

MEET OUR PANELISTS

Courts during COVID: Challenges and Successes

February 9th 2021 | 4:00-5:30PM

Judge Stacie Beckerman has served as a U.S. Magistrate Judge for the District of Oregon for six years. She currently serves as the Chair of the Ninth Circuit's Magistrate Judge Executive Board and Chair of the Ninth Circuit's Pro Se Litigation Committee, and she is the Magistrate Judge Observer to the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit. She also serves on the board of her district court's historical society.

Judge Candy Wagahoff Dale began her appointment as United States Magistrate Judge on March 30, 2008. Among her other duties, she is the Chair of the Local Civil Rules Advisory Committee and serves on the planning committee for the annual Teachers Institute. Upon appointment by Chief Justice John Roberts, she served a two-year term as the Magistrate Judge Observer to the Judicial Conference of the United States from October of 2017 through September of 2019. Judge Dale also is a member of the Committee on Workplace Environment and the Fairness Committee for the Ninth Circuit; and a past member of the Jury Trial Improvement Committee and past Chair of the Magistrate Judges Executive Board for the Ninth Circuit. Prior to serving on the federal bench, Judge Dale was a trial attorney in private practice for over twenty-five years.

United States District **Judge Phyllis J. Hamilton** was appointed in May 2000 by President William Clinton to serve as a District Judge for the Northern District of California, in San Francisco. She became the Chief Judge of the district in December 2014 and served until February 1, 2021. In April 1991, Judge Hamilton was appointed as a United States Magistrate Judge and served the Northern District of California in that capacity until her elevation to the District Court. Prior to her federal judicial career, Judge Hamilton served as a Court Commissioner in the state court for Alameda County (1985 -1991) and as an Administrative Judge for the United States Merit Systems Protection Board, San Francisco Regional Office (1980-1985). She also practiced law as a deputy public defender for the California Office of the State Public Defender (1976 -1980). Judge Hamilton received her B.A. degree from Stanford University and her J.D. cum laude from Santa Clara University School of Law.

Judge Virginia Phillips was appointed to the United States District Court for the Central District of California by President Clinton on November 15, 1999. She served as the Chief Judge of the District from 2016 to 2020. She was a Magistrate Judge in the Central District from 1995 until 1999, and served on the California Superior Court for four years before joining the federal bench. Judge Phillips graduated magna cum laude from the University of California, Riverside and received her law degree from the University of California, Berkeley (Boalt Hall). After law school she practiced civil litigation with the firm of Best, Best & Krieger in Riverside, California, becoming a partner in 1988. She served on the Ninth Circuit Jury Trial Improvement Committee from its formation in 2002, and was appointed Chair of the Committee in 2008. She currently serves on the Ninth Circuit Judicial Council, and the Ninth Circuit Ad Hoc Committee on Workplace Environment. She is the co-author of Federal Civil Procedure Before Trial (TRG 2019). During her tenure on the District Court, she has presided over a wide range of criminal and civil cases.

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Susan Gelmis is the Chief Deputy Clerk for Operations at the Ninth Circuit. She has been with the court for over 30 years, previously serving as supervisor of the Motions and Pro Se Units in the Staff Attorneys' Office and as director of the Circuit's Pro Bono Program for 22 years. Susan has served on numerous Circuit wide committees and task forces relating to prisoner and pro se litigation, and as liaison to the pro se law clerks in the district courts, organizing and speaking at Circuit wide and national conferences. In December 2015, Susan moved to the Clerk's Office to assume her current position as Chief Deputy Clerk, where she oversees all docketing and filing and calendaring systems and procedures, staffs the Circuit Rules Committee, and organizes and speaks at CLE programs around the Circuit. Susan is a 1987 graduate of NYU Law School and originally a native of New York.

Kiry K. Gray was appointed Clerk of Court for the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California on September 24, 2015. She is the first African-American woman to be appointed as Clerk in the Central District of California. Ms. Gray has a long history of service to the Court, spanning thirty years. She began her career in the judiciary in the Jury Department on a temporary assignment in 1985. Her dedication to the Court and work ethic earned Ms. Gray many promotions over her tenure and she rose to several management positions early in her career, including being named the Assistant Supervisor in the Criminal Section in 1987, the Assistant Deputy-in-Charge for the Southern Division in 1990 and the Deputy-in-Charge of the Eastern Division in 1993. Ms. Gray served as the Court's Acting Clerk of Court beginning July 1, 2015 prior to her appointment.

Mohammad (Mo) Ali Hamoudi began his legal career as a solo practitioner in San Francisco in 2010. In California, he served on the board of governors of the California Attorneys for Criminal Justice. In 2014, he was hired as an Assistant Federal Defender in Seattle, where he has worked on trials and appellate cases, including capital and non-capital habeas matters. He frequently argues motions in federal court in the Western District of Washington. He is admitted to practice in Washington and California. Currently he is on the membership committee for the Federal Bar Association, is a Ninth Circuit lawyers representative for the Western District of Washington, is a regional delegate for the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, and an adjunct professor at Seattle University school of law where he teaches criminal motions practice.

Alex Samuels is an Assistant United States Attorney in the District of Arizona, where he has been an AUSA in the Criminal Division since 2014. Alex served as one of the U.S. Attorney's Office's Tribal Liaisons in 2018 and 2019, was a Section Chief of the Violent Crimes Section from 2019 to 2020, and currently is a Section Chief of the Indian Country Crimes Section. Before joining the U.S. Attorney's Office, Alex worked in private practice at the law firm Perkins Coie. Prior to that, he worked as a law clerk at the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the Arizona Supreme Court. He graduated from Arizona State University in 2007 and from Harvard Law School in 2011.