

JH&C and KU Law Professor Collaborate On Legal Ethics Reporter

This year, Joseph, Hollander & Craft LLC proudly took on the role of publisher for the *Legal Ethics & Malpractice Reporter*, a monthly publication covering legal ethics, professional responsibility, and malpractice.

After 40 years teaching legal ethics, University of Kansas law professor Mike Hoeflich became frustrated with the lack of resources available to help his students stay informed of developments in this area of the law after they began their legal careers. He envisioned a legal journal that would address ethics topics in a format that wouldn't make continued learning a chore.

Hoeflich reached out to JH&C's Legal Ethics and Malpractice group to discuss a collaboration. The practice group – Diane Bellquist, Chris Joseph, Chris McHugh and Carrie Parker – regularly advises and defends legal professionals facing disciplinary issues and malpractice claims. They shared Hoeflich's vision to make ethics guidance more accessible and jumped at the opportunity to produce practical educational materials for colleagues in the legal community.

So the *Legal Ethics & Malpractice Reporter* (LEMR) was born. The LEMR is an electronic bulletin published on the last day of every month. Each issue includes: a lead article addressing a current ethics or malpractice topic; a note regarding new authority in the field; advice for conducting research on legal ethics and malpractice; a "tech tip" relevant to modern legal practice; and a "blast from the past" on legal ethics and malpractice history. The LEMR now boasts more than 11,000 readers.

The team behind the LEMR also offered four continuing legal education seminars in 2020 addressing issues ranging from legal ethics and trial publicity to ethical issues in the representation of cannabis clients. More than 1,500 attorneys attended these programs, which were offered virtually and free of charge.

Joseph, Hollander & Craft now dedicates a section of its website to legal ethics and malpractice education and archiving past issues of the LEMR. Attorneys in Kansas, Missouri, and beyond may research topics or subscribe to the newsletter at <https://josephhollander.com/ethics-malpractice/>.

Firm Wins Missouri's First Cannabis License Appeal

When Missouri voted to legalize medical marijuana in 2018, Chris McHugh was a step ahead. He traveled to nearby states to tour cultivations, testing facilities, and dispensaries, and was at the forefront to serve clients facing the complicated and highly competitive licensing process. Missouri received more than 2,100 applications for only 338 available facility licenses. Chris submitted seven applications for clients, and all were approved – making Chris the only attorney with a 100% win rate.

By 2020, dozens of companies who had filed applications on their own and had them rejected were flocking to Chris and fellow JH&C attorney Drew Goodwin to help them win on appeal. Chris and Drew were the first attorneys to file – and win – a license appeal at the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. This was not only a win for their client, Green Precision Analytics. It was a win for Kansas City, giving it the only testing facility license issued in the area. Chris and Drew currently have nearly 40 licenses on appeal.

For his part, Chris' efforts were applauded by more than 1,000 readers of *Greenway Magazine*, Missouri's official publication of the cannabis industry, who voted Chris among the "Best of the Industry 2019." In announcing the honor, the magazine wrote, "The benefit of his time as criminal defense, prisoners' rights, and First Amendment attorney is somewhat obvious, perhaps the exact perspective *Greenway* readers believe makes McHugh one of the best in the industry."

The Missouri Medical Cannabis Trade Association (MoCann) also tapped Chris to serve on its Board of Directors and Government Affairs Committee.



MATTHEW JOHNSTON JOINS KANSAS CITY OFFICE AS WORK FOR PLAINTIFFS GROWS

When senior litigators Drew Goodwin and Chris McHugh joined the firm in 2019, their extensive trial experience in complex litigation and medical marijuana licensing allowed the firm to significantly expand the Civil Division's scope of work.

"For nearly two decades, this firm has been well-known for its defense work in criminal and civil matters, but, with the opening of our office in Kansas City, Missouri, we've had increasing requests from clients seeking our representation as plaintiffs' counsel," said Managing Member Chris Joseph.



Matthew Johnston

"As a result, Drew Goodwin is leading the firm's plaintiffs' practice and we hired Matthew (Matt) Johnston to join our Kansas City team, focusing on complex business litigation, personal injury, wrongful death, professional liability and employment discrimination matters."

Matt is licensed to practice before the Missouri state courts, the United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri and the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri. He is a graduate of the University of Kansas School of Law and completed his bachelor's degree in economics at Kansas State University.

JUSTICE IN THE YEAR OF COVID-19

Litigators Win Early 2020 Courtroom Victories and Successfully Defend Motions When Trials Halted

In a year of few jury trials, Joseph, Hollander & Craft's criminal defense attorneys made their time in court count.

Chris Joseph started the year trying *State v. Co* – a highly publicized case against the Topeka Correctional Facility's former dental instructor. Though the allegations were scandalous, a flawed investigation provided reasonable doubt. On January 30, 2020, a Shawnee County jury delivered not guilty verdicts on five of six charges.

