

# South Carolina Children's Justice Act Task Force Members Bios 2012 – 2014

## **Anne S. Abel, MD**, *Medical University of South Carolina*

Anne Sutherland Abel, M.D. has served as the Pediatric Director of the Abuse Recovery Center (ARC) for 14 years, examining suspected physical or sexual abuse victims, teaching health and mental health professionals, and interfacing with law enforcement, families and human services providers. Dr. Abel also has a private pediatric specialty practice serving children with development and behavioral disorders. As Adjunct Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Dr. Abel teaches Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine.

## **Amanda Adler**, *At-large Member* Attorney, Appleseed Legal Justice Center

Amanda Adler is an attorney working on the Special Education Project at the South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center. The Project was created to help serve low-income special-education students who are not receiving the educational services to which they are entitled. Her work includes screening cases and referring them to advocates or lawyers, as well as providing outreach and education. A new goal of the Student Advocacy Project is identifying the systemic barriers facing South Carolina's special-education students and developing policy solutions.

Amanda began her legal career working on education policy at SC Appleseed with support from the Equal Justice Works Fellowship and the Nelson Mullins Riley and Scarborough Centennial Fellowship. She has written training materials and presented on education law and policy for a wide range of audiences. Her special interests include issues involving school finance, teacher recruitment and retention, students struggling with homelessness, and English Language Learners. Amanda is a former educator who has taught in public schools in South Carolina and Georgia. She has a law degree from the University of South Carolina and a B.A. from Emory University.

## **Margaret Fent Bodman**, *Child Abuse Attorney* Assistant Solicitor, Fifth Judicial Circuit

Ms. Bodman graduated from St. Mary's School of Law in San Antonio, Texas in 1991. She served as Assistant District Attorney at the Bexar County Criminal District Attorney's Office from 1991 – 1998. Beginning in 1999, she served as an Assistant Course Director for the National College of District Attorney's at the National Advocacy Center in Columbia, South Carolina. In that position, she coordinated training programs for state prosecutors. She served in that position until 2005 when she became an Assistant Solicitor for the Fifth Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office. She focuses on prosecuting sexual assault cases involving both children and adults and cases involving severe physical injury inflicted upon and the death of children.

**Brenda Brisbin, *Prosecuting Attorney***

Assistant Solicitor, Office of the Solicitor, Second Judicial Circuit

Brenda Brisbin has been a prosecutor with the Second Judicial Circuit since August of 2000. She previously worked as a pediatric nurse in several hospitals and as Program Manager for the Department of Health and Environmental Control. She earned a B.S. Degree in biology from the University of Richmond, a B.S. in nursing from the Medical College of Virginia, and her law degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law.

**Louise Cooper, *Volunteer Guardian ad Litem***

Director, South Carolina Guardian ad Litem Program

Ms. Cooper received a BA in psychology and a secondary teaching certificate from the University of Louisville in 1976. She taught children with behavior disorders in the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and also taught adults who had not finished high school or who could not read.

In 1991, she became a volunteer for the Georgetown County Guardian ad Litem Program, and was hired as its Coordinator in 1998. She accepted a grant position as a Recruiter/Trainer for a ten county region in 2000. Through this experience she gained a greater understanding of the uniqueness of each county and a sense of how much work was needed across the state to standardize advocacy for abused children. In 2002, after the grant position ended, she returned to serve as Coordinator for Georgetown and Williamsburg Counties. In August of 2004, Ms. Cooper was appointed State Director of the Guardian ad Litem Program.

**Taron Brown Davis, *Child Protective Services Agency***

Staff Attorney, SCDSS

Taron Brown Davis is an Assistant General Counsel at the South Carolina Department of Social Services. Previously she was a Senior Resource Attorney at the Children's Law Center, a program of the University of South Carolina School of Law. Mrs. Davis has also practiced exclusively in the family court while working with Davis & Davis, LLC, and served as Chief Counsel at the Richland County Department of Social Services. Additionally, Mrs. Davis has served as a juvenile public defender in Richland County. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of South Carolina in 1991 and her Juris Doctor degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1994.

