G. Alan DuBois
Alan DuBois is the Federal Defender for the Eastern District of North Carolina. He graduated from Duke University in 1984 and the University of Virginia School of Law in 1987. In 1989, after two years as a staff law clerk at the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, he joined the Federal Public Defender's Office. In 2005, Mr. DuBois spent nine months working in Washington, DC; he spent six months with the United States Sentencing Guideline Commission and three months with the Office of Defender Services. On January 12, 2010, Mr. DuBois appeared before the U.S. Supreme Court to argue on behalf of the respondents in *U.S. v. Comstock*. Mr. DuBois was confirmed and sworn in as Federal Public Defender for the Eastern District of North Carolina on April 9, 2018.

Kelly Margolis Dagger is a partner at Ellis & Winters LLP in Raleigh, North Carolina, where she represents clients in a range of civil and criminal matters. Ms. Dagger serves on the Criminal Justice Act panels for the United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina as well as the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. She also serves on the Criminal Justice Act Committee for the Eastern District of North Carolina, and the Local Criminal Rules Committee. Ms. Dagger represents clients at all stages of the criminal process in federal court. Ms. Dagger has tried numerous federal criminal cases involving a variety of charges, including drug trafficking, death by distribution, firearm offenses, robbery, and bribery. Ms. Dagger received her B.A. degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her J.D. degree from the University of California, Berkeley. Kelly Dagger became the EDNC CJA Panel Representative in 2024.

Emily Munn is the CJA Case Budgeting Attorney at 4th Circuit. Emily is a highly experienced and well-regarded criminal defense attorney. Emily currently practices with the Smith Law Firm in Hampton and Norfolk, VA. Emily is also the Chief Legal Officer with UTIDox, a start-up medical company. Prior to that, Emily was a substitute judge for the City of Norfolk, an adjunct professor at Norfolk State University and Tidewater Community College, a staff attorney for the Norfolk Sheriff's Office, and an assistant public defender for the City of Norfolk.
Emily has won numerous awards and recognitions, which include being named "Influential Women of Law 2020" by Virginia Lawyers Weekly; "Top 40 Under 40" by Inside Business; "Legal Elite — Criminal Lawyers 2016 and 2019"; and being appointed to the Board of Visitors for Wake Forest University School of Law.
Emily received her J.D. from Wake Forest University School of Law, earning membership in the Order of the Coif. She also received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Wake Forest University.

Kat Shea Dowling is an Assistant Federal Public Defender for the Eastern District of North Carolina. She has served in this role since 2011. Prior to joining the FPD, she clerked for the Honorable Carl Barbier in the Eastern District of Louisiana. She received her law degree from Duke Law School in 2010 and her Bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia in 2005. At the FPD, she represents clients with felony charges and facing civil commitment.

Halerie Costello is an Assistant Federal Public Defender in the Eastern District of North Carolina. She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 2005 and Duke Law School in 2011, after which she joined the Federal Public Defender's Office. Between 2014 and 2016, she clerked for the Honorable Terrence W. Boyle, after which she returned to her role as an Assistant Federal Public Defender. Her practice focuses on felonies and civil commitment cases.

Jonathan Byrne is the Appellate Counsel in the Office of the Federal Public Defender in the Southern District of West Virginia, where he primarily handles appeals and other post-conviction matters. Prior to arriving in the FPD office in 2002, Jonathan worked as an Assistant Public Defender in the appellate division of the Kanawha County Public Defender office and as a Domestic Violence Staff Attorney for what is now Legal Aid of West Virginia.
Jonathan graduated from West Virginia University in 1996 with a B.A in History and from the College of Law in 1999. He is admitted to the bar of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals as well as the Supreme Court of the United States. In addition to writing briefs and arguing cases, Jonathan keeps abreast of breaking law for the FPD office, CJA panel members, and the world at large via the Fourth Circuit Blog and the *In Plain Cite* podcast. He is a member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and West Virginia Writers, Inc.

Ann L. Hester is an Assistant Federal Public Defender in the Appellate Division of the Federal Public Defender for the Western District of N.C.
Education: B.A. 1989, North Carolina State University; J.D. 1992, University of North Carolina.
Ann Hester has been working for the Federal Public Defender in the Western District of North Carolina since 2006, handling direct appeals and post-conviction litigation. She is especially passionate about defending her clients' Fourth Amendment rights and would rather not talk about the modified categorical approach. Before working as a defense attorney, she was a civil litigator handling employment and commercial cases.

Vidalia Patterson graduated with honors from Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law in 2001. In 1997, she received her B.A. from Davidson College. Ms. Patterson began her legal career as a clerk for United States Magistrate Judge Alexander B. Denson and was retained as a staff attorney for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina from 2001- 2002. From 2002 until 2005, she worked in the area of toxic tort ligation as an associate with the former Womble, Carlyle, Sandridge & Rice, LLC. In 2005, she joined the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Eastern District of North Carolina, where she works as a Research and Writing Attorney, is co-editor of the office news publication, "The Zealous Advocate: Newsletter for the Defense," and supervises the office's year-round intern and extern programs. Ms. Patterson has also guest-lectured at Duke University Law School as well as at Campbell University Law School, where she also serves as an adjunct professor and Connections Program mentor.

