

A woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a black blazer over a white top and a pearl necklace, is sitting in a library. She is looking down at an open book on her lap, holding a pen in her right hand. The background is filled with wooden shelves containing many law books with red and gold spines.

# Ensuring Equal Access to Justice

**2021 Annual Report**

*North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, Inc.*

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# North Mississippi Rural Legal Service, Inc - Mission and Vision

## Our Mission

North Mississippi Rural Legal Service, Inc. (NMRLS), a charitable nonprofit legal aid program, provides zealous attorney representation, advocacy, and community education to ensure equal access to the civil justice system for the most vulnerable members of our society.



## Our Vision

North Mississippi Rural Legal Services is dedicated to preserving the hope, dignity, and independence of our most vulnerable communities by relentlessly and tirelessly committing our expertise and resources to provide high-quality legal assistance to our clients who otherwise would not have equitable and effective access to the civil justice system.

# Message From The Chair of the Board



**Katherine Weatherby**  
Board Chair

Dear Supporters,

Along with our entire Board, I have always valued how NMRLS employees rise to meet every challenge and opportunity. We thank them for taking that dedication to new heights this past year as they adapted to the challenges of a global pandemic and delivered uninterrupted service to low-income north Mississippians when they needed us the most.

Throughout 2021, NMRLS responded to the economic impacts and operational setbacks from COVID-19 with strong governance and oversight. The many accomplishments NMRLS had in 2021 are attributable to our passionate and talented employees. We recognize the importance of ensuring that NMRLS is a place where all our employees feel safe, protected, supported and rewarded. I am pleased with the strides we made in 2021 to foster diversity and make our organization even more inclusive.

I want to thank my fellow Board members for contributing their business expertise, industry knowledge, and time. I extend the entire Board's appreciation to Ben Cole, II for his strong leadership and commitment to NMRLS. Also, I commend NMRLS' employees for continuing to provide services to the most vulnerable communities during turbulent times. It is my privilege to share this 2021 North Mississippi Rural Legal Services Annual Report which celebrates the impact of our ceaseless dedication to ensuring equal access to justice.

Sincerely,

*Katherine Weatherby*

Katherine Weatherby  
Chair of the Board of Directors

# Message From the Executive Director



**BEN THOMAS COLE, II**  
Executive Director

Dear Supporters,

I could not be prouder when I look at all that North Mississippi Rural Legal Services dedicated staff accomplished in FY2021. With systems and institutions increasingly stacked against low-income people in almost every way, North Mississippi Rural Legal Services nearly 44 staff members were able to find a way to make sure that north Mississippians were able to access the legal services they needed during their most pressing times.

From preventing evictions and foreclosures, ensuring access to benefits for people with disabilities, veterans, the elderly, helping individuals with disabilities get an education, and protecting the rights of all low-income individuals, our staff was there every step of the way in providing equal access to justice for clients.

Our staff helps clients in all ways that are so critical. When the stakes get higher, as they have recently in this country, we fight even harder for clients and their families, and for the fairness and justice which are fundamental rights everyone should enjoy.

Thank each of you for helping us ensure access to justice for north Mississippians.

Sincerely,

*Ben Thomas Cole, II*

Ben Thomas Cole, II  
Executive Director



# Our Legal Service Priority Areas in 2021

Each year North Mississippi Rural Legal Services' Board of Directors decides on the top priority areas for the year based on the legal needs' trends from the previous year and input from program staff.

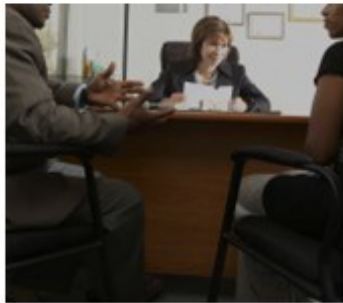
Through offices strategically placed, NMRLS fights for the rights of the low-income members of our communities in 39 north Mississippi counties. We coordinate our services across practice areas to address the legal problems faced by historically low-income populations, including veterans, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Our staff establishes positive, goal-directed relationships with our clients to provide them with the highest quality legal guidance and representation that they desperately need.

Our multifaceted work to help people meet basic needs includes, but is not limited to:



**Foreclosure  
Prevention**



**Divorce/Separation/  
Annulment**



**Domestic  
Violence  
Prevention**



**Wills and Other Estate  
Documents**



**Bankruptcy  
Protection**



**Establish  
Protection**

# Client Story: Retrieving Personal Property

## Oxford Office

Ms. Blaxton was the legal title owner of a 2013 Dodge Charger that had been purchased for her by her ex-boyfriend. After their relationship ended, the boyfriend absconded with the car and parked it in his mother's yard and then threatened Ms. Blaxton with violence should she seek to retrieve it. At the time, this was Ms. Blaxton's only reliable vehicle. Attorney

Williamson sued the ex-boyfriend and his mother in Tippah County Circuit Court, seeking an Order of Replevin. The parties were properly served, and after a brief hearing, Ms. Blaxton was awarded access to retrieve her car from the mother's house.