**Cheryl Elrod, *Parent Group Representative***

Restitution/Appeals Coordinator, Division of Victim Assistance

Ms. Elrod is the Compensation Restitution/Appeals Coordinator with the Governor's Office, Division of Victim Assistance. She has twenty-three years of experience with the Office of Victim Assistance, including claims examination for payments, investigations to determine eligibility of claims, and managing the sexual and physical abuse examination protocol programs. Ms. Elrod is currently responsible for the potential recovery of funds for awarded claims and reinvestigation of appealed claims. She holds an Associate Degree in business management from Midlands Technical College. She has been a foster parent for thirteen years and has adopted two of her foster children.

**Rosalyn Frierson, *South Carolina Court Administration***  
Director

Rosalyn W. Frierson was appointed Director of South Carolina Court Administration by the South Carolina Supreme Court in 1998. Mrs. Frierson is a graduate of the University of South Carolina School of Law and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from the University of South Carolina. She previously served as a S.C. Supreme Court Staff Attorney, Law Clerk to former Chief Justice Ernest Finney, Jr. and Research/Budget Analyst for the Ways and Means Committee of the S. C. House of Representatives. Ms. Frierson is a member of the S.C. Bar Association and the S.C. Bar House of Delegates. She is also a member of the S. C. Access to Justice Commission, Commission on Alternative Dispute Resolution, South Carolina Legal Services Board. She received the Richland County Bar Association Civic Star Award in 2002.

**Vicky Gaskins, *Law Enforcement***  
Lieutenant, Juvenile Division, Aiken County Sheriff's Office, Aiken, SC

Mrs. Gaskins is a Lieutenant with the Aiken County Sheriff's Office. As the Juvenile Division Lieutenant, she is responsible for supervising all investigations of child abuse or neglect, all child fatalities, and all juvenile offender crimes. Previously Mrs. Gaskins served as an intern at the Tennessee Bureau of Investigations, Patrol Deputy, School Resource Officer, Investigator (Juvenile Division), and Senior Investigator (Juvenile Division). She received her B.S. degree in Criminal Justice from the University of South Carolina.

**Ellen Hamilton, *At-large Member***  
Director, Pee Dee Coalition

Ms. Hamilton is the Executive Director of the Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault, which is a rape crisis and family violence center for seven counties and includes a multi-dimensional child abuse and treatment program. This organization has been the recipient of the Children's Justice Act Grant Child Abuse Awareness Program. Ms. Hamilton has worked 21 years with Victim Advocacy at the local, state, and national level. She is a member of the S.C. Chapter of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, National Organization of Victim's Assistance, National Coalition Against Sexual Assault. Ms. Hamilton has a B.A. in Psychology and a Masters in Public Administration.

**Kimberly Hamm, *MSW, Executive Director***  
S.C. Network of CACs

Kim Hamm is a native of Richmond, Virginia. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Human Services Counseling from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, and recently received her Master's Degree in Social Work at the University of South Carolina. Victims' Rights have always been her focus. Mrs. Hamm has clinical experience working with child and adult victims of physical and sexual abuse. Prior to serving as the Executive Director of the SCNCAC, she was a Certified Mediator in Virginia, and also served as a victim advocate at Family Services, Inc., in Charleston, SC. She is a certified Victim Service Provider in the State of South Carolina, and was a 2008 graduate of the South Carolina Victims' Assistance Academy.

**Beebe James, *At-large Member***

Ms. James is the retired part-time coordinator of the South Carolina Network of Children's Advocacy Centers and was formerly the Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse South Carolina. Previously she served as the founding Executive Director of Trinity Housing Corporation, a non-profit corporation providing transitional housing for homeless families and as Coordinator of Ministries and Lay Missioner for Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Columbia.

She is a former President of the Junior League of Columbia and serves on the South Carolina Child Fatality Advisory Committee as well as the Prosecution Review Committee of the Sexual Predator Act. Ms. James also serves on the Board of the Palmetto Health Foundation and has a broad background in non-profit management, having previously served on numerous community boards.

**The Honorable Daniel E. Martin, Jr., *Family Court Judge***

Judge Daniel E. Martin, Jr., was born in Charleston, South Carolina. His father, Daniel E. Martin, Sr., is a former circuit court judge who presided in the Ninth Judicial Circuit. His mother, Ruby N. Martin, retired as principal of Angel Oak Elementary School on Johns Island. Judge Martin's parents have been married for more than 50 years. Judge Martin attended both public and parochial schools on the Charleston peninsula. He graduated from Bishop England High School in 1980 and entered Howard University in Washington, D.C. that fall. After obtaining his Bachelor of Arts degree, he enrolled in the University of South Carolina School of Law and obtained his Juris Doctorate degree in 1988. He was then admitted to practice before all courts in South Carolina as well as the United States District Court and the United States Court of Appeals.

