

SPEAKER BIOS

BEAU RUDDER

Beau Rudder is the Director of Training at the Mississippi Office of State Public Defender. From 2003 to 2012 he was an assistant public defender in Pascagoula, Mississippi, where he represented indigent clients charged with felonies ranging from non-violent drug offenses to capital murder. A native of Middletown, Ohio, Beau earned his BA from the University of Mississippi in 1999 and his JD from the University of Toledo School of Law in 2002. He is a board member and past president of the Mississippi Public Defenders Association and he is Secretary of the National Alliance of Indigent Defense Educators. Beau lives in Madison, Mississippi with his wife Jacqueline Rudder and his son Abraham.

ANDRÉ DE GRUY

André de Gruy is the director of the Capital Defense Division of the Mississippi Office of State Public Defender. He founded the division as an independent state agency in July 2001. He previously worked as an intern, staff attorney and director of the Mississippi Capital Defense Resource Center Inc. and as an assistant public defender in Hinds County. He is a 1990 graduate of Mississippi College School of Law. He served on the Mississippi Corrections and Criminal Justice Task Force and now serves on the Oversight Taskforce. He served on the Mississippi Public Defender Association Board of Directors for over 15 years including as President and chair of both the Training and Public Policy Committees. He is a "Life" member of MPDA. He is also a member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and the Mississippi Association for Justice. André has served on the Mississippi Public Defender Taskforce and currently serves as a lawyer/advisor to the Mississippi Psychology Association's Forensics Working Group and serves on Catholic Charities' Poverty in Mississippi Taskforce. He is married to Judge Elizabeth de Gruy, they have five children and one grandchild.

JAKE HOWARD

Jake Howard splits his time between the Law Office of McDuff & Byrd, where he has been an associate since 2012, and the MacArthur Justice Center at the University of Mississippi, where he has been Of Counsel since January of 2015. Jake has litigated civil rights and criminal cases at the trial, appellate, and post-conviction stages in state and federal court. Since 2012, he has been the co-coordinator of an effort to ensure that all juvenile offenders serving life sentences in Mississippi's prisons receive an opportunity for release on parole pursuant to the United States Supreme Court's decisions in *Graham v. Florida* and *Miller v. Alabama*. Prior to moving to Mississippi, Jake was an E. Barrett Prettyman Fellow in the Criminal Defense and Prisoner Advocacy Clinic at the Georgetown University Law Center and a law clerk for the Honorable Myron H. Thompson in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Alabama. Jake earned a masters of laws degree in advocacy from Georgetown University Law Center and graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard Law School. He also received a master's in teaching from the University of Washington and a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of Michigan.

MELANIE CARR

Melanie Carr is an independent consultant, investigator, and mitigation specialist, working on human rights and civil rights cases, primarily on behalf of poor people facing the death penalty or lengthy sentences. After graduating from Harvard with a degree in social anthropology, Melanie moved to New Orleans in 1997 to work as a capital defense investigator and mitigation specialist with the Louisiana Crisis Assistance Center. In 2002, she received an Echoing Green Fellowship to establish A Fighting Chance, a nonprofit capital

defense investigation and mitigation office. A Fighting Chance (now known as NOLA Investigates) expanded access to qualified investigators and mitigation specialists through aggressive funding litigation and improved investigation and mitigation standards through recruiting, training and supervising investigators and mitigation specialists. After rebuilding A Fighting Chance in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Melanie transitioned the leadership of the organization and moved back to her native northeast in 2007. As a solo practitioner now based in Brooklyn, Melanie's clients have included the Jena 6, a Civil Rights Era innocence case in the Deep South, worker's rights and discrimination class actions, juvenile detention conditions, police brutality and civil rights cases, and sentencing advocacy for juveniles serving lengthy sentences in adult prisons. She also provides training on investigation and mitigation development for criminal defense team members.