**W. Ledyard  
Williamson, Esq.**

## About the Oxford Office Managing Attorney

Ledyard serves as Managing Attorney of the Oxford Litigation Office of North Mississippi Rural Legal Services. Originally from Alabama, Ledyard attended the University of Mississippi for his undergraduate studies, later earning a law degree from Cumberland School of Law in Birmingham, Alabama. He returned to Oxford after law school and began his career serving as Staff Attorney at NMRLS under the tutelage of the Hon. Minnie P. Howard.

Ledyard provides litigation services on behalf of NMRLS to needs based clients in fifteen counties located in North Mississippi, representing persons in state and federal courts in matters ranging from domestic relations to housing evictions to issues of consumer protection, as well as providing representation before administrative bodies and agencies, including the Social Security Administration, the Mississippi Office of Employment Security, and the Mississippi Departments of Human and Child Protective Services.

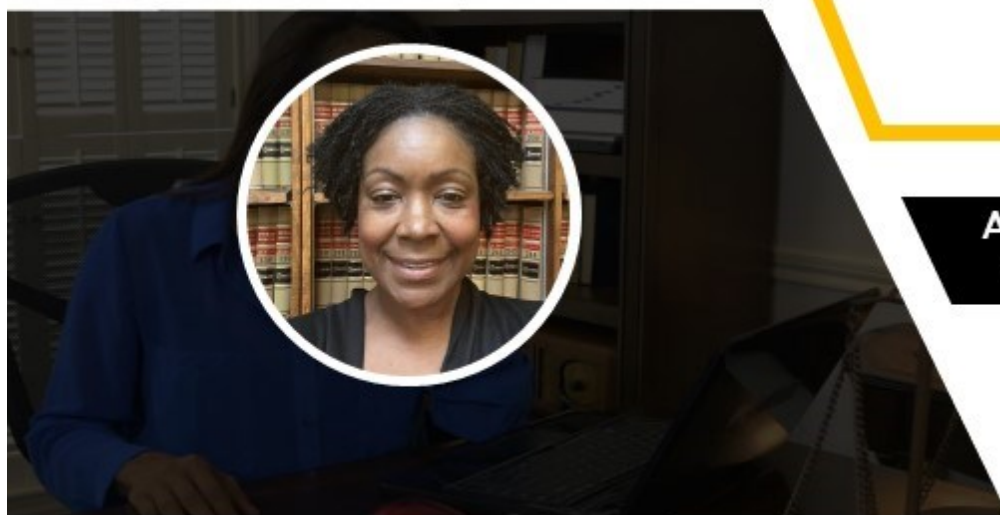


## Client Story: Preventing Foreclosure Through Mortgage Assistance

### Greenville Office

Laura Smith, a 55-year-old single female, contacted the NMRLS call center in October of 2020 seeking help with preventing the foreclosure of her home. Ms. Smith's work hours were reduced due to COVID-19, and it caused her to fall four months behind on her mortgage. Although she had saved money to bring her mortgage current in October of 2020, her loan servicer refused to accept her payments. Ms. Smith's mortgage loan servicer initially refused to consider her for mortgage assistance. Attorney Greene-Mayfield

made a claim to the FHA Service Center, and Ms. Smith's loan servicer accepted her mortgage assistance application and considered her for loss mitigation. After being delinquent on her loan, Ms. Smith was offered and accepted an FHA loan modification that reinstated her loan, reduced her interest rate, and lowered her monthly payment by over \$300 per month. Ms. Smith is now working fulltime and is maintaining her mortgage payments.



**Angela Greene-Mayfield, Esq.**

### About the Project Manager

Angela is the Project Manager for the Foreclosure Prevention Project (FPP) at the North Mississippi Rural Legal Services (NMRLS) Greenville office. She has been in that position for the past three years. Angela started her legal career in California and has been a licensed attorney in California and Mississippi for the past eighteen years. Prior to working at NMRLS, she worked for a non-profit organization in California, specializing in Fair Housing cases. Angela handles foreclosure prevention cases, and she also counsels clients on general housing issues.

Angela loves to travel and garden in her spare time.