In 1989, Judge Martin joined his father in his law practice and they created the firm Martin and Martin. Also in 1989, Judge Martin was appointed to serve as a part-time Magistrate for Charleston County. As Magistrate, he presided over landlord tenant disputes, claim and deliveries, small claims actions and bond hearings. He resigned this position in 1993 to dedicate himself to the full time practice of law. As a lawyer, Judge Martin handled domestic actions, criminal defense, civil lawsuits, probate matters and land disputes. He served on the bench-bar committees for the Charleston County Probate Court and the Charleston County Master-in-Equity Court. He served as legal counsel for the Town of Lincolnton from 1991 to 1998 and as Grand Legal Advisor for Prince Hall Grand Lodge of South Carolina from 2008 to 2011. He also served as a member of the executive committee of the Charleston County Bar Association, House of Delegates for the South Carolina Bar Association and the Resolution of Fee Disputes Board for the Ninth Judicial Circuit. He is former treasurer of the South Carolina Black Lawyers Association.

Judge Martin has been a life-long member of Emanuel AME Church where he served on the board of trustees. He has served on the board of directors for the Cannon Street YMCA and Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture. He served on the City of Charleston Commission for Children, Mayor Riley's Committee of 12 and the City of Charleston Development Advisory Committee. He is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Nehemiah Masonic Lodge No. 51., George Washington Carver Consistory No. 162, and Arabian Shrine Temple No. 139. Judge Martin is a 33° Prince Hall Mason.

Since 1989, Judge Martin has been married to Reba Hough of Hartsville, South Carolina. Mrs. Martin is Deputy Director of the Charleston County Human Services Commission. Judge and Mrs. Martin have two children, Daniel E. Martin, III and Zelena S. Martin. Judge Martin was elected on February 2, 2011 to seat no. 1 of the Family Court, Ninth Judicial Circuit.

**Nancy McCormick**, *Experienced in Working with Children with Disabilities*  
Attorney, Protection and Advocacy

Nancy McCormick is an attorney with Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc. (P&A) where she works on issues affecting children with disabilities in the juvenile justice system. She was a volunteer guardian ad litem in Richland County CASA for many years. She graduated from Duke University and Emory Law School.

**Honorable George M. McFaddin, Jr.**, *Family Court Judge*

George M. McFaddin, Jr., was born in Sumter, SC, on November 4, 1954. Judge McFaddin lives in the rural Salem Black River community (near Sardinia) of eastern Sumter County where he grew up. He is married to Cindy Johnston of Denmark, SC. They have two daughters, Megan and Cassie.

He received these degrees from the University of South Carolina: B.A., 1978; M.P.A., 1979; J.D., 1985. He was a law clerk to The Honorable Rodney A. Peebles. In 2002 he was elected to the Family Court of the Third Judicial Circuit.

Judge McFaddin is an elder of Salem Black River Presbyterian Church.

While at USC, Judge McFaddin served as a page, assistant chief page, and chief page at the SC House of Representatives. His various jobs have included tobacco farm laborer, golf course maintenance, apprentice embalmer/funeral director, firefighter, EMT, janitor and chemical plant laborer. His personal interests are reading, collecting Indian artifacts, history (emphasis on the Vietnam War and the War Between the States), and Scottish heritage activities.

**Kathleen McLean-Titus**, *CJA Coordinator (Ex officio)*  
Policy & Program Supervisor, Foster Care, Division of Human Services, SCDSS

Ms. McLean-Titus has worked with SCDSS for 25 years, including 18 years in child welfare services. She currently supervises foster care policy, foster home licensing policy and foster care technical assistance. Prior to her current position she served in various capacities which included foster care technical consultant in the midlands region of the state, supervised foster care and foster home licensing for over 11 years at the county level, frontline foster care and treatment case manager, assisted in development of the Economic Services CHIP system and was an economic services frontline worker.

Ms. McLean-Titus received a B.S. from the University of Central Oklahoma, an MSW from the University of South Carolina and completed the USC/DSS Child Welfare Leadership Program. She currently serves on the board for the National Association of Foster Care Managers and is a Certified Adoption Investigator through SCDSS. She has received specialized training in all aspects of Child Welfare.

