



**Civil Rights Division Association
NEWSLETTER
Issue 7, December 2023**

Happy Holidays everybody! The Civil Rights Division Association (CRDA) is a non-partisan organization composed primarily of former employees of the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, with current employees also welcomed and encouraged to join. The CRDA Newsletter is intended to provide members with information on CRDA activities, member updates, and information about the work of the Civil Rights Division.¹ We are very excited to be able to stay connected with CRDA members, and encourage member networking. Still need to join the CRDA? Just click to the [CRDA website](#)!

Table of Contents

Newsletter Submissions	p. 2
Division Alumni Reflections	p. 2
Division Alumni Book Recommendations ..	p. 5
Civil Rights Division News	p. 6
Division Alumni Updates	p. 9
Corrections	p. 12

¹ The CRDA is a membership organization and is not affiliated with the U.S. Department of Justice or any other government agency. Any views expressed in the CRDA Newsletter are those of the author or organization.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

We invite you to share any news or personal updates for the CRDA Newsletter! This includes news about family and/or personal activities, interesting trips you have taken, job changes, career posts, publications and retirements. We invite creative submissions and reflections, too! Creative submissions and reflections should be no longer than 500 words, and can be:

- Insights on interesting experiences during your tenure with the Division;
- Photos of memorable events with a brief summary of the event; and
- Thoughts on or reviews of books, articles, movies or other publications pertaining to civil rights history and policy.

*Please send your information to CRDA Newsletter Editor Lisa Wilson Edwards at CRDANewsletter@gmail.com. The Newsletter is published bi-monthly. **The deadline for submissions to the next newsletter is January 15, 2024.***

* * * * *

DIVISION ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

Closing the Circle Keeps Hope Alive

By Richard W. Roberts© *

For most of my traveling life, there were two states I never visited: Mississippi and Alabama. That was not by accident. I'd been through Virginia, the capital of the Confederacy. I'd go down south for the summers from New York to the Carolinas where my parents grew up. But too many stories kept me away from Mississippi and Alabama.

Now that there's more life behind me than ahead of me, I thought it time to end that ban. Over the past year, I made my first ever trip to Mississippi and my second ever to Alabama (the first was a hurried 24-hour turn around to attend my law clerk's wedding). A colleague who grew up in Detroit and went down south in the summers to Mississippi where her mother grew up arranged a civil rights tour of the Mississippi Delta. I reasoned that since she was familiar with the milieu, and a schoolmate of mine lived there (and could bail me out if I got in trouble), now was the time.

We took in Clarksdale where Morgan Freeman's blues restaurant draws crowds near the closed black hospital where Bessie Smith died from injuries suffered in a road accident. We toured Indianola and its B.B. King Museum. We whizzed past the notorious Parchman prison and visited my schoolmate in Greenwood where he, amazingly, farms 7,000 acres, pastors a church every Sunday, and maintains his family medicine practice the other six days of the week. The most sobering experiences were standing outside the abandoned Bryant's Grocery where Emmett Till's fateful end began in Money; seeing the site in Glendora where J.W. Milam lived and, along with Roy Bryant, killed Till; entering the former gin there where the killers retrieved the 70-pound fan and tied it to Till's neck; standing at Graball's Landing where Till's mauled body was found in the Tallahatchie River; and sitting in the County Courthouse in Sumner where the all-white male jury let the killers free.

As we ambled across the courthouse square toward the Emmett Till Interpretive Center, we

crossed paths with an older black woman who took in our tourist gazes. She stopped and offered with pointed emphasis, “Ain’t nothin’ changed. Nothin’.”



This year’s civil rights tour was to Alabama. Right across the road from the historical plaque marking the spot in Anniston where the Freedom Riders’ bus was torched rested a freshly painted one-story abode hosting a flagpole twice its height with an oversized Stars-and-Bars atop it fluttering carelessly in the gentle breeze. Birmingham’s Civil Rights Institute overlooked the bombed 16th Street Baptist Church and Kelly Ingram Park where Bull Connor unleashed his terror on children marching for desegregation. We walked the Pettus bridge in Selma where the march to Montgomery began, the capital where we saw EJL’s lynching memorial and the huge statute of Jefferson Davis perched at the Capitol building’s façade overlooking Dr. King’s Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. As we passed Lionel Richie’s home in Tuskegee and toured the University, we wondered how we could tell that older woman in Sumner to “keep hope alive.”

