



**Judicial District 18 & the Chief Justice's
Commission on Professionalism
9th Biennial Professionalism CLE
January 31, 2020**

Welcome to our 9th biennial CLE presentation on Professionalism. We are very honored to have Chief Justice Cheri Beasley as our keynote speaker this year. We are also grateful for the continued support of the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism led by Executive Director, Mel Wright. Our Bar is committed to offering this CLE to our members to promote professionalism in our practices, awareness of ethical issues facing the legal community, and education on mental health and substance abuse. This year's theme, *Race, Equity and the Law*, is a reflection of District 18's ongoing commitment to alleviating racial and ethnic disparities in our local criminal justice system. In 2015 our Bar voted to form a Racial Justice Task Force. The mission of the task force is as follows:

To initiate a dialogue within the legal community regarding race and justice; to facilitate collaboration among criminal justice stakeholders, organizations within the district, and citizens on issues of racial and ethnic justice; to assess whether racial and ethnic minorities receive disparate treatment at any stage of the criminal or juvenile delinquency process in District 15B; to study strategies and best practices to alleviate inequities; to ensure that addressing racial inequities is a priority for judges, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and other stakeholders including witnesses, jurors, and crime victims; to prepare a report of findings and recommendations for the District Bar; and to reduce and ultimately eliminate any racial or ethnic disparities in our criminal and juvenile justice systems and strengthen public confidence in the criminal justice system.

We are thankful for the hard work and dedication of District 18's Racial Justice Task Force as they address these issues. The task force members include the following:

Co-Chair James E. Williams, Jr.	Willie Atwater, Probation
Co-Chair James R. Woodall	Tye Hunter
Sheriff Charles Blackwood	Alyson Grine
Sheriff Mike Roberson	Cait Fenhagen
CHPD Chief Chris Blue	Jennifer Marsh
Judge Sherri Murrell	Woodrena Harrell
Judge Allen Baddour	Hathaway Pendergrass
David Delaney	

I was honored to serve again on the CLE planning committee with the following members of the District 18 Bar:

Marie Hopper, President, District 18 Bar
Erin Haygood, Vice-President District 18 Bar
Maggie Davis, Secretary/Treasurer District 18 Bar
Melinda Evans, Attorney at Law
Noah Oswald, Attorney at Law
Lauren Shoffner, Attorney at Law
Hathaway Pendergrass, Attorney at Law
Lisa Vira, Attorney at Law

Thank you to our membership for being here today to support professionalism within our District Bar.

Sincerely,
Fran Muse
Chair, District 18 Professionalism CLE Planning Committee