Ashley Robertson is the inaugural Director of the Supreme Court Project. Launched in 2026, the Federal Defender Supreme Court Project (SCP) is an institutional resource that seeks to improve the representation of indigent defendants at the Supreme Court.

Before joining SCP, Ashley served in the Office of the Solicitor General at the U.S. Department of Justice. In that role, she filed dozens of Supreme Court briefs at the merits and certiorari stages. She has also successfully argued three Supreme Court cases in the past two Terms, including *Ellingburg v. United States*, 607 U.S. 163 (2026), a case in which the government confessed error and supported relief in the Supreme Court for the criminal defendant.

Ashley previously served as a Senior Counsel to Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco, the Department of Justice's second-ranking official. During her time in the Department, she helped lead initiatives for reform at the Bureau of Prisons, including efforts to promote access to counsel for people detained before trial. She has also practiced in the Supreme Court & Appellate Litigation group at O'Melveny & Myers LLP.

Ashley clerked for Justice Elena Kagan of the U.S. Supreme Court, Chief Judge Sri Srinivasan of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, and Chief Judge James E. Boasberg for the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. She received her J.D. from Stanford Law School.

Stacie Fahsel is the Senior Counsel for the Supreme Court Project. She is an experienced Supreme Court practitioner who has litigated dozens of matters before the Court. Stacie previously served as an Assistant Federal Public Defender in the appeals and non-capital habeas unit at the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Pennsylvania. In that role, she litigated a broad range of constitutional, statutory, and sentencing issues on behalf of indigent individuals charged with federal crimes. She also played a leading role in crafting the strategy for raising Second Amendment challenges in the Third Circuit following the Supreme Court's decision in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen*, 597 U.S. 1 (2022). Before joining the defender program, Stacie was a founding member of the Supreme Court and Appellate practice group at Paul, Weiss LLP. She also served as an Associate General Counsel in the Office of General Counsel at the United States House of Representatives and practiced at Williams & Connolly LLP. Stacie clerked for Judge Harris Hartz of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit. She received her J.D. from Harvard Law School.

Eric Brignac received his JD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2002. Immediately after law school he worked as an associate at Covington & Burling in Washington D.C., focusing on transportation law and employee benefits law. Mr. Brignac also clerked for Judge James L. Dennis on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit and Judge Allyson K. Duncan on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Mr. Brignac is currently employed as the Chief Appellate Attorney with the Federal Public Defender's Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina, where he has worked since 2006. He also teaches a seminar on Sex Offenders and the Law and on Advanced Appellate Advocacy as an adjunct law professor at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Keith Smith, PhD(c) New Bern, North Carolina
Keith Smith is a doctoral candidate in Computer Science at National University's School of Technology and Engineering, where his research focuses on the intersection of artificial intelligence and law, including natural language processing applications in legal contexts such as judicial decision prediction and computational analysis of legal texts.
Keith brings a distinctive combination of technical expertise and direct legal industry experience. He currently serves in a dual role at a law firm in eastern North Carolina, where he manages the firm's information technology infrastructure and systems while also performing paralegal work. This daily immersion in legal workflows gives him firsthand understanding of the operational realities, pain points, and ethical considerations that attorneys face when integrating technology into their practices.
His research and professional work have positioned him at a rare intersection: he possesses both the technical depth to explain how AI systems function at an architectural level and the practical legal experience to ground that knowledge in the context of real-world law practice. He is an active participant in technical AI discourse and has developed AI governance tools specifically designed for legal practice environments.
Keith's instructional approach emphasizes practical demonstrations over theoretical lectures, equipping attorneys with immediately actionable knowledge they can apply in their practices the same week.

Steven Biard, United States Probation Officer
B.S. in Criminology, Law, and Society, University of California, Irvine.
Steven has worked in the probation field for 13 years. He has worked as a United States Probation Officer with the Eastern District of North Carolina for the past 8 years with a primary role of preparing presentence reports.

Malcolm "Lee" Holmes, United States Probation Officer- Raleigh Office
B.A. in Criminology, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC.
Lee started in the criminal justice field as a Correctional Officer in the Mental Health Department at Central Prison. He then spent five years working as a Probation Officer for the State of North Carolina (Wake County). In October of 2015, Lee started with the U.S. Probation Office in the Eastern District of North Carolina (EDNC). Lee has participated in many above and beyond capacities within EDNC such as; firearms instructor, evidence collector for the search team, halfway house liaison, staff training aimed at reducing recidivism (STARR) coach, and district implementation team member (DIT).