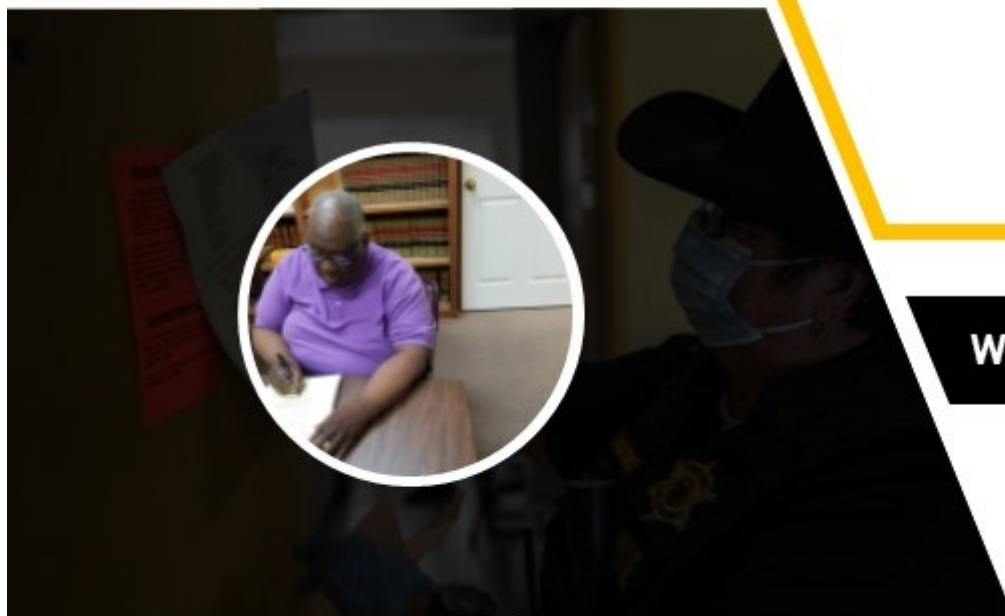


# Client Story: Going The Extra Mile to Prevent Eviction

## West Point Office

Shelia Jenkins was several months behind on her rent and had a past due utility bill. She sought assistance from Rental Assistance for Mississippians Program (RAMP). Her case was assigned to William Young for review and assistance. She was having difficulty understanding the requirements and submitting the required documents. Mr. Young assisted her in understanding the requirements and gathering the necessary documents needed to complete the application process. He also provided Ms. Jenkins with certain documents that would help speed up the application

process. Ms. Jenkins provided Mr. Young with all the requested documents which allowed him to review her application and mark it as complete. He submitted the application, and she was approved.



**William Young**

## About the RAMP Program Counselor

William Young, is a native of West Point, Clay County, Mississippi. He graduated from Mississippi State University. He also attended Mississippi College School of Law in Jackson, Mississippi.

William has been employed with North Mississippi Rural Legal Services for thirty-five years and has held several positions within the organization. He is currently the Project Director of the Adams Benefits Enrollment Center.

## Client Story: Cancelling Judgement for Overpayment of Benefits

### Call Center

Sarah Cooper contacted NMRLS seeking assistance in an alleged overpayment of unemployment benefits. Ms. Cooper had been employed prior to the onset of the COVID pandemic. However, her minor children's school closed due to the pandemic, and she did not have anyone to keep them while she worked. Further, her son contracted COVID causing the family to be quarantined. Ms. Cooper applied for unemployment benefits in March 2020 and received benefits from April until July. In July 2021, the Mississippi Department of Employment Services (MDES) reversed its award of unemployment benefits and determined that Ms. Cooper had been overpaid \$14,000. She appealed this decision, and the MDES Board of Review affirmed the Administrative Law Judge's decision that Ms. Cooper had been overpaid. The Board's decision also stated Ms. Cooper might have been eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Benefits and referred her file for further investigation to determine whether she was entitled to receipt of those benefits. The decision did not designate who was to conduct the review, and no investigation occurred. MDES issued a warrant to attach Ms. Cooper's wages and enrolled a judgment with the Circuit Clerk's office at which point Ms. Cooper contacted NMRLS. The deadline to appeal to the Circuit Court had expired. Attorney Hollins wrote a letter to the MDES Legal Department detailing the applicability of PUA and the failure by MDES to investigate in accordance with the Board's decision. As a result of Attorney Hollins' efforts, Ms. Cooper's file was reviewed, she was awarded PUA benefits which offset her overpayment, and MDES cancelled the overpayment.



**Lacy Hollins, Esq.**

### About the Intake Call Center Attorney

Lacy is a Call Center Attorney. She has held this position for the past six years. However, she has been involved with the program on a volunteer basis or in other staff positions since 2012. She graduated from the University of Mississippi School of Law in May 2010 and was admitted to the Mississippi Bar in September of that same year. Lacy has also worked as a private attorney in general practice. As a call center attorney, Lacy speaks with clients regarding their legal issues and the facts of their case to determine what must be done to obtain the outcome they hope to reach. Although most cases within the program's case acceptance guidelines are transferred to a branch office for further assistance, she helps as many of those that she can herself.

Lacy and her husband, Jeff, have been married for the past 23 years and have three children, the youngest of which just graduated high school. She spends her free time with her family, four dogs, two grand-dogs, and grand-kittens, and volunteering with an organization that works to educate and empower women to be their own protectors.