Would it do any good for me to tell her about my second-ever trip to Mississippi? John Brittain, the Olie W. Rauh Professor of Law at the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law, teaches a Service-Learning practicum involving students interning with lawyers in assisting people and communities in crisis. He invited me to accompany him and his students to their internship in Jackson, Mississippi at the Mississippi Center for Justice, a nonprofit, public interest law firm committed to advancing racial and economic justice. The students helped eligible citizens get conviction records judicially expunged, helped poor occupants of heir property to secure title, and drafted campaigns to educate underserved communities about available health care services. Little did I know beforehand that the Center’s Director of Operations and General Counsel was Stacey Moore Buchanan, the daughter of the late John Moore, the 35-year veteran Education Section litigator and supervisor and Jackson native. We reminisced warmly about her dad. Her return to his home state to carry on his civil rights legacy gave me reason to keep hope alive. Perhaps seeing Stacey’s generation might give reason to that older woman in Sumner to do so too.

**Richard W. Roberts is a retired United States District Judge with the Federal District Court of the District of Columbia. He served as Chief of the Division’s Criminal Section from 1995 to 1998, and a Trial Attorney in the Section from 1978 to 1982. The views expressed in this Reflection are solely those of the author.*

Last Bus

A poem by Margery M. Ross*

I catch the last bus
Out of downtown DC on April 4, 1968.
Fires loom and looters
Have a field day at
D. J. Kaufman's across
Pennsylvania Avenue from the DOJ
Where I monitor urban riots
For the Attorney General.
Now it's me in the midst of the melee.
Headed toward Georgetown
Hoping to get home.

Fifty plus years, history repeats,
It's one step forward, five back.
Police still kill with impunity,
Cities burn, no end to toxic words.
From a reality TV host—
Good trouble trashed as anarchy.
When reading Ta-Nehisi Coates
Years ago, I protested:
Exaggeration. No more.
Between the World and Me—
That last bus is leaving.

**Margery M. Ross served as a Paralegal with the Division from 1968 to 1971. The views expressed in this poem are solely those of the author.*

"Then and Now: How Far We've Come"

By Reuben Ortenberg*

Events of almost sixty years ago were brought to mind by the visual of peaceful racial justice protesters being forcibly cleared from Lafayette Park just before the president of the United States stood before St. John's Episcopal Church for a photo op, unopened bible in-hand. Although it was later determined that the clearing was planned before law enforcement knew of the president's visit, the visual was nonetheless jarring and reminiscent of a case in Crawfordville, Taliaferro County, Georgia, in which the Civil Rights Division intervened on behalf of the United States during my tenure as a Trial Attorney for the Division.

Crawfordville was a small cotton farming town located between Atlanta and Augusta, Georgia. It had a Courthouse on a square. On August 22, 1965, about 125 young Black students marched in double file from the Friendship Baptist Church in Crawfordville and took their place together on the Courthouse lawn. They sang "God Bless America," were led in prayer by one of their number, and then another of their number made a statement. They then marched back to the church. They complained of racial discrimination in the public schools and of being denied rights based on their race. The police were trying to keep things calm, when a man of about sixty years of

age got out of a vehicle, pulled a book from his front seat, and began reading aloud or to himself. The police immediately arrested nine of the Black student marchers and charged them with interference with religious worship. The book from which the man was or may have been reading was a bible. The arrested people filed suit in Federal District Court challenging, among other things, the constitutionality of the Georgia State law which made it a misdemeanor to interfere with religious worship. The case, *Turner v. Goolsby*, 255 F. Supp. 724 (S.D. Ga. 1966) was argued before a three judge Federal panel which held that the Georgia law “...was unconstitutionally applied....” and enjoined the prosecution of the students from going forward.

The defendants in *Turner v. Goolsby*, public officials, used a law which forbade interference with religious worship by the use of profanity, as a weapon to punish Black students for peacefully protesting the deprivation of their rights to use public school facilities and to a desegregated education. Almost sixty years later in 2020, it appeared that our nation’s highest elected official potentially interfered with a constitutional right to peacefully protest the murder of Black people by the police, so that he could hold up a bible for a photo opportunity. Sadly, in close to sixty years we have progressed only in the sense that the Crawfordville defendants were low level minor public officials, and the preacher may have actually been reading the bible, while in 2020, it seems to me, our nation’s highest elected official used the bible to advance political objectives. Not much progress.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel said, “We learn from history that we do not learn from history.”