Jess Hoeme collected another acquittal on February 7. In *State v. Dugo*, a Wichita police officer was charged with aggravated battery after his patrol car collided with a civilian's truck when the officer was responding to a burglary call. After a Sedgwick County jury found him not guilty, Dugo collapsed into his chair, overcome with emotion.

Hoeme said, "Our police officers serve to protect us whenever we are in need. When they need my help, I'll be there every time."

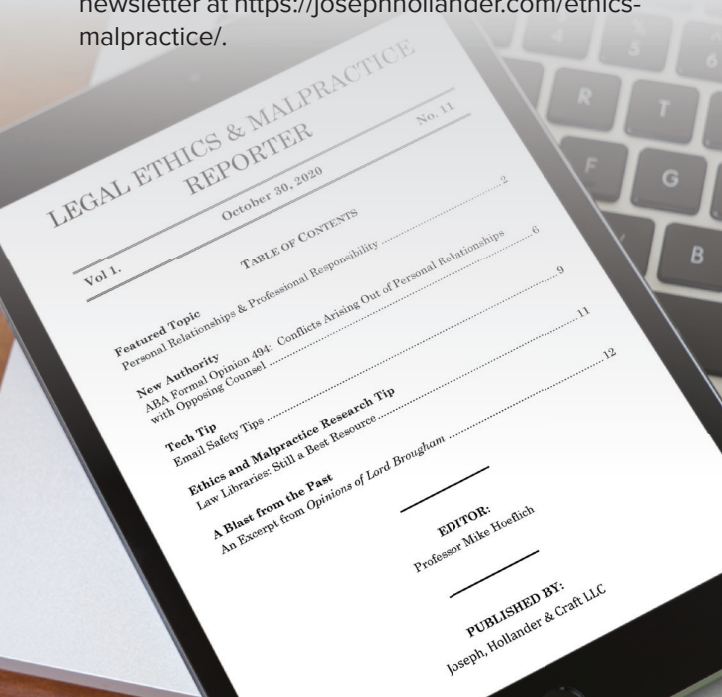
While March brought jury trials to a halt, the pursuit of justice continued. JH&C's criminal defense team prevailed on multiple motions seeking suppression of evidence and dismissal of charges.

Smith-Woertz Elected Member of Firm

In June 2020, Joseph, Hollander & Craft proudly elected Ardith Smith-Woertz as a Member of the firm. Ardith, who joined the firm in 2018, focuses on family law, primarily handling cases involving divorce, child support, child custody and residency, parenting issues, and paternity.

"Ardith has been an outstanding family law practitioner for more than 30 years and is a highly skilled, certified mediator through the Kansas Office of Judicial Administration," said Julia Craft, chair of the firm's family law division. "The firm is fortunate to have Ardith's knowledge and leadership in our family law practice group."

A life-long advocate for child welfare issues, Smith-Woertz currently serves on the Board of Directors of CASA of Shawnee County.



Edwards Serves on WBA’s Racial Justice Task Force

Keith Edwards was appointed to the Wichita Bar Associations Racial Justice Task Force, a group of prosecutors, defense attorneys, and civil practitioners dedicated to identifying and rectifying inequalities caused by systemic racism in the local justice system.

“Communities all across the United States are going through an intense and overdue reckoning of racial justice issues. I’m absolutely honored to have been appointed to the Task Force and I’ve been consistently impressed with the dedication and insight of the other attorneys who were asked to serve,” Keith said.



Keith Edwards

The Task force includes local public defenders, prosecutors from the municipal, state, and federal justice systems, the Sedgwick County District Attorney, Justice Department attorneys, serving and retired judges, as well as many attorneys from some of the area’s largest law firms. Keith went on to say, “This is a big issue and we’re doing what we can to move quickly and to avoid as many blind spots as possible.”

Firm Moves to New Overland Park Office

The firm’s expansion in the Kansas City metro area prompted a move to a new location in Overland Park, at 10104 West 105th Street. The 5,500-square-foot building offers multiple conference rooms and additional office space for attorneys, legal staff and administration.

“We are handling an increasing number of professional liability defense and criminal defense cases in the Greater Kansas City area,” said Diane Bellquist, who relocated to Overland Park from the firm’s Topeka office in response to the growing demand.

Bellquist joined attorneys Dionne Scherff and Lindsey Erickson at the new location, who handle criminal cases in Johnson, Wyandotte, Leavenworth, Miami, and Riley counties, as well as in the United States District Courts for the District of Kansas and the Western District of Missouri.



ATTORNEYS VOLUNTEER SUPPORT WITH COVID-RELATED ISSUES

As the pandemic waged throughout the year, Dionne Scherff, Anne Kindling and Ardith Smith-Woertz joined colleagues across the state to offer guidance for the courts and healthcare workers risking exposure to COVID-19.

Chief Justice Marla Luckert appointed Dionne to the Kansas Supreme Court’s Ad Hoc Jury Task Force, formed to help Kansas courts resume jury trials in a safe manner. The Task Force developed guidelines to protect the health and safety of court participants while providing fair and timely access to Kansas courts.