**Jeff Moore**, *Law Enforcement*  
Executive Director, S.C. Sheriff ' s Association

Mr. Moore is the Executive Director of the South Carolina Sheriff ' s Association (SCSA). He represents the SCSA ' s interests on various state and national policy and advisory committees concerning the ongoing evolution of the criminal justice system at the state and national levels. Mr. Moore is responsible for implementing SCSA ' s legislative agenda, developing its strategy, and testifying before numerous committees. He is a member of S.C. Criminal Justice Curriculum Committee, Chairman of the Department of Social Services Advisory Committee on Child Support, S.C. Ad-Hoc committee on Mental Health and Retardation, S.C. Victim's Assistance Network (legislative committee), and Sexual Assault Examiner Task Force. Mr. Moore received his B.A. in History from the University of North Carolina and his Masters at the University of South Carolina.

**Melissa Muse, Ph.D.**, *Mental Health Therapist*  
Family Bridges Therapeutic Associates LLC

Dr. Muse is a private mental health therapist who primarily serves children and families who have experienced sexual abuse, physical abuse, and interpersonal violence. She deals with assessment, trauma intervention, domestic violence, anger management, grief and loss, abuse recovery through family, individual and group therapy, and assists with sexually abused children during forensic assessments. Dr. Muse provides professional trainings to various community agencies regarding child maltreatment, and serves as an expert witness in child maltreatment cases. She received her Bachelor of Science from the University of Pittsburgh, a Master of Science in Applied Psychology from Southwestern Oklahoma State University, and a Doctorate of Education from Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

**Brenda J. Myers**, *Experienced in Working with the Homeless*

Brenda J. Myers is the former State Coordinator of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program at the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) in the Office of Youth Services. She is a native of Richmond, Virginia. Brenda received her Bachelor's Degree from the University of South Carolina (Columbia). Previously she served as the Youth Court Coordinator for the SCDE. She was a Paralegal for Richland County Department of Social Services (DSS) Legal Department. Also while at DSS, Brenda served as a caseworker in the Child Protective services division and as a caseworker in the Medicaid division. As State Coordinator for Homeless Education, her primary responsibility was overseeing compliance of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act; Subtitle B of title VII, in South Carolina's public school districts, ensuring that homeless children and youths are given equal access to quality public education, including preschool education. Brenda provided training and technical assistance to homeless liaisons, school personnel, service providers, faith-based organizations, and any other agencies that requested it.

**Kimaka Nichols-Graham**, *Child Advocate*  
South Carolina Legal Services

Kimaka Nichols-Graham is a Staff Attorney II at South Carolina Legal Services and the Education Unit head for that agency. She practices family law and children's law cases to include divorce,

custody, school discipline, special education, special needs relative adoption, and children's social security appeals. In her capacity as unit head, Ms. Nichols-Graham secures education law funding, conducts trainings for attorneys on how to represent students from low income families in public education cases, and teaches parents how to advocate for children in public schools. Ms. Nichols-Graham provides assistance throughout South Carolina.

Ms. Nichols-Graham received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Winthrop University, a Master of Science in Public Policy from Rutgers: the State University of New Jersey, and a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law.

**Erik Norton**, *Experienced in Working with Children with Disabilities*  
Attorney, Nelson, Mullins, Riley & Scarborough

Erik Norton is an associate of Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP who practices in Columbia in the area of business litigation. In 2006, Mr. Norton initiated the firm's South Carolina Student Advocacy Project, where he recruits, trains, and mentors a team of attorneys who provide pro bono representation to students with disabilities in school administrative proceedings. Mr. Norton also was instrumental in creating a new umbrella project known as Children and the Law. The project includes the South Carolina Student Advocacy Project, Project Impact (Inspiring and Motivating Parent Assistance through Collaboration) in North Carolina, and the TeamChild Early Intervention Project in Georgia, all of which are major pro bono programs representing children in these three states.

Mr. Norton also serves on the boards of Pro-Parent, a nonprofit organization providing parent training and resources, and the S.C. Autism Society. Mr. Norton earned a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law. He earned a Master of Arts in Teaching, magna cum laude, in 1997 from the University of South Carolina and a Bachelor of Arts in English, cum laude, in 1995 from the South Carolina Honors College.