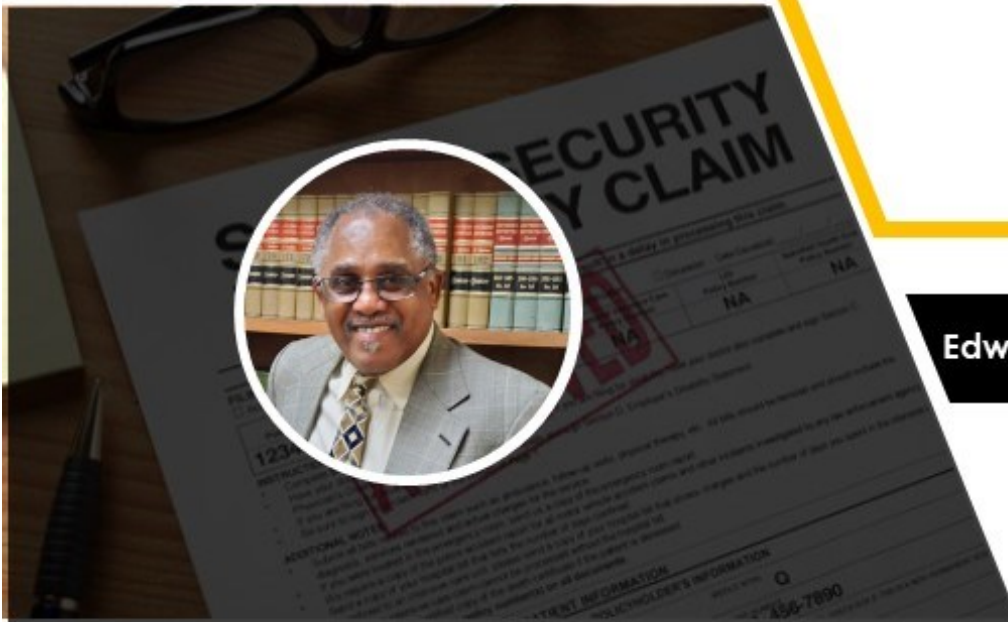


## Client Story: Securing Supplemental Income Disability Benefits

### West Point Office

Brandy Benson, a forty-eight-year-old female, had not worked since 2017. Her last place of employment was at the Dugan Memorial Nursing Home in West Point. Ms. Benson was diagnosed with atrial fibrillation in 2013, and she also suffers from depression, anxiety, and panic attacks. Ms. Benson was under the care of a local cardiologist at the time she applied for legal representation from North Mississippi Rural Legal Services. She only went to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in school, had applied for a GED but, did not complete the program in order to get her certificate. Ms. Benson applied for

Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) and was denied. She then requested a hearing before an Administrative Judge. Ms. Benson's hearing was scheduled, and Attorney Long represented her at the hearing. After considering the evidence, the Administrative Law Judge ruled in Ms. Benson's favor, and she now receives monthly disability benefits and Medicaid coverage.



**Edward Long, Jr, Esq.**

### About the West Point Office Managing Attorney

Ed has been practicing law for almost fifty (50) years, primarily as a public interest attorney. Over the course of his legal career, he has practiced in the States of Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas.

Ed has practiced in several legal fields such as domestic relations, probate, social security disability and state and federal appellate practice. His primary areas of legal focus are housing and consumer law.

## Client Story: Clearing Criminal Records One Person at a Time

### Clarksdale Office

Monica Hatchard had a job interview and was told she needed to have a seven-year-old arrest cleared from her background. She went to the local District Attorney's office and inquired about the arrest and was told that "I'm here to put you in jail, not to keep you out." Ms. Hatchard attended numerous expunction clinics and was told there is nothing to expunge since the charge is not a conviction. She was about to give up on her new job and accept that the charge would haunt her for the rest of her life, but Ms. Hatchard then visited the Coahoma County Justice Court where the charge was pending. The clerk at the Coahoma County Justice Court steered her to North Mississippi Rural Legal Services. Attorney Patricia Booker advised Ms.

Hatchard that her charge could be expunged, and she worked hard on getting her record expunged. After a month long wait, the Coahoma County Justice Court Judge signed off on the order to expunge Ms. Hatchard's charge. She was able to get the job that she applied for and is forever grateful for Attorney Booker for working with her. With gratitude Ms. Hatchard states "this is the hardest anyone has ever worked for me in getting this record cleared."



**Patricia Booker, Esq.**

### About the Clarksdale Office Managing Attorney

Patricia serves as the Managing Attorney for the Clarksdale Litigation Office of North Mississippi Rural Legal Services. Patricia attended Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota for her undergraduate studies in political science, later earning a law degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law. She began her career with North Mississippi Rural Legal Services in 2008.

Ms. Booker serves the counties of Bolivar, Coahoma, Quitman, Tallahatchie, and Tunica where she represents clients primarily in family matters, expunctions, housing, social security, and unemployment matters. She is also the Municipal Court Judge for Lambert, Mississippi where she was born and raised. Ms. Booker enjoys that she is giving people who cannot afford to have a voice, a strong voice in the legal arena.