In Topeka, Anne and Ardith aided the Washburn Law Clinic’s Washburn Hospital Employees Legal Preparedness (HELP) Project in bringing peace of mind to hospital workers bravely facing the pandemic. The attorneys have been preparing living wills and durable powers of attorney free of charge for hospital employees unable to afford legal assistance on their own.

Former Prosecutor Dustin Curry Joins Firm’s Criminal Defense Team

Dustin Curry, a former Special Assistant United States Attorney and Assistant District Attorney, joined the firm in November 2020 to focus on criminal defense in state and federal courts across Kansas.



Dustin Curry

“Dustin has tried more than 50 jury trials in federal and state courts,” said Managing Member Chris Joseph. “For six years, Dustin worked as a special prosecutor on the DOJ’s Violent Crimes Task Force. His understanding of prosecutorial strategy and tactics is a tremendous asset to our firm, and we’re thrilled he’s now working with us to ensure justice for our clients.”

Dustin began his legal career as a prosecutor in the Shawnee County District Attorney’s Office. During his nine years at the DA’s office, he served as a Deputy District Attorney, supervising two separate criminal divisions and handling major felony cases ranging from aggravated assault to attempted capital murder.

Dustin is admitted to practice before the Kansas Supreme Court, Kansas state courts, and the United States District Court for the District of Kansas. He received his juris doctorate from Washburn University School of Law after completing his bachelor’s degree in psychology at the University of Kansas.

Independent Reviews Bestow More Accolades Than Ever Before

2020 was an unprecedented year for the firm as more of our attorneys received best-of-the-best accolades than ever before. Through surveys of clients and lawyers, Best Lawyers in America®, Super Lawyers® and Chambers USA ranked 14 of our attorneys among the best in their respective fields.

Super Lawyers®

- Diane Bellquist
- Ross Hollander
- Chris Joseph
- Kris Lawless
- Chris McHugh
- Dionne Scherff
- Ardith Smith-Woertz

Rising Stars

- Drew Goodwin
- Casey Meek
- Carrie Parker



- Ross Hollander
- Wichita Lawyer of the Year
- Labor Law Management

Also recognized in
Employment Law Management
Litigation – Labor & Employment

- Kris Lawless
- Topeka Lawyer of the Year
- Criminal Defense – White Collar

Also recognized in
Criminal Defense – General Practice

- Casey Meek
- Topeka Lawyer of the Year
- Criminal Defense – General Practice

- Diane Bellquist
- Banking and Finance Law

- Julia Craft
- Family Law

- Chris Joseph
- Criminal Defense – General Practice

- Jess Hoeme
- Criminal Defense – General Practice
- DUI/DWI Defense

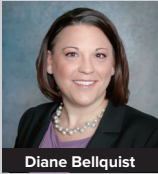
- Chris McHugh
- Cannabis Law

Ones to Watch

- Katherine Chlumsky
- Family Law
- Rebecca Henry
- Family Law
- Carrie Parker
- Appellate Practice



- Ross Hollander
- Labor & Employment Law



Diane Bellquist



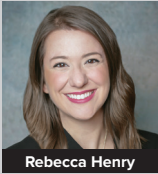
Katherine Chlumsky



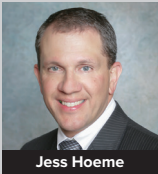
Julia Craft



Drew Goodwin



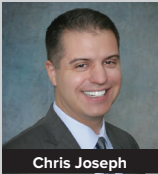
Rebecca Henry



Jess Hoeme



Ross Hollander



Chris Joseph



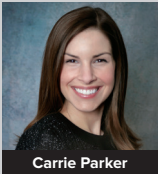
Kris Lawless



Chris McHugh



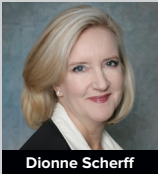
Casey Meek



Carrie Parker



Ardith Smith-Woertz



Dionne Scherff

ANNUAL GIVING TO FIGHT HUNGER AND BRING HOLIDAY CHEER

Many non-profits were called upon to aid more people than ever before. Joseph, Hollander & Craft was honored to lend a hand to numerous organizations helping children and families through the pandemic in 2020.



Photo Credit: Courtesy Overland Park Police Officer's Foundation

The firm was thrilled to bring some holiday joy to kids through its support of the **Overland Park Police Officers Foundation’s** annual *Cops & Kids: Operation Rudolph* event. Fifty kids were selected by OPPD School Resource Officers who spend every day helping students succeed. Due to COVID-19, the day was changed from in-person shopping to a drive-up event, with officers handing out clothing, toys and gifts to make each child’s holiday merrier.

Members of the firm continued an annual tradition supporting the **MHA of South Central Kansas’** Adopt-A-Bell Drive, providing families and adults suffering from mental illness with much-needed holiday cheer.

The firm also was a proud supporter of **Harvesters Community Food Network** and its efforts to stamp out hunger among the roughly 18% of Kansas and Missouri residents now facing food insecurity.



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