LELA HUBBARD

Lela Hubbard, LMSW, joined the OSPD Capital Defense Division staff in December 2008 as a Mitigation Investigator. Ms. Hubbard received her master's degree from Jackson State University School of Social Work in 1998. She has worked professionally as a social worker in both Behavioral Health and Family Services. In 2008 she received the Outstanding Senior Paralegal Award. Lela is a nationally certified Defense Initiated Victim Outreach (DIVO) specialist and received her certification under the training of Kelly Braham. Lela has a knack for understanding victim pain and has been an inspiration in resolving not only her cases but helping out other mitigation investigators in the office by working with victims' families and having them agree not to seek the death penalty.

DR GILBERT S. MACVAUGH III

Dr. Macvaugh is a clinical and forensic psychologist in independent practice and specializes in forensic mental health evaluations in criminal, civil, and juvenile cases. He is board certified in forensic psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Forensic Psychology. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Fort Lewis College, a Master of Arts degree in clinical psychology from the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, and Master of Science and Doctor of Psychology degrees in clinical psychology from Antioch University-New England. He completed his internship in clinical psychology at the Worcester State Hospital and his post-doctoral fellowship in forensic psychology in the Law and Psychiatry Program at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. He previously was a staff psychologist for Forensic Services of the Mississippi State Hospital and has worked as a consultant for the Hinds County Adult Detention Center and the Walnut Grove Youth Correctional Facility. He also has held teaching appointments in the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior at the University of Mississippi Medical Center and in the Department of Psychology at Millsaps College. Dr. Macvaugh has testified as an expert witness in numerous pretrial and post-conviction capital cases for state and federal courts. He has been invited to give presentations at state, national, and international conferences and has published articles and book chapters on topics related to forensic mental health assessment. His scholarly work in the area of forensic evaluations of intellectual disability in death penalty cases has been cited in state and federal appellate court decisions, law review articles, and amicus curiae briefs to the United States Supreme Court. Dr. Macvaugh currently serves as chair of the Psychology & Law Task Force of the Mississippi Psychological Association, is an invited member of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Task Force on the Death Penalty, and is appointed by the Mississippi Board of Psychology to provide training and examinations for psychologists seeking certification to perform civil commitment evaluations for Mississippi Chancery Courts. His primary areas of interest include criminal competencies/insanity, violence risk assessment, civil commitment, and capital sentencing/mitigation with an emphasis on *Atkins* and *Panetti* cases.

DR. THOMAS GRISSO

Thomas Grisso, PhD, ABPP, a clinical psychologist, is Emeritus Professor at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. His research and clinical work has aimed to improve courts' decisions and mental health professionals' evaluations in legal cases pertaining to adults and juveniles, especially those with mental disorders. His research on developmental factors related to youths' interrogation and adjudication has been cited in U.S. Supreme Court decisions and has influenced basic policy and practice in our juvenile courts nationwide. He is Executive Director of the American Board of Forensic Psychology, and his achievements related to psychology in the public interest have been recognized by special awards from the American Psychological Association, American Psychiatric Association, Royal College of Psychiatrists (U.K.) and the American Psychology-Law Society.

KATHRYN SHEELY

Kathryn Sheely works as a state-wide death penalty public defender in Louisiana. She joined the Baton Rouge Capital Conflict Office after graduating from the LSU Law Center in 2006 and was quickly nicknamed "Motion Girl" by clients and then co-counsel for filing lengthy, technical motions in a mostly successful effort to persuade prosecutors it would be easier to take someone else's case to trial. Most recently, her team won a unanimous life verdict in a first degree murder trial against Dale Cox, the District Attorney Slate named one of America's deadliest prosecutors.

