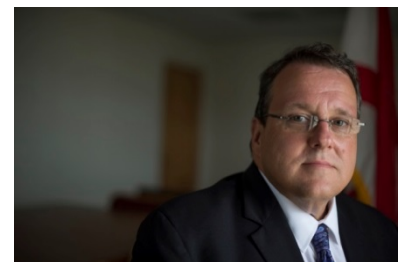


Senator Singleton holds a B.S. Degree in Criminal Justice from Alabama State University and a Juris Doctor from Miles College; he is a consultant. His hobbies include hunting, traveling and fishing. Senator Singleton is a member of Greenleaf Missionary Baptist Church, Greensboro Alabama and he is a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity."

Source: Sen. Singleton's Office

Barry Matson
Deputy Director, Office of Prosecution Services and Alabama District Attorney Association

Barry Matson has served as Deputy Director of Alabama's Office of Prosecution Services since 2006. Previously, he was the Chief Deputy District Attorney in Talladega County, Alabama for 16 years. A native of Talladega, Matson graduated from Jacksonville State University in 1986 with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and earned his law degree from the Birmingham School of Law in 1993. From 1990 to 1993, he worked as a law librarian and clerk for Sullivan and Fielding, and served research assistant to Sullivan in his capacity as chairman of the Alabama Pattern Jury Instruction Civil.



Matson is married to the former Amy Elizabeth Majors of Rainbow City, and they have two children. He is the past president of the Alabama Assistant District Attorneys Association past co-chairman of the Alabama Assistant District Attorneys Association and a member of the Alabama Cattlemen's Association; the Northern District of Alabama State and Federal Prosecutors Association; the association of Government Attorneys in Capital Litigation; the National and Alabama District Attorneys Associations; the American, Alabama and Talladega County Bar Associations; and the Fraternal Order of Police.



Matson is an active member of First United Methodist Church in Talladega and the Alabama Emmaus Community, where he serves on the board of directors of the Cheaha Cluster. He serves on the board of directors of the Wesley Foundation at Jacksonville State University and FIRST Family Services of East Central Alabama, and is the North Talladega County chairman of Boy Scouts of America. He has coached several youth athletic teams, and is a member of the steering committee of Habitat For Humanity of Talladega.

Source: Various Sources

Robert McGhee
Vice Chairman, Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Council

"As an enrolled member of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Robert McGhee has been involved in and an advocate for Native American issues at all levels of government. Mr. McGhee is currently serving his fourth term on the Poarch Band of Creek Indians Tribal Council, in which he holds the position of Vice Chairman. In this capacity Mr. McGhee is honored to represent his people "government-to-government" at the Local, State, and Federal levels regarding issues of Education, Health Care, Economic Development, and Sovereign Immunity.



Prior to moving back to Atmore, Robert McGhee worked in Washington, D.C. for approximately five years at the Department of Interior-Bureau of Indian Affairs, the United States Senate, and Troutman Sanders LLP-Indian Law Practice Group. Before accepting the position of Governmental Relations Advisor for the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Mr. McGhee served in several capacities for the Tribe. He was employed by the Tribe as the Tribal Administrator, Governmental entity of the Tribe, and President of Creek Indian Enterprises (CIE), the Economic Development entity of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians.

Mr. McGhee holds a MSW from Washington University in St. Louis and an Executive Masters in Business Administration from the University of Tennessee Knoxville. During his tenure in DC and here at the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Mr. McGhee has had the opportunity to serve on numerous White House Initiatives and boards. Currently he serves on the Board of the National Indian Child Welfare Board, Children First Alabama, is a member of the Secretary's Health and Human Services Tribal Advisory Committee, and the Board of Advisors for the Center for Native American Youth and the Native American Rights Fund.

Robert McGhee currently resides in Atmore, Alabama."

Source: Poarch Band of Creek Indians website



Session V

Civil Rights History

Southern Poverty Law Center - Civil Rights Memorial

"Created by Vietnam Veterans Memorial designer Maya Lin, the Memorial is located across the street from the Southern Poverty Law Center's office building in Montgomery, Alabama, a city rich with civil rights history.

A circular black granite table records the names of the martyrs and chronicles the history of the movement in lines that radiate like the hands of a clock. Water emerges from the table's center and flows evenly across the top. On a curved black granite wall behind the table is engraved Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s well-known paraphrase of Amos 5:24 - We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

Like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Civil Rights Memorial invites visitors to touch the engraved names. As Lin envisioned, the Memorial plaza is "a contemplative area — a place to remember the Civil Rights Movement, to honor those killed during the struggle, to appreciate how far the country has come in its quest for equality, and to consider how far it has to go."

The Memorial is just around the corner from the church where Dr. King served as pastor during the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955-1956, and the Alabama Capitol steps where the Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march ended in 1965. The Memorial is located on an open plaza accessible to visitors 24 hours a day, every day of the week.

The Civil Rights Memorial Center is adjacent to the Memorial. In addition to exhibits about Civil Rights Movement martyrs, the Memorial Center houses a 56-seat theater, a classroom for educational activities, and the Wall of Tolerance."

Source: Southern Poverty Law Center website

Session VI

Prison Reform

Anthony Hinton Client, Equal Justice Initiative

Mr. Hinton is an Alabama man who was held on death row for nearly 30 years after being convicted of the murders of two restaurant managers, John Davidson and Thomas Wayne Vasona, in Birmingham in 1985. Represented by the Equal Justice Initiative for 16 years, Mr. Hinton was released in 2015 after winning a new trial.

In an appeal that reached the US Supreme Court, in 2014 the Court ruled that Hinton's original defense lawyer was "constitutionally deficient" and his case should be retried. Hinton's defense lawyer had wrongly thought he had only \$1,000 available to hire a ballistics expert to rebut the state's case on evidence. The only expert willing to testify at that price was a one-eyed civil engineer with little ballistics training, who admitted he had trouble operating the microscope.

He is the 152nd person exonerated from death row in the United States since 1973 and the sixth in the state of Alabama.

Source: *Wikipedia*



Bennet Wright Executive Director, Alabama Sentencing Commission

"Bennet Wright serves as the Executive Director of the Alabama Sentencing Commission and the Vice President of the National Association of Sentencing Commissions.

Mr. Wright also serves as the Commission's liaison to the Alabama Legislature and chairs the Commission's Standards Committee tasked with developing the State's sentencing guidelines.

Prior to joining the Commission, Mr. Wright worked for the federal judiciary at the United States Administrative Office of Courts in Washington, D.C. and before that taught courses including Statistics, Sociology, Criminology, and Deviance at Auburn University.

Mr. Wright received his undergraduate degree in criminology and his graduate degree in sociology.





Mr. Wright is a native of Crow Indian Reservation in Montana."

Source: League of Women Voters of Alabama website

Charlotte Morrison
Senior Attorney, Equal Justice Initiative

"Charlotte Morrison, Senior Attorney, has been with EJI since 2001. She clerked for Judge Rosemary Barkett on the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, is a former Rhodes Scholar with degrees in Philosophy from Oxford University and the University of Montana, and graduated from New York University School of Law in 2000."

Source: Equal Justice Initiative website