Melissa Lunsmann, Supervisory USPO
M.S. in Sociology, B.S. in Criminal Justice, both from Illinois State University in Normal, IL.
Melissa has worked in public service since 2007, where she got her start in youth intervention. She has worked in the probation field since 2008, some of that time in the county system in IL and a short time in the state of NC system in Pamlico County, starting with the U.S. Courts in Greenville, NC in 2015. In May 2023, Melissa was selected for a Supervisory USPO position in the Raleigh office, and she will transition back East to the Jacksonville office in May of this year.

Jay F. Neely, Chief United States Probation Officer
B.A. in Political Science with a concentration in Law and Political Philosophy, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC.
Jay has worked in the probation field for more than 30 years, with more than 27 years as a United States Probation Officer. He spent his first three and one-half years in the Middle District of North Carolina before transferring to the Eastern District of North Carolina in February 2003. In August 2007, Jay was promoted to Supervisory United States Probation Officer in the Court Services Unit. In May 2023, he was promoted to Deputy Chief United States Probation Officer of the Court Services Unit. In December 2025, he was selected as the Chief United States Probation Officer.

Bethany J. Nguyen, Senior United States Probation Officer
B.A. in Criminal Justice and Psychology, State University of New York at Brockport, Brockport, NY (2004), and B.A. in Business Administration with a concentration in pre-law studies, State University of New York at Brockport, Brockport, NY (2012).
Prior to working as a United States Probation Officer, Beth worked for the United States Attorney's Office (WD/NY and ED/MI) in the asset forfeiture and financial litigation unit and the white-collar crime unit. She began her federal probation career in 2016 in the Eastern District of North Carolina and initially served as a clerical specialist and an operations support specialist. In April 2019, Beth became an officer with the Court Services Unit. Since October 2022, she has served as a Sentencing Guidelines Specialist.

Julie W. Rosa, Deputy Chief United States Probation Officer
B.S. in Criminal Justice and Psychology, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC, and a Certificate in Leadership, Wake Forest University, Wake Forest, NC.
Julie has worked in the criminal justice field for more than 26 years, serving 24 years as a United States Probation Officer in the Eastern District of North Carolina. She began her career in the Court Services Unit before transferring into the Supervision Services Unit in 2010. She held the positions of Senior United States Probation Officer and Supervisory United States Probation Officer, always with a steady focus of utilizing evidence-based practices to bring about behavior change in individuals on supervision. In May 2023, Julie promoted to Deputy Chief United States Probation Officer of the Supervision Services Unit.

Toni A. White, U.S. Probation Officer
B.A. in Political Science from Saint Martin's University, Lacey, WA.
Toni has worked in the criminal justice field for 11 years. She started her career at the Special Commitment Center on McNeil Island in Washington State, which housed individuals who were civilly committed as sexually violent predators. After two and a half years, she transitioned to a new role with the state as a probation officer in downtown Seattle, WA, where she supervised a specialized caseload for drug offenders and sex offenders. In May 2021, she moved to North Carolina and soon after worked as a state probation officer in the sex offender unit in Durham County. In January 2023, Toni was hired with the EDNC U.S. Probation, in Raleigh, NC, where she continues to work in the Court Services Unit.

W. Ellis Boyle was appointed as United States Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina by Attorney General Pamela Bondi on August 7, 2025, and was sworn in by U.S. District Judge Terrence W. Boyle on August 11, 2025.

As U.S. Attorney, Mr. Boyle leads federal law enforcement officials in the Eastern District of North Carolina, including the 44 eastern most counties of North Carolina. He oversees a staff of 119 employees, including 58 attorneys and 61 non-attorney support personnel. The office prosecutes federal crimes across the district, including crimes related to immigration, gang violence, National Security, drug trafficking, and violent crime. The office also defends the United States in civil cases and collects debts owed to the United States.

Before becoming the U.S. Attorney, Mr. Boyle practiced law at Ward and Smith, P.A., as a trial lawyer, representing businesses, government entities, and individuals in complex matters. He also served as General Counsel and Deputy Secretary at the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (DPS), which employs over 27,000 people. At that time, DPS controlled the state's prisons, probation, the State Highway Patrol, ALE, Emergency Management, the National Guard, and the juvenile justice system.

Prior to his role at DPS, Mr. Boyle served as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Eastern District of North Carolina for two years. During his time in the Civil Division, he tried many cases in federal court. He gained extensive experience representing the United States in cases involving negligence and medical malpractice claims for personal injuries under the Federal Tort Claims Act, as well as in bankruptcy cases.

Before serving as an AUSA, Mr. Boyle practiced as a business litigation associate at Womble, Carlyle, Sandridge & Rice in Winston-Salem, where he primarily represented companies in complex business disputes and dissolutions.

Mr. Boyle hails from northeastern North Carolina, born and raised in Edenton. He earned a degree in history from Davidson College. After graduating, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant into the Army where he served as an infantry officer for four years, eventually rising to the rank of Captain. Following his time in the Army, Mr. Boyle earned a law degree from Wake Forest University Law School. After graduating, he spent a year as a law clerk for the Honorable Claude Hilton, a U.S. District Court Judge in the Eastern District of Virginia.