JOE GUASTAFERRO

Joseph Guastafarro has spent his thirty-year career as a trial consultant and or mitigation specialist working exclusively with the criminal defense bar defending citizens accused. He has worked collaboratively with State, Federal and privately retained criminal defense lawyers. Joe has worked with capital defense teams in thirty cases. Seventeen of the thirty were tried to a verdict before a jury and twenty-six received a sentence other than death. He worked as a mitigation specialist with the defense team for Terry Nichols in the Oklahoma City bombing state trial and as a consultant with the defense team of Brian Nichols in the Fulton County (GA) courthouse shootings, both of which resulted in life verdicts. Dedicated to training criminal defense lawyers, he taught his first criminal defense CLE course in 1976 for the Cook County Public Defender Office. Joe is a member of the faculty of the Professional Education Group and lectures throughout the country on Jury Selection & Persuasion. He is a regular member of training faculty in State and Federal Public Defender offices for both capital and non-capital cases. He has taught for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy and the National Criminal Defense College as well as the New York State Defenders Association (NYSDA) and taught on the faculty from 1996 and 2005. He has lectured at numerous National Association for Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL) conferences and published articles in that organizations nationally acclaimed magazine, "The Champion." Joe was on the inaugural faculty of Gerry Spence's Trial Lawyers College in 1994 and continued with the college until 1998. In 1995 and 1996 Joe was part of a nine-person team who taught trial skills in Russia to criminal defense lawyers in the former Soviet Union. In May 2003, after his involvement in the Embassy Bombing Case in NYC, he lectured in Salzburg, Austria on the Impact of Terrorism on American Juries. Joe has a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature, from Jersey City University and a Master Degree in Theatre Arts, from the University of Connecticut.

REBEKKA HIGGS

Rebekka Higgs was born and raised in Saudi Arabia where public beheadings are commonplace, women are stoned to death for adultery, and drug trafficking is a capital offense. Upon graduating University of California Davis Law School in 1995, she immediately began a lifelong career in criminal defense. Rebekka worked on her first capital case while in private practice in 1998. She signed on with the San Diego Public Defenders in 1999. After moving to Colorado she began working for the Office of the Colorado State Public

Defender in 2008. She has done capital work in Colorado since 2010. In 2015 Rebekka teamed up with Tamara Brady and Daniel King to defend James Holmes in the Aurora Theater shooting trial, obtaining a life verdict. After seven and a half months in trial, Rebekka, being an avid outdoorswoman, backpacked the 500-mile Colorado Trail.

STACY FERRARO

Stacy Ferraro is the Juvenile Parole Resource Counsel. Stacy's position is funded by the generous support of the Vital Projects Fund. Stacy's position is the product of a private-public partnership between the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and Office of the State Public Defender (OSPD). Stacy has worked in death penalty litigation at trial, appeal and post-conviction including federal Habeas cases since 2001. She has extensive experience as both a Mitigation Specialist and an attorney. Stacy is a graduate of Duke University and University of Mississippi School of Law.

LAVARR MCBRIDE

LaVarr McBride is from Beaver, Pennsylvania (near Pittsburgh). He is on the faculty at Penn State University teaching in the Administration of Justice Department. He has a Bachelor's degree in criminal justice and psychology and a Master's Degree in Social Science with an emphasis in Sociology and Economics.

Mr. McBride has worked in many different areas of state and federal law enforcement. He began his career at the Utah State Prison as a prison guard in Medium and Maximum Security facilities. He then left the prison and was a parole officer and worked on a task force in northern Utah dealing with drugs and other violent crime. For the last 20 years of his career he worked as a Federal Probation Officer and then as a Training Specialist with the Office of Federal Defenders and as Management Analyst for the Administrative Office of the United States Courts in the Judiciary Branch in Washington DC. He is an expert in working with trauma associated with violent crime specifically in homicide and sexual crime cases. For the past 11 years, LaVarr has been helping in death penalty and violent crime cases as a Victim Outreach Specialist, working with defense teams in reaching out to victim survivors.

Mr. McBride happened to be in Colorado the night of the Aurora Colorado Theater Shooting on other business and volunteered his services listening and sitting with victims and community members just hours after the tragedy. He currently is working on international terrorism cases as a victim outreach specialist and other high profile cases within the United States.

In his spare time he recently became a published author. He wrote a book with Eric Wicklund who he supervised on Federal Probation. The book titled, "Through a Convicts Eyes," looks at crime and accountability through the eyes of an offender. Mr. McBride believes that we can learn from each other by simply listening to one another. He speaks nationally at conferences on Violent Crime, death penalty, and victim's rights; including the National Organization of Victims Assistance, Parents of Murdered Children, and various law enforcement national conferences.