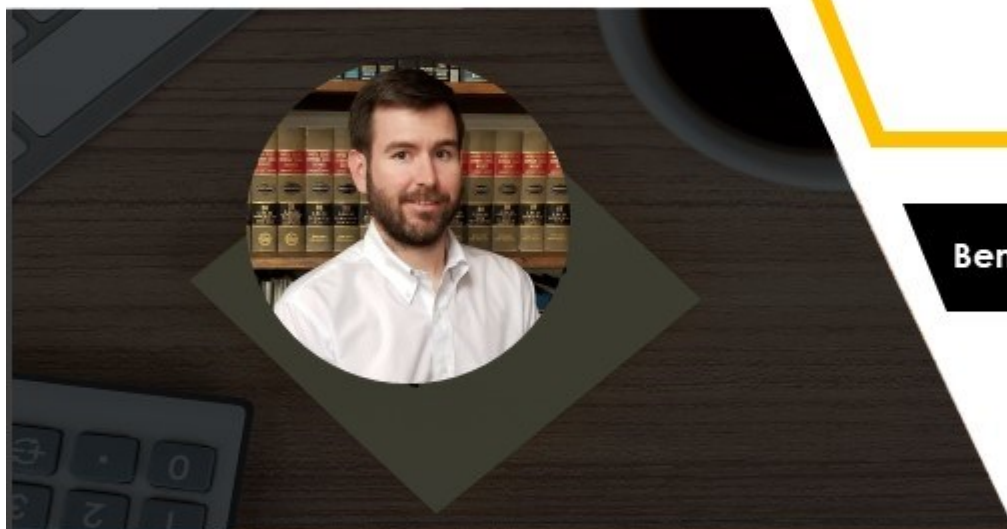


# Client Story: Freeing Frozen Tax Return Refunds

## Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC)

The taxpayer and his wife contacted the Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) after receiving a Notice of Deficiency for the 2018 tax year. The couple had raised their grandchild since 2013, as the child's mother is deceased, and the father is incarcerated. However, the IRS determined through an examination that the couple was not entitled to claim the grandchild as a dependent, thus disallowing their Earned Income Credit and Child Tax Credit. Mr. Wilkerson, project director for the LITC, assisted the taxpayers in filing a petition in the United States Tax Court

as well as an application for waiver of the filing fee. He then submitted evidence to Appeals to support the taxpayers' eligibility for the credits in question. Appeals ultimately conceded the issues, resulting in the couple receiving their previously frozen refund of over \$5,000.



**Ben Wilkerson, Esq.**

## About the Low-Income Tax Clinic Attorney

Ben is a graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Law. He has worked at North Mississippi Rural Legal Services since 2010 when he began work as a Call Center Attorney. Since 2018, Ben has held the role of Director of the Low-Income Tax Clinic. The Tax Clinic serves the entire state of Mississippi by representing low-income taxpayers who are involved in controversies with the IRS.

When away from the office, Ben enjoys spending time with his wife and two young children, as well as working in the yard, playing golf, and watching a variety of sports.

## Client Story: Waving Court Fees to Defend for Self-Help Eviction

### Greenville Office

Billy Lee was desperate because he and his wife were locked out of their rented home because of the landlord's illegal "self-help" eviction. Attorney Gail P. Thompson attempted to file an injunction in the Justice Court of Washington County Mississippi for wrongful eviction. Since the lock-out occurred during the holiday season, most judges were already on holiday vacation, but Attorney Thompson located a justice court judge who could hear the case. She then attempted to file an injunction on behalf of the Lees

only to be told by the justice court clerk that a \$75 fee was required. The Lees did not have the available fee, so counsel requested the fees be waived utilizing an *informa pauperis* (IFP) motion pursuant to Miss. Code §11-15-17 which allows poor persons to sue without security costs. The clerk declined to file the pleading. Attorney Thompson then contacted a county court judge who allowed the pleading to be filed, and Attorney Thompson was able to get the Lees back in their home that same day. At the final hearing, the landlord forfeited a month's rent and was ordered to pay court costs. As a result of Attorney Thompson's efforts, she prevented her clients from being wrongfully evicted and educated the justice court that it can allow persons, found to be indigent, to file an IFP and instruct the Sheriff to serve the defendant without prepayment of costs at the County's expense.



Gail P. Thompson Esq.

### About the Greenville Office Managing Attorney

Gail is a graduate of the Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She worked for North Mississippi Rural Legal Services (NMRLS) for a brief period prior to law school. Upon her return to Mississippi, she was the first African American female to open a law office in Oxford, Mississippi, the Thompson Law Firm. Later, Gail moved her practice to Tunica, Mississippi, where she also was the first African American attorney.

After years in private practice, Gail accepted a position as the Staff Attorney of Honorable Johnnie E. Walls, Jr. in the 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit Judicial District of Mississippi. With Judge Walls retirement, Thompson had an opportunity to come back, full circle, to NMRLS. She accepted the position as Supervising Attorney of the Violence Against Woman Act, Legal Assistance to Victims grant, funded by the Office on Violence Against Women in 2016. During this period, Gail received the Purple for Peace Award in recognition of her community service in representing victims and survivors of domestic violence by the Mississippi Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Continuing her tenure at NMRLS, she presently serves as the Managing Attorney of the Greenville office.



