

## Presenter Bio's

(13<sup>th</sup> Annual Local Gov't Conference)



**Kristi A. Nickodem, Robert W. Bradshaw Jr. Distinguished Term Assistant Professor of Public Law and Government; NC School of Government**

Kristi A. Nickodem is a Robert W. Bradshaw Jr. Distinguished Term Assistant Professor of Public Law and Government at the UNC School of Government. She teaches, consults, and writes about human services law, including the organization and governance of local social services and consolidated human services agencies and the confidentiality of social services information. Nickodem's work also explores how local governments use and respond to technology, including legal issues associated with social media, artificial intelligence, and the First Amendment. Nickodem is a member of the North Carolina State Bar and earned a J.D. with high honors, Order of the Coif, from UNC-Chapel Hill. Prior to coming to the UNC School of Government, she practiced law at K&L Gates LLP.



**Cheryl D. Howell, Albert Coates Professor of Public Law and Government – NC School of Government**

North Carolina SOG Judicial College faculty member [Cheryl D. Howell](#) was the recipient of the 2022 Liberty Bell Award. This [honor](#), presented annually by the [North Carolina Bar Association](#) (NCBA), recognizes "someone who exemplifies lifelong service to the law in North Carolina." Cheryl Howell joined the School of Government (then the Institute of Government) in 1992. Prior to that, she practiced law in Winston-Salem and Fayetteville and worked as a research assistant to Chief Judge R.A. Hedrick of the NC Court of Appeals. Currently, Howell teaches, consults, and writes about family law and other issues, and she works with the NC

Association of District Court Judges and the North Carolina Judicial College in planning and coordinating judicial branch education programs. She is a member of the North Carolina Bar Association. She also has served as a member of the Family Court Advisory Committee, appointed by the Chief Justice of the NC Supreme Court, since its creation in 1998, and serves as a member of the NC Child Custody and Visitation Mediation Advisory Committee, appointed by the director of the Administrative Office of the Courts. Her publications include articles and bulletins relating to family law and family court, as well as chapters created for the [Trial Judges' Bench Book, District Court Edition](#). Howell earned a B.A., *magna cum laude*, from Appalachian State University and a J.D., with honors, Order of the Coif, from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



**Judge Ashleigh Parker, District Court Judge 10th Judicial District**

Judge Ashleigh Parker is a District Court Judge in the 10th Judicial District, which encompasses Wake County, located in Raleigh, NC. Prior to her appointment by Governor Roy Cooper, Judge Ashleigh served the citizens of North Carolina as an Assistant Attorney General at the North Carolina Department of Justice and as an Assistant District Attorney at the Wake County District Attorney's Office. Judge Ashleigh graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Wake Forest University and *cum laude* from North Carolina Central University School of Law. She has been practicing law since she was 24

years old. At age 30, Judge Ashleigh was only the 3rd and youngest African American female to hold this position in Wake County since the District Courts were established over 50 years ago. Judge Ashleigh prides herself on her judicial philosophy of being "R.E.A.L.: Respectful, Efficient, Active in the Community, and Learned in the Law." She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and lives in Raleigh with her 2 boys. For more information about Judge Ashleigh, you can visit her website, [www.JudgeAshleigh.com](http://www.JudgeAshleigh.com)



**Angenette (Angie) Stephenson, Stephenson & Fleming, LLP**

Angie has over 20 years of experience as an attorney in the field of child welfare. Before entering private practice, she served as a child welfare attorney for ten years in the North Carolina Attorney General's Office and was a parent attorney before that. Before practicing law, Angie had several years of experience as a foster care social worker in North Carolina and Hawaii. She draws on extensive experience as a foster care social worker and Assistant Attorney General to help her agency client individualize its decisions based on multiple competing factors. Angie's commitment to the field of child welfare continues to be her primary focus and is further enhanced by her recognition as a Board-Certified Specialist in Child Welfare Law.



**Sharlene Anderson, Associate Attorney – Moore County Atty's Office**

Sharlene graduated from Brigham Young University in Social Work in 1996. She graduated from the J. Rueben Clark School of Law at Brigham Young University in 1999. Sharlene is licensed in Virginia (1999), Utah (2001) and North Carolina (2017). Sharlene's early career centered around domestic violence work and she served as a Guardian ad Litem in Utah's Fourth Judicial District. From there, she went a different route for a time, and worked as corporate counsel for software companies off and on as she raised her 3 children and moved back and forth across the country as a military spouse. In 2015, she settled in North Carolina and is thrilled to call Moore County her home. In 2017, she opened a private practice working primarily with estates and court-appointed work in child support and abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. Sharlene has been with the Moore County Attorney's Office since February 2021. In 2023, Sharlene was certified by the North Carolina State Bar as a child welfare law specialist.