**Reuben Ortenberg served as a Trial Attorney in the Southeast Section of the Division from March 1965 through September 1967. He worked primarily on school desegregation and voting right cases in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. The views expressed in this Reflection are solely those of the author.*

DIVISION ALUMNI BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

Here are some book insights from Division alum Hugh Moore*:

- Beneath a Ruthless Sun: A True Story of Violence, Race, and Justice Lost and Found”
- Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America”

Both of these books by author Gilbert King examine civil rights cases in Lake County, Florida, in the late 1940s and early 1950s. “Devil in the Grove” (which was awarded the Pulitzer Prize) includes a discussion of Marshall’s 1946 defense of black defendants charged in a supposed “race riot” in Columbia, Tennessee. Following the Columbia trials, Nashville civil rights attorney Z. Alexander Looby and others stopped an apparent effort to lynch Marshall.

- “Unexampled Courage: The Blinding of Sgt. Isaac Woodard and the Awakening of President Harry S Truman and District Judge J. Waties Waring”

This fascinating book by author Hon. Richard Gergel, who serves as a Federal District Judge in the District of South Carolina, discusses the 1946 blinding of Sgt. Woodard, a black World War II veteran, by law enforcement in South Carolina. The incident was brought to the attention of

President Truman, who then issued his Executive Order desegregating the military. Judge Waring presided over the federal case arising out of the attack on Sgt. Woodard. Judge Waring later presided over the Clarendon County, SC, school case, which was part of *Brown v. Board of Education*.

- “Mayday 1971: A White House at War, a Revolt in the Streets, and the Untold History of America's Biggest Mass Arrest”

This book, by author Lawrence Roberts, describes in detail the May, 1971, anti-Vietnam demonstrations in Washington that resulted in 12,000 arrests. For a few hours Civil Rights Division attorneys (including me) participated in the “booking” of protesters. In the book there is a photograph of the “booking” tables.

** Hugh Moore served as an attorney in the Education Section from 1970 to 1973. The views expressed in these book insights are solely those of the author.*

CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION NEWS

Here are summary updates of recent Civil Rights Division news. More details can be found on the Division's [website](#).

Justice Department Officials Meet With Law Enforcement And Community Leaders To Protect Communities From Hate-Filled Violence



The week of November 8, Justice Department leaders met with law enforcement and community leaders at a time of increased threats against Jewish, Muslim, and Arab communities across the country. The Department remains vigilant in combating threats against Americans based on their religion, race, color, ethnicity, or national origin. Attorney General Merrick B. Garland announced:

“In this heightened threat environment, the partnerships between the Department of Justice, state and local law enforcement, and the communities we serve matter more than ever. That is why, this week, the Department held meetings with law enforcement and community leaders to discuss what they are seeing on the ground and how we can best support them. In these conversations, I reiterated that the Justice Department is committed to protecting our communities from hate-fueled violence. The Department will continue

bringing together stakeholders to support our shared goal of preventing, disrupting, and prosecuting illegal acts of hate fueled by antisemitism, Islamophobia, or anti-Arab bias.”

Attorney General Garland, Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta, FBI Director Christopher Wray, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Kristen Clarke, Acting Community Relations Service Director Justin Lock, and other Department officials met with Jewish community leaders in Washington, D.C. The leaders expressed their concerns about the significant increase in threats against Jewish community members, organizations, and businesses over the past month. Department officials discussed their continued commitment to protecting Jewish communities and highlighted recent examples of prosecutions against individuals for threatening or attempting to harm Jewish people across the country.

In Brooklyn, New York, Deputy Attorney General Lisa O. Monaco joined U.S. Attorney Breon Peace for the Eastern District of New York for a roundtable discussion with local Jewish leaders. Deputy Attorney General Monaco emphasized that the Justice Department’s top priority is keeping the American people safe, and that the Department will use every available tool to work with partners across the country to combat hate.