ROBERT AUTOBEE

Bob Autobee lives in Pueblo, Colorado. On October 18, 2015, Eric Autobee the son of Bob and Lola Autobee was murdered by Edward Montour in the Limon Correctional Center in Limon, Colorado. Since that time, Bob and Lola's lives have been changed forever. Bob and Lola have two sons, Eric and Scott. Scott resides in Pueblo with his wife Liz, and their grandchildren, Morgan Erica 11, Hunter Scott is 5 and Benjamin Robert is 5.

Bob Autabee wanted death for the inmate accused of killing his son, a prison guard, the first time he was prosecuted over a decade ago. But a maze-like journey through anger, depression and alienation from God and then newfound faith and forgiveness has led him to plead for mercy for Edward Montour as he is prosecuted a second time.

Since that time Bob has become a spokesperson against the death penalty and enjoys meeting with others and helping them by sharing his story. Bob has won several awards for his work with advocating against the death penalty and recently met with the parents and convicted murderer James Holmes, helping them through a difficult process and sharing with them his love for God and for forgiveness.

Bob speaks nationally to audiences ranging from victims to defense attorneys. He respects everyone and understands that his journey may be different than others, but that does not mean that they can't respect one another and help each other through a difficult process.

Bob and LaVarr have a unique story and are here to help participants understand the need for empowerment through understanding and learning to respect one another.

KELSEY RUSHING

Kelsey L. Rushing is a staff attorney with the Office of State Public Defender, Capital Litigation Division, where he litigates death eligible cases at the trial level. Kelsey began his career with Ferr Smith & Associates in Canton, MS in a general practice concentrating primarily on personal injury and chancery matters. He later joined Blackmon & Blackmon, PLLC, as a staff attorney handling mass tort litigation and civil defense clients. In 2004, Kelsey was a founding and managing partner of Smith, Rushing, Cotton & Robinson, PLLC, in Jackson, MS. There he handled primarily personal injury claims and criminal defense. He served as a contract public defender with Warren and Yazoo Counties. Prior to his work with the State Public Defender, Mr. Rushing established a solo practice in Canton, MS, and served as the Municipal Judge for the City of Canton in 2009-2010.

Kelsey is a native of Carthage, MS. He is a 1999 graduate of Cumberland School of Law at Samford University. He received his Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree in Political Science from the University of Southern Mississippi.

RADLEY BALKO

Radley Balko is a 40-year-old investigative reporter living in Nashville, Tennessee. Currently, he runs The Watch, a Washington Post blog that features original reporting and commentary on civil liberties and the criminal justice system.

Prior to that, Balko covered the same beat for the Huffington Post, Reason magazine, and as a policy analyst for the Cato Institute. He also writes about music and culture in Nashville.

Balko has been published in a variety of outlets, from Playboy to the Wall Street Journal. He has twice testified before Congress. His work has been cited by the U.S. Supreme Court (*Hudson v. Michigan*), and cited and excerpted by the Mississippi State Supreme Court (*Mississippi v. Edmonds*). His reporting has been credited with helping Mississippi murder convict Cory Maye get off of death row, and eventually released from prison. His reporting also helped lead to the termination of longtime Mississippi medical examiner Steven Hayne.

Balko's 2009 feature on forensics fraud in a Louisiana murder case won the Western Publication Associations "Maggie Award" for reporting. In 2011 he was named the L.A. Press Club's Journalist of the Year. In 2015

he won the Innocence Project's Journalism Award for his coverage of forensic misconduct. And in 2016, he'll receive the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers' "Champion of Justice" award.

Balko's 2013 book *Rise of the Warrior Cop: The Militarization of America's Police Forces* has received praise from numerous critics, pundits and media outlets, including the *New Yorker*, the *Economist*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Kirkus*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *New York Journal of Books*. Balko is originally from Greenfield, Indiana. He graduated from Indiana University in 1997 with a BA in journalism and political science. He is a music buff, an amateur photographer, and an admitted "dog person."

JERRY MITCHELL

The stories of Clarion-Ledger investigative reporter Jerry Mitchell have helped put four Klansmen and an accused serial killer behind bars. His stories have also exposed corruption, helping lead to exonerations and reforms of state agencies. A winner of a MacArthur "genius" grant and a Pulitzer Prize finalist, he is writing a memoir about his pursuit of civil rights cold cases, *Race Against Time*, for Simon & Schuster.