**Margarita Ortiz**, *Hispanic Outreach Coordinator*  
Family Connections of SC

Margarita Ortiz has been the Hispanic Outreach Coordinator for Family Connections of South Carolina, Inc., since 2009. She coordinates and provides all Family Connection statewide programs, activities and events to the Spanish speaking families, including the translation of materials, presentations and interpretation as needed, and develops new programs based on input from these families for a continual improvement in their quality of life.

Ms. Ortiz is a member of the Board of Directors of the South Carolina Hispanic/Latina Health Coalition, is a co-facilitator for Alianza Latina, is a member of the Special Health Care Needs Organizations Coalition, and is a School Improvement Council member. She received the Columbia Regional Business Report Health Care Heroes Award in 2011, the Pot of Gold Volunteer Award in 2003, and the "Above and Beyond the Call" Volunteer Award in 2003.

**Robin Page**, *S.C. Guardian ad Litem Program Attorney*  
Attorney, Bell, Tindal & Freeland, PA

Robin Page is a partner in the law firm of Bell, Tindal & Freeland, PA, in Lancaster, South

Carolina, where she has been practicing primarily family law since 1982. She has represented DSS, parents and children in DSS child abuse and neglect cases, and is currently a contract attorney for the S.C. Guardian ad Litem Program representing volunteer guardians ad litem in Lancaster County.

Ms. Page received her B.A. Degree in Political Science from Winthrop College and her Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law. She is a member of the Lancaster County Bar Association (former President), the South Carolina Bar, and served on the South Carolina Bar Family Law Task Force.

**Dr. M. Elizabeth Ralston**, *Mental Health Professional*  
Founding Director, Dee Norton Lowcountry Children's Center

M. Elizabeth Ralston, Ph.D. is the founding director of the Dee Norton Lowcountry Children's Center, Inc (DNLCC) an accredited Children's Advocacy Center located in Charleston, SC.

Dr. Ralston is on the clinical faculty of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science at the Medical University of South Carolina. Dr. Ralston serves on the Board of Directors of the National Children's Alliance, as well as the NCA Development Committee and Finance Committee. She has served on the board of Directors of Voices for South Carolina's Children, was on the founding board and served as president of the SC Chapter of the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, is a past president of the SC Chapter of Children's Advocacy Centers, serves on the Citizens Review Panel for the Lowcountry of South Carolina, and is a member of the SC Children's Justice Act Task Force. In 2009 DNLCC was designated as a Level III Center within the National Child Traumatic Stress Network funded through SAMSHA.

Dr. Ralston is the co-director of Project BEST, a community based learning collaborative coordinated through Children's Advocacy Centers and funded by The Duke Endowment. The goal of Project Best is to increase the availability of evidence based treatment to the children of South Carolina by training community mental health professionals in the delivery of Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and training community treatment brokers to do evidence based treatment planning and case management.

Dr. Ralston is the director of a community based learning collaborative in the Charleston area in the provision of evidence supported treatment for children with sexual behavior problems. Dr. Ralston provides training, consultation, expert testimony and technical assistance regarding child maltreatment at the local and state level as well as national and international level.

**Pamela D. Robinson**, *Volunteer Guardian ad Litem*  
Director, Pro Bono Program, USC Law School

Pamela DeFanti Robinson is currently the Director of the USC School of Law Pro Bono Program. She is a graduate of Clemson University with a BA in Elementary Education and of the USC School of Law. The Pro Bono Program is a nationally recognized, academic-based volunteer program integral to the professional development of law students.

Ms. Robinson is an active member of the S.C. Bar, the Richland County CASA Project, the PAIMI Advisory Board, the Clemson University Humanities Development Board, the Association

for American Law Schools (AALS), the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration, the ABA Center for Pro Bono. Ms. Robinson has been a volunteer guardian *ad Litem* for over 18 years and is a frequent speaker on the topic of effective representation of abused and neglected children. She was the coordinator for the S.C. Bar's Children's Committee project, "Guidelines for Guardians *ad Litem*". She is the recipient of several S.C. Bar Pro Bono awards for her service to children and to the indigent population in South Carolina and in 2007 was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Richland County CASA Program.

**Olga C. Rosa, Health Professional**

Director, S.C. Children's Advocacy Medical Response System Project, USC School of Medicine

Dr. Rosa was recently hired by the USC School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, as the Director of the Children's Hospital Collaborative's South Carolina Children's Advocacy Medical Response System Project. Through the support of a major Duke Foundation grant, this initiative will develop statewide children's forensic medical services in coordination with children's advocacy centers.