# Client Story: Avoiding Foreclosure

## Elder Law Project

Ms. Kay lost her husband and suffered from a heart condition that required her to be hospitalized for open heart surgery and months of physical therapy. She missed some mortgage payments that she thought were on automatic draft but were not paid due to a change in servicer that occurred while client was hospitalized.

Ms. Kay never received notice of the change in servicer and was unaware that the automatic draft had fallen into arrears. Ms. Kay received notice that her home was in foreclosure and the servicer was demanding \$38,000 immediately to avoid the foreclosure.

Working with the Elder Law Project, Ms. Kay was able to negotiate an offer to settle for just 10% of the outstanding principal balance due, paying just \$3,805 to clear her mortgage and release the lien on her property.



**Al Culturini, Esq.**

## About the Elder Law Project Attorney

Al has served as the Elder Law Project Director for North Mississippi Rural Legal Services since January 2017. He was previously the managing attorney of the Foreclosure Prevention Unit of North Mississippi Rural Legal Services from 2012-16. Al also served as adjunct professor for the Elder Law Clinic, a part of the University Of Mississippi School Of Law Clinical Programs. He serves as the Chair of the Board of Memory Makers Respite Day Services in Oxford.

Prior to attending law school, Al taught speech and theatre at a local community college in Fulton, Mississippi. He worked in private practice in Holly Springs and Oxford before joining North Mississippi Rural Legal Services. Al is from Albany, New York, but now resides in Oxford with his wife, Morgan, and their dog, Sam.

# Client Story: Escalating Rental Assistance to Save Housing

## Rental Assistance Project

Joseph Madison, his wife, and two small children were facing eviction. They had been given two weeks either to bring the rent current or to vacate the apartment. Due to missing work because of quarantining several times, he had fallen behind in his rent. Mississippi had the rental assistance program (RAMP) available. Mr. Madison believed his landlord's refusal to participate in the program prevented him from obtaining any relief, so he was not pursuing his application. Having worked with RAMP, Katrina Porter knew the guidelines and exceptions of the program and assisted Mr. Madison in completing the application without the landlord's cooperation in submitting needed information.

As two weeks was a very short period to process the application, Ms. Porter escalated the case to the supervisors and obtained an expedited favorable decision which resulted in the back rent being paid and the eviction avoided. Also, Mr. Madison was found eligible for three additional months of rental assistance to allow the family time to stabilize its finances and housing..



**Katrina Porter**

## About the Case Maintenance/Fiscal Secretary

Katrina serves as Support Staff for the Adams Benefits Enrollment Center (BEC) and Rental Assistance for Mississippian Program (RAMP). She has worked at NMRLS since 2019. Her duties entail assisting senior and disabled clients in enrolling for other benefits they may be eligible for such as SNAP, LIS, and housing repair. As support staff for RAMP, Katrina assisted applicants in applying for and providing documentation in support of requests for assistance in paying their rent. She has been commended for her proficiency several times by the funding agency for assisting applicants attempting to obtain help in retaining their housing.

Her passion is to always help people in need of assistance as she may need that same help in future. She loves to treat people as she would want to be treated. Her personal interests are spending time with family and shopping.



## Client Story: Order of Protection Obtained

### Victims of Crime Act Project (VOCA)

Ms. Smith was a victim of domestic violence during a very short marriage. Ms. Smith's abuser was arrested and charged with simple assault/Domestic Violence by the local police department. As part of his bond, he was prohibited from contacting client. However, there was no prohibition against contacting friends and family members, which he promptly began to do. He did everything in his power to get to the client without contacting the client. As an example - the abuser sought public attention by donating to local charities in the name of the client's child.

He sought a relationship with a family member of the client who lived out of state and who had never met the abuser. Through his attorney, he subpoenaed her friends to his criminal trial, despite the friends having no knowledge of the events that lead to his arrest. He and his attorney later admitted that the subpoenas were issued and served without any investigation and/or contact with the "witnesses". All these actions, coupled with the past actions of the abuser, made the client very uncomfortable and frightened for her safety.

VOCA went to chancery court and obtained an order that prevented any contact with the client, her family, or her friends. The VOCA team then represented her in obtaining an annulment to erase any existence of her union with her abuser.



**Christi McCoy, Esq.**

### About the VOCA Project Director

Christi serves as Project Director for The Earlene Gardner Project, which serves victims of crime in the State of Mississippi. The project has attorneys located in Oxford, West Point, Jackson and Hattiesburg providing legal services such as Domestic Abuse Protection Orders, Divorce and Custody litigation.

Christi is a 7<sup>th</sup> generation Mississippian and a proud graduate of the Mississippi public school system, including Northeast Mississippi Community College and the University of Mississippi. She has been with NMRLS since the inception of The Gardner Project in 2017. Prior to that, Christi maintained a private practice focusing on domestic law and criminal law. She served many years as the Attorney Representative in the U.S. District Court system, representing indigent defendants.

Christi enjoys reading, gardening and traveling. She and her daughters have served as foster parents for many abandoned cats and dogs in Lafayette County.

