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Alabama Defense Lawyers Association Elects 2023-2026 Officers, District Directors, Young Lawyers Section Chair, and Women in the Law President at Annual Meeting

AUBURN, ALABAMA (JULY 6, 2023) – The Alabama Defense Lawyers Association (ADLA) held its 58TH Annual Membership Meeting and Elections on June 17, 2023, confirming a new slate of Officers and Directors at the close of the business meeting. The Annual Meeting was held at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort in Miramar Beach, Florida. Birmingham attorney Jonathan Hooks of Weinberg Wheeler Hudgins Gunn & Dial, LLC has begun his term as President of the ADLA. “I am honored and excited to serve ADLA as its President. This organization represents the best of the defense bar. Over the past decade, it has served me well and allowed me to serve my colleagues. I am looking forward to the challenge and can’t wait to see what the next year has in store for this group. A special thanks to outgoing President Stephen Still for his steady hand at the helm and his many years of service. We have an ambitious and engaging agenda for this next year, and more information will be released soon,” said Hooks.

JONATHAN M. HOOKS was installed as the 2023-2024 President of the Association. Hooks is a partner at Weinberg Wheeler Hudgins Gunn & Dial, LLC in Birmingham. He has represented an array of clients throughout the southeast, including manufacturers and distributors of a wide variety of products, skilled nursing facilities, premises owners, transportation companies, energy companies, and professionals such as engineers, home inspectors, and real estate agents. He is a member of the Defense Research Institute (DRI), has served on the ADLA Board of Directors, and has chaired ADLA’s legislative committee for several years. He was elected to serve as Secretary-Treasurer in 2021, followed by President-Elect in 2022. Hooks is a frequent author of *amicus curiae* briefs to the Supreme Court of Alabama on behalf of ADLA. He is also a long time faculty member of ADLA’s Deposition Boot Camp. Hooks is a 2003 graduate of Samford University’s Cumberland School of Law.

MEGAN K. MCCARTHY assumes the position of President-Elect. Megan McCarthy is a partner at Ball, Ball, Matthews & Novak's Montgomery office. Ms. McCarthy has a vigorous litigation practice in the fields of auto liability, bad faith defense, personal injury defense, general insurance, and construction law. In her 19 years of experience, Megan has tried over 180 cases in District, Circuit, and Federal courts throughout the state of Alabama with great success. Ms. McCarthy has served as President of the Young Lawyers Section Board of the Alabama Defense Lawyers Association, on the Board of the General Section of the Association, and in 2022-2023 as the Secretary/Treasurer of the Organization. Despite her busy schedule, she finds time to mentor young lawyers and serves as a faculty member on ADLA's Deposition Bootcamp.

BAINS FLEMING of Norman Wood Kendrick & Turner was elected as Secretary-Treasurer. Fleming has tried more than 25 cases in court across the State of Alabama. At home in the courtroom, he has a wide-ranging practice that includes the defense of medical malpractice claims, catastrophic person injury and wrongful death claims along with toxic and mass tort litigation. He also handles product liability, premises liability, transportation, and construction litigation matters. He is an active member of numerous defense lawyer organizations including the IADC and DRI. He is a past president of the ADLA Young Lawyers' Section and has served on the ADLA's Trial Academy Faculty for many years. Fleming previously served a three-year term on the ADLA Board of Directors when he was elected Secretary-Treasurer.

STEPHEN W. STILL, JR. is immediate Past President. Still is a 2005 graduate of the University of Alabama School of Law and has practiced with Starnes Davis Florie, LLP in Birmingham since graduating from law school, where he currently serves as General Counsel. Still's practice is devoted primarily to defending long term care providers in medical malpractice lawsuits and regulatory/investigation matters, defending legal malpractice suits, defending insurers and third party administrators in bad faith, fraud, and tort of outrage matters, and general civil litigation defense. He has been involved with ADLA since 2013 and has served on the Deposition Boot Camp faculty since that time. Still previously served two three-year terms on the ADLA Board of Directors when he was elected Secretary-Treasurer in 2020, President-Elect in 2021, and President in 2022.

The ADLA welcomed the following new members of the Board of Directors to serve a three-year term ending in 2026:

District 1 Director: HAROLD D. MOOTY of Bradley Arant Boult Cummings, LLP is a litigator whose practice focuses on commercial litigation matters, including contract disputes and business torts, across the Southeast. He often handles cases where injunctive relief is requested, frequently in emergency situations where the success or failure of a business is at stake. Hal has years of experience representing both individuals and businesses in state and federal courts, as well as in arbitration proceedings. His litigation experience includes numerous non-compete, non-

solicitation, and non-disclosure cases. Hal has assisted and advised clients with emerging joint venture, partnership, and shareholder disputes. He also serves on the Deposition Boot Camp faculty.