Dr. Rosa comes to South Carolina from Florida, where she had been the Medical Director and Primary Care Pediatrician of the Child Protection Program in District 15 since 2001. She received her medical degree from the University of Puerto Rico in 1986.

**Heather V. Scalzo, Assistant Public Defender**

Greenville County Public Defender's Office

Heather Scalzo is an assistant public defender in the Greenville County Public Defender Office for the 13th Circuit Defender's Office. She has been a public defender since 2005 and represents indigent juveniles charged with crimes in Greenville County.

Mrs. Scalzo is a 1996 graduate of Emory University. She received her Juris Doctor degree from Rutgers University School of Law in 2002. While in law school she was a clinical student in the Rutgers Child Advocacy Center and received the Sera Ramcharitar Memorial Prize for her work on behalf of underprivileged women, children, and families.

Prior to becoming a public defender, Mrs. Scalzo began her law career as a staff attorney at the Office of Hearings and Appeals for the Social Security Administration. She is a member of the 2011 S.C. Supreme Court's Family Court Docket Management Committee and participated on a panel for the Supreme Court Institute. Mrs. Scalzo is a member of the Junior League of Greenville and volunteers for Meals on Wheels. She is married to Christopher Scalzo. They have three children. She has been a member of the S.C. Bar and Greenville County Bar since 2002.

**The Honorable Caroline Streater, Criminal Court Judge**

Magistrate, Richland County Government

Ms. Streater is a graduate of the University of South Carolina School of Law. She served as the Assistant Solicitor in the Twelfth Judicial Circuit for four years. Her expertise was in General Sessions and Family Court prosecutions and initiating forfeiture actions. In this position, she

excelled in handling and prosecuting child abuse cases. She has worked as a Child Abuse Attorney Specialist with the South Carolina Commission on Prosecution Coordination and as a Legislative Liaison/Congressional Affairs, at the S.C. Department of Juvenile Justice. She is currently with the Richland County Government.

**Troy D. Strother**, *Parent Group Representative*  
Executive Director, Parents Anonymous of S.C.

Troy D. Strother began his 20-year career in the field of education and non-profit management with the New York City Housing Authority as the Principal instructor of GED classes for a youth training program. In 1994, he accepted a position as the Associate Executive Director of Dallas Youth Services, a non-profit organization that offered an innovative education and youth development program. His work led him to Washington, DC where he consulted for the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps., As the Core to Careers Director. In 2001, he became the Executive Director of Youth Service Charleston where he ran such programs as "Reading Soul Mates", "Earth Force", and "Youth in Philanthropy" for the youth in the community. One year later Mr. Strother was instrumental in merging Youth Service Charleston with the Boys & Girls Club of the Trident Area and provided a rich and varied program for hundreds of young people. As a result of this accomplishment, Troy Strother became the Director of programs for the Boys & Girls Club of the Trident Area. In 2005, he was given the opportunity to expand the number of youth he impacted to a nationwide level by becoming a consultant for YouthBuild USA.

Troy D. Strother was born and raised in New York City. He has a bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the College of Santa Fe in New Mexico and a Masters degree in Education from New York University. He lives in Charleston, SC with his wife, Gina and their 11-year old daughter Gabrielle where he continues his lifelong commitment to supporting the youth in America.

**Naomi Torfin**  
Executive Director, S.C. Children Come First

Ms. Torfin is the Executive Director of Children Come First, an organization dedicated to systemic reforms of South Carolina's foster care system. She has worked in the social services field since graduating James Madison University in Virginia and completing her service in Niger, West Africa with the United States Peace Corps in 2003.

She worked directly with aged-out foster youth in Miami, Florida helping them to learn the life skills necessary for successful adulthood before moving to South Carolina and working on larger goals of systemic improvements with Children Come First in 2009. In 2009 SC Children Come First was instrumental in supporting the passage of the Responsible Father Registry bill. In addition, the 2010 Early Permanency and Adoption Bill was signed into law, helping abused and neglected children avoid the trauma of multiple placements and find a safe and permanent homes.