# Attorney Minnie P. Howard Promoted to Deputy Director

From Staff Attorney to Being Promoted to NMRLS' Deputy Director



**Minnie Howard, Esq.**  
Deputy Director

Minnie P. Howard is a lifelong resident of the State of Mississippi. She was born in Yalobusha County, Mississippi and reared in neighboring Grenada County.

Ms. Howard graduated from Grenada High School and attended the University of Mississippi where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree both in English and Political Science.

She obtained her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law.

“

**My role as Deputy Director allows me to ensure that equal access to justice is offered to every low-income Mississippian in NMRLS' service area.**

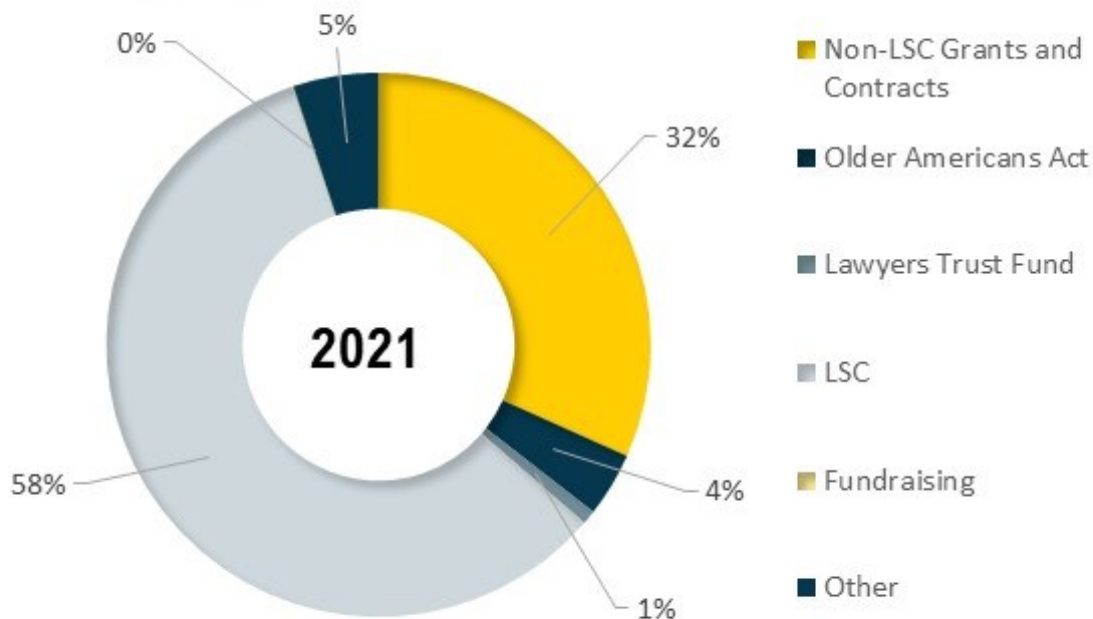
Her primary focus areas are family law, consumer law, and administrative law. She has practiced in state and federal court on both the local and appellate level before becoming the managing attorney for the Oxford office.

Minnie has been employed at North Mississippi Rural Legal Services since 1980, and she worked as a staff attorney and a managing attorney in the Batesville Office before coming to Oxford. She served as the Street Law Clinic Adjunct Professor at the University of Mississippi Law School for almost twenty years. The Street Law Clinic is a component of the University of Mississippi Law Centers Poverty Clinical Programs. She is a member of the American Bar Association, Magnolia Bar Association, and the Mississippi Bar where she previously served as a Bar Commissioner.

Minnie is an active member of her West Camp M.B. Church family where she serves as a Sunday School teacher and sings in the sanctuary choir. Minnie is an avid tennis fan, enjoys traveling and taking photos of her new kitten, Simon.



# Financial Highlight



## Financial Overview

	2021
<b>Net Assets – Beginning of the Year</b>	<b>\$1,373,866</b>

<b>Revenue</b>	
Legal Services Corporation	\$1,967,738
Non-LSC Grants and Contracts	\$1,066,620
Lawyers Trust Fund	\$27,584
Older Americans Act	\$128,374
Fundraising	\$2,523
Other	\$170,592
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,363,431</b>

<b>Expenditures</b>	
Personnel	\$2,355,440
Occupancy	\$190,481
Supplies and Postage	\$83,934
Telephone/Internet	\$103,969
Travel and Lodging	\$45,120
Other	\$714,413
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,493,357</b>

# List of Donors, Supporters, and Community Partners

We have made every effort to ensure that this information is accurate and complete. Please let us know of any corrections by calling the Accounting Office at (662) 234-8731 ext. 2104. Information concerning the Statement of Financial Position is available upon request.