These meetings come as there has been a significant increase in the volume and frequency of threats against Jewish, Muslim, and Arab communities across the country. During the meetings, Department leadership stressed that no one in the United States should have to live in fear of violence because of where they or their family comes from or because of how they worship.

In addition, Attorney General Garland and Associate Attorney General Gupta met with community leaders before the Civil Rights Division’s quarterly interagency meeting hosted by Assistant Attorney General Clarke with leaders representing Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, and Hindu communities. The meeting was co-hosted by Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia of the Department of Homeland Security’s Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. The Department’s Civil Rights Division first began convening regular meetings with Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, and Hindu organizations following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. The organizations asked the Justice Department and other federal agencies to continue to take actions to protect their communities from unlawful discrimination and violence.

Also that week, Attorney General Garland, Deputy Attorney General Monaco, and Associate Attorney General Gupta hosted the Law Enforcement Quarterly Meeting, at which representatives from the Justice Department’s law enforcement and grantmaking components together with their state and local law enforcement partners, discussed the increase in threats against Jewish, Muslim, and Arab communities. Attorney General Garland emphasized to the group that in moments of crisis, strong partnerships and trust between law enforcement and communities are essential and that successfully preventing, disrupting, and prosecuting illegal acts of hate requires close coordination across government and across the country.

The Department hosted a [virtual forum](#) to highlight the successful implementation of the United Against Hate (UAH) initiative in all 94 U.S. Attorneys’ Offices and discuss efforts to combat unlawful acts of hate. In conjunction with the event, the Civil Rights Division [released](#) a document highlighting the reach of the UAH program in its first year and examples of its impact in communities across the country. These include enhancing coordination on responding to threats to religious communities and sparking the creation of new initiatives at local colleges and similar institutions.

Division Secures \$25 Million Landmark Agreement with Apple to Resolve Employment Discrimination Allegations Based on Citizenship Status



On November 9, 2023, the Division announced an agreement with Apple Inc. (Apple) to resolve allegations that Apple illegally discriminated in hiring and recruitment against U.S. citizens and certain non-U.S. citizens whose permission to live in and work in the United States does not expire. Under the agreement, Apple is required to pay up to \$25 million in backpay and civil penalties, the largest award that the Justice Department has recovered under the anti-discrimination provision of the Immigration and Nationality act (INA).

“Creating unlawful barriers that make it harder for someone to seek a job because of their citizenship status will not be tolerated,” said Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division. “This resolution reflects the Civil Rights Division’s commitment to ending illegal discriminatory employment practices.”

The settlement agreement resolves the Department’s determination that Apple violated the INA’s anti-discrimination requirements during Apple’s recruitment for positions falling under the permanent labor certification program (PERM). The PERM program is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and allows employers to sponsor workers for lawful permanent resident status in the United States after completing recruitment and meeting other program requirements. Any U.S. employer that utilizes the PERM program cannot illegally discriminate in hiring or recruitment based on citizenship or immigration status.

The Department’s investigation started in February 2019, and found that Apple engaged in a pattern or practice of citizenship status discrimination in recruitment for positions it hired through PERM, and that the company’s unlawful discrimination prejudiced U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, lawful permanent residents, and those granted asylum or refugee status. These less effective recruitment practices deterred protected workers from applying to positions that Apple preferred to fill instead with PERM beneficiaries.

DIVISION ALUMNI NEWS AND UPDATES

Here are updates on our former Division colleagues:



Former Division colleagues celebrate the Investiture of Division alum Judge Sonya L. Sacks to the General District Court for the 18th Judicial District (Va.)

Sonya L. Sacks was formally sworn in as Judge of the General District Court for the Eighteenth Judicial District at her Investiture on October 7, 2023. The ceremony took place at Alexandria (Va) General District Court. The oath of office for Judge Sacks was administered by Hon. Patricia Tolliver Giles of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. Many Division colleagues joined Judge Sacks to celebrate her Investiture, including Antoinette Barksdale, Felicia Sadler, Raheemah Abdulaleem, Luz Lopez Ortiz, and Lisa Wilson Edwards. Judge Sacks was an attorney with the Voting Section and Employment Litigation Section from 2006 to 2020.