Her most valuable asset is the first 15 years of her life she spent in and out of foster care due to parental substance abuse and neglect. Despite many obstacles and against many odds, Ms. Torfin overcame barriers and now uses her experience to lend a voice to others and help remove the barriers she once faced.

**Kali C. Turner**, *Member at large*  
Government Affairs Director, S.C. Bar  
J.D. University of South Carolina 1992

Kali Campbell Turner graduated with honors from the University of South Carolina in 1989 with a degree in History and Political Science. She graduated from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1992. Ms. Turner began her legal career working at the Office of Child Support Enforcement in Columbia, SC. She then served as General Counsel to the Foster Care Review Board and later as an attorney with Richland County DSS. She currently serves as the Government Affairs Director at the South Carolina Bar. Ms. Turner is a native of Sumter, South Carolina. She is married to Patrick Turner and the mother of three wonderful boys.

**Tana G. Vanderbilt**, *Experienced in working with children with disabilities*  
General Counsel, S.C. Department of Disabilities and Special Needs

Since March of 2007, Ms. Vanderbilt has been General Counsel for the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs. Prior to that, she was the Pro Bono Coordinator for the Nelson Mullins Law firm. Ms. Vanderbilt was previously employed as a resource attorney at the Children's Law Office, where she provided assistance to attorneys, developed written resource materials, and conducted training programs on child protection legal issues for a broad range of professionals. From October 1994 until June 1999, she was Legal Counsel for the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs. Prior to that position, Ms. Vanderbilt worked for the South Carolina Department of Social Services as a staff attorney and then as Senior Assistant General Counsel.

Ms. Vanderbilt is board member of Palmetto Richland Children's Hospital and SCPSAC. She received her BA with a major in Political Science and a minor in Psychology from Furman University and her Juris Doctorate from the University of South Carolina School of Law.

**Teresa L. Vassar**, *Experienced in Working with Children with Disabilities*  
Executive Director, Willowglen Academy

Teresa Vassar currently serves as Executive Director of the Willowglen Academy. Previously, she served as Program Director for the Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services Division of the Dept. of Social Services for Horry and Georgetown Counties. She received a B.S. in Psychology from the University of South Carolina and a M.Ed. degree from Converse College. Ms. Vassar also holds the Certified Public Manager credential. Ms. Vassar has extensive clinical services experience including work with severely abused and neglected children, family treatment and the treatment of sexually abused children. Ms. Vassar has actively worked to achieve an increase in the quality of care of children with disabilities while promoting least restrictive level of care.

In 1996, Ms. Vassar took the director position of the Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services division of DSS (formerly Managed Treatment Services). Ms. Vassar assumed the primary responsibility for assuring that quality intensive case management services were provided to children who were victims of abuse and neglect and suffered from emotional disabilities. Ms. Vassar is the founder and President of the "Special Kid" Sponsor Program. This program trains volunteers and pairs them with children who have special needs. This program also works to

financially assist all children in foster care with needs that are not covered through the Medicaid or state system.

**Honorable Gary Watts, Coroner**  
*Richland County, SC*

Gary Watts is no stranger to public service. Prior to being elected as Coroner, he served as the Deputy Coroner in Richland County for more than 15 years and was involved in over 7,500 death investigations. His professional experience also includes having served as a police officer, an Emergency Medical Technician, and an investigator with the Richland County Public Defender's Office.

He is a graduate of the Institute of Police Technology and Management, University of North Florida in Jacksonville, Florida (this included traffic, homicide, investigations, advanced traffic and traffic accident reconstruction). He also attended the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy.

In addition to his experience and education, Mr. Watts is also active in professional organizations, providing another avenue for supporting his community. He is a member of the S.C. Division of the International Association for Identification. He also serves as the President for the S.C. Coroner's Association and as Chairman for the Richland County Child Health and Safety Council Child Fatality Review Committee. Mr. Watts also served as the former Chairman for Midlands Safe Kids.

**Valerie Williams, Law Enforcement**  
Senior Agent, SLED

Agent Williams is an twenty-year law enforcement veteran, and is presently assigned to the Community Relations Office of the State Law Enforcement Division, where she works with community relations issues, victim issues, investigations, forensic interviews with children and conducts training. Much of her training and experience has been focused on crimes against children. Special Agent Williams holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminology and is currently completing a Master's degree in Counseling. Formerly she worked for the Sumter City Police Department as a detective, patrol officer, and drug abuse resistance education instructor.