## Individuals & Businesses

Steven Orlansky  
Arnetchers Dudley  
Queen E. Booker  
The Baptist Law Firm, PLLC  
Farmers & Merchants Bank  
Fondren Law Firm, PLLC  
Lamar & Hannaford, P.A.  
Springer Law Office

## Community Partners Continued

Pleasant Hill M.B. Church  
Safe Haven, Inc.  
Shelter and Assistance in Family Emergencies, Inc. (S.A.F.E.)  
South Delta Area Agency on Aging  
Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
University of Mississippi School of Law Pro Bono Initiative  
West Tennessee Legal Services

## Community Partners

Bancorp South  
Brown Missionary Baptist Church  
Golden Triangle Area Agency on Aging  
Internal Revenue Service  
Legal Services Corporation (LSC)  
Mid-State Opportunity, Inc.  
Mississippi Access to Justice Commission  
Mississippi Bar Foundation, Inc.  
Mississippi Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Mississippi Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
Mississippi Department of Health  
Office Against Interpersonal Violence  
Mississippi Home Corporation  
Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project  
North Central Area Agency on Aging  
North Delta Area Agency on Aging  
Northeast Area Agency on Aging  
Our House, Inc.





# Board of Directors

**Katherine Weatherby**  
*Board Chair - Sallis, MS*

**Gwendolyn Baptist-Rucker, Esq.**  
*Board Vice Chair - Southaven, MS*

**Kristin Belvin, Esq.**  
*Board Secretary - Tupelo, MS*

**I. Richard Gershon, Esq.**  
*Board Treasurer - University, MS*

**Levi Boone, III, Esq.**  
Cleveland, MS

**Robert A. Carson, III, Esq.**  
Clarksdale, MS

**Mary Hastings**  
Baldwyn, MS

**Martha Kimmons**  
Oxford, MS

**Solomon Osborne, Esq.**  
Greenville, MS

**Karen Peairs, Esq.**  
University, MS

**Latarsha Jones**  
Marks, MS

**Betty W. Sanders, Esq.**  
Greenwood, MS

**Derrick T. Simmons, Esq.**  
Greenville, MS

**Nina Stubblefield-Tollison, Esq.**  
Oxford, MS

**Mattie Todd Tucker**  
Indianola, MS



# List of Staff

## Administrative Leadership

### **Ben Thomas Cole, II, Esq.**

Administrative Office - Executive Director

### **Ruby White, Esq.**

Administrative Office - Advocacy Director

### **Schenille Martin**

Administrative Office - Fiscal Manager

### **Clarence Franklin**

Administrative Office - Network Administrator/ Operations Manager

### **Minnie P. Howard, Esq.**

Administrative Office - Deputy Director

### **Ben Wilkerson, Esq.**

Oxford Office - Low Income Taxpayer Clinic Manager

### **Christi McCoy, Esq.**

Oxford Office - Victims of Crime Act Project Manager

### **Al Cutturini, Esq.**

Oxford Office - Elder Law Project Manager

### **Patricia Booker, Esq.**

Clarksdale Office - Managing Attorney

### **Nora Rasco, Esq.**

Oxford Office - Call Center Manager

### **Gail P. Thompson, Esq.**

Greenville Office - Victims Against Women Act Project Manager  
Managing Attorney

### **Angela Greene-Mayfield, Esq.**

Greenville Office - Foreclosure Project Manager

### **Edward Long, Jr., Esq.**

West Point Office - Managing Attorney

### **William Young**

West Point Office - Benefits Enrollment Center Project Manager

### **Arnetchers Dudley**

Administrative Office - Administrative Assistant (part-time)

### **Cynetra Freeman**

Administrative Office - Resource Development (part-time)

### **Gloria Bogan**

Administrative Office - Administrative Assistant

### **Eunice Carter**

Administrative Office - Special Projects Accountant

### **Anne Wanjohi**

Administrative Office - Accounting Clerk

### **Lafreeta Harwell**

Administrative Office - Financial Support Staff

## Attorneys and Support Staff

### **W. Ledyard Williamson, Esq.**

Oxford Office - Managing Attorney

### **Francine Green**

Oxford Office - Case Maintenance Secretary

### **Lacy Hollins, Esq.**

Oxford Office - Intake Call Center Attorney

### **Stephanie Gobert, Esq.**

Oxford Office - Intake Call Center Attorney

### **Moriah Jennings**

Oxford Office - Low Income Taxpayer Center Clerk (part-time)

### **Sandra Murray**

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### **Priscilla Grantham, Esq.**

Oxford Office - Victims of Crime Act Project Staff Attorney

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Administrative Office - Assistant PAI Coordinator

### **Linda Strong**

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### **April Bell**

Clarksdale Office - Case Maintenance Secretary

### **Naomi Keaton**

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### **Gloria Benson**

Greenville Office - Fiscal Secretary/Call Center Intake

### **Shirley McNeal**

Greenville Office - Case Maintenance Secretary

### **Jasmine Straw**

Greenville Office - Foreclosure Support Staff

### **Adreain Reynolds, Esq.**

West Point Office Staff Attorney

### **Charlene Dotson-Orange**

West Point Office - Case Maintenance/Fiscal Secretary

### **Ashley Jones**

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