Division alum Candyce Phoenix conferring with Cong. Jamie Raskin (D-Md), Chair of the House Oversight Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and member of the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol

Candyce Phoenix was an attorney in the Division's Employment Litigation Section from 2015 until 2019, when she joined the House Committee on Oversight and Reform as Staff Director for Chairman Jamie Raskin (D-MD) and the Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. She served as counsel for the second impeachment of President Donald J. Trump. In 2021, she joined the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol as Senior Counsel and Senior Advisor. In addition to senior management duties, she led one of the

investigative teams and was responsible for, among other things, investigating the Oath Keepers, the Proud Boys, and other militia groups, the federal government's failure to properly respond to the rise of violent white supremacy, and the influence of social media in the attack. Earlier this year, Candyce joined the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia as Deputy Attorney General for Policy and Legislative Affairs. She graduated from Columbia University and Harvard Law School.



Division alum Michelle Coles at a book-signing for her young adult novel, *Black Was The Ink*

Michelle Coles has been appointed by Maryland Governor Wes Moore to the [Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#). The Commission was created to unearth cases of racially motivated lynchings that took place in Maryland, and to make recommendations to address the legacy of lynching rooted in the spirit of restorative justice. Michelle's debut young adult novel, [Black Was The Ink](#), centers on the Reconstruction Era, and was recently installed in [Planet Word's](#) Interactive Library. Michelle served the Division as an Attorney in the Division's Special Litigation Section and Policy Section from 2010 to 2022.



Division alum Oneshia Herring

Oneshia Herring served as an attorney in the Division's Housing and Civil Enforcement Section, and she served as Senior Counsel in the Office of the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights from 2014 to 2021. She was President of the Department of Justice Association of Black Attorneys from 2019 to 2021. In 2021-2022, she served as Deputy Director of the Office of Civil Rights in the Department's Office of Justice Programs. After over 8-1/2 years at the Department, Oneshia joined

the National Fair Housing Alliance as Senior Vice President and Counsel for Consulting and Compliance. In this role, she leads the organization's efforts to provide high-impact consulting and compliance service to housing providers. She teaches at the University of Baltimore School of Law. Oneshia received her BS from Florida State University, Master's degree in Applied Sociology from University of Central Florida, and J.D. from North Carolina Central University School of Law.



Division alum Roscoe Jones

Roscoe Jones served as an attorney in the Division's Appellate Section from 2010 to 2012, and was Special Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General of Civil Rights from 2012 to 2013. After leaving the Division, Roscoe served as Chief of Staff and Legislative Director for Capitol Hill Offices for four years. He entered private practice in 2019 and was elevated to Partner and Co-Chair of the Public Policy Practice Group at Gibson Dunn and Crutcher. In 2023, Chambers USAS ranked Roscoe as one of the leading government relations practitioners in the United States. Recently, he was profiled in the National Law Journal for his work representing the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights in the organization's efforts lobbying for comprehensive policy reform legislation in the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act. As an adjunct professor, Roscoe teaches a policy course at the University of Michigan Law School, and has taught at Yale Law School, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, University of Chicago Law School, Georgetown University Law Center, George Washington University Law School, University of Washington Law School, and the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Policy and Governance. Roscoe Graduated from Stanford University, and University of Virginia Law School.



Division alum Lisa Wilson Edwards (second from left) with family and friends at the Kinkaku-ji Temple in Kyoto, Japan

Lisa Wilson Edwards vacationed with family and friends in Tokyo and Kyoto, Japan in August. They enjoyed the bustling activity of Tokyo, and the beautiful temples and shrines of Kyoto and the outlying area of Arashiyama. Last year, after 25 years in the Division (and 30 years in the

Department), Lisa joined the Federal Communications Commission as Special Advisor, Digital Equity and Inclusion to work on developing and drafting the agency's regulations to prevent digital discrimination of access and facilitate equal access to broadband internet service, as prescribed by section 60506 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021. The longstanding digital divide was heightened during the pandemic and amplified the needs of low-income, rural, minority and tribal communities across the nation that either lack broadband, have slow or ineffective service, or experience impediments that deprive them of equal access to broadband internet service. The agency [adopted regulations on November 15, 2023](#) in accordance with the statute.

Correction:

- The September 2023 (Issue 6) Newsletter is corrected at page 3 to reflect that David Marlin served as a Trial Attorney in the Division from 1961 to 1965, working in Alabama on voting cases, and pursuing school desegregation at military bases before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.