District 2 Director: JEREMY S. GADDY is beginning his work as a District II Director. He is a partner in the Birmingham firm of Clark, May, Price, Lawley, Duncan & Paul, LLC. Gaddy has a broad litigation practice representing defendants in claims including medical malpractice, trucking, construction, retail and hospitality and other general civil defense matters. He is a graduate of Georgia Tech, and the University of Alabama School of Law, and he is licensed in all state and federal courts in Alabama and Mississippi. Gaddy has served on ADLA's Deposition Bootcamp faculty since 2018.

District 3 Director: WILLIAM W. NICHOLS is a partner with the Dothan, Alabama law firm of Lee, Livingston, Lee, Nichols, & Barron, where he specializes in health care law, medical malpractice defense, and general civil defense litigation. He attended Cumberland School of Law and has been a member of the ADLA since his graduation and admission to the Bar in 1997. He also serves as an Alabama Bar Exam grader and a member of the Alabama Appellate Rules Committee.

District 4 Director: MELISSA P. HUNTER of Galloway, Wettermark and Rutens, LLP in Mobile. Melissa is a partner with the firm and her practice focuses primarily on governmental liability and municipal law. She also handles general insurance defense cases. Prior to joining the firm in 2009, Melissa served as a law clerk for Justice Sarah Stewart. Most recently, Melissa served as a Women in the Law Section committee member for ADLA and is excited to take on the role of President of the Section this year.

Melissa is originally from Decatur, Alabama but has made Mobile her home since marrying her husband, Robert. She is also a mom to Charlie (8) and Mae (1). Melissa also serves on the Board of Directors for the Junior League of Mobile and teaches Sunday School at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

District 4 Director: GABY REEVES of Christian & Small, LLP was appointed to serve 2023-2024 for the remaining term of John Browning of Rapid Deployment, Inc. & Clearbrook, LLC. She is located in Christian & Small's Mobile/Baldwin County office and focuses her practice on general civil litigation with a concentration in first-party insurance, personal injury and premises liability defense litigation. Reeves has been active in the South Alabama Volunteer Lawyers Program (SAVLP) throughout her career and was the 2007 recipient of the Ben Kilborn Mobile Bar Association Volunteer Lawyer of the Year Award. She has served on the SAVLP Board of Directors for more than 15 years and is currently a member of the SAVLP's Executive Board, serving as the program's President. Reeves is the Editor of ADLA's Journal and has served in the role since 2019.

Additionally, the ADLA welcomed 2023-2024 Young Lawyers Section Officers and Women in the Law President.

HANNAH H. STOKES assumes the position of Chair of the Young Lawyers Section. Stokes is an associate in Carr Allison's Birmingham office, where her practice focuses on construction defect, premises, and general liability defense. She currently lives in Vestavia with her husband and daughter, but earned her law degree in May 2016 from the University of Alabama School of Law in Tuscaloosa. Hannah looks forward to serving with ADLA again this year, and is excited to be the Chair for 2023-2024. She looks forward to leading the new YLS board and membership with emphasis on publications, programming, and social events.

ANDREW M. TOWNSLEY was elected 1st Vice Chair of the Young Lawyers Section. Andrew is an associate at Lanier Ford Shaver & Payne in Huntsville. He regularly represents municipalities, businesses, and individuals in the defense of automobile and premises liability cases. He also defends numerous hospitals, doctors, nurses, and other providers in medical malpractice cases. Andrew is actively involved in the Madison County Volunteer Lawyers program and serves on the Board of Directors of United Cerebral Palsy of Huntsville and Tennessee Valley. He previously served as the YLS 2nd Vice Chair.

STEPHEN D. PALMER was elected 2nd Vice Chair. Stephen D. Palmer is an Attorney at Carr Allison in Birmingham, Alabama where his practice focuses on civil defense and workers' compensation litigation. Steve did his undergraduate studies at Birmingham-Southern College, earned his masters at Duke University, and attended law school at the University of Alabama. In his free time, Steve operates a small publishing company that produces a series of concise legal booklets on various state and federal court rules, he enjoys being a father and husband, walking his dog, and watching Alabama football.

MELISSA P. HUNTER of Galloway, Wettermark and Rutens, LLP in Mobile will serve as President of the Women in the Law Section from 2023-2025.

About the ADLA: Alabama Defense Lawyers Association (ADLA) is a professional organization of over 900 attorneys dedicated to defending civil actions and promoting fairness and integrity in the civil justice system. For more information about the ADLA, please contact (334) 395-4455 or visit www.adla.org.