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Welcome New RCBA President Sarah McEllistrem



BEING DECISIVE IS JUST ONE TRAIT THAT IS LEARNED when you are the youngest of twelve children. From the dinner table and beyond, with that

many siblings, you need to move quickly and know what you want. Sarah McEllistrem uses that skill to her advantage in her practice and will undoubtedly bring it into her new role as the President of the Ramsey County Bar Association. Her passion for the organization, her experience in her legal field, and her pre-law career will all be assets to the organization.

McEllistrem took her own route to the practice of law. She graduated with a degree in Marketing and Management from the College of St. Catherine's in 1998. Following college, she began working as a buyer and business analyst with the Target Corporation. The job allowed her to travel extensively and put her degree to good use. After six years with Target she made the decision to attend law school at William Mitchell College of Law.

During law school she began clerking at Collins, Buckley, Sauntry and Haugh, PLLP. She decided to call CBS&H home after graduation and begin her employment law practice. McEllistrem is passionate about her area of law and it shows. She has represented countless employees through wrongful termination actions and other employment matters in addition to licensing issues. Shortly after joining the partnership in 2012, she took on the role of managing partner and ran the business end of the 25-person law firm for five years. In addition to her work within her firm and with the RCBA, McEllistrem is also a member of the Second District Ethics Committee and the Warren E. Burger Inn of Court.

McEllistrem had a lot of exciting events on the horizon in 2019, specifically in May! She decided to step back from her role as managing partner to dedicate time and effort to the RCBA as well as plan her wedding. She was passed the gavel on May 8 and was married on May 31. She only received a cake at one event. Just saying.

McEllistrem sees her role as president as focused on member value. She plans to work on building valuable networking opportunities, and a strong sense of community. She knows that our chosen profession is challenging and can be stressful, but there are resources that can help and a community to support one another. The RCBA is one of those resources.

I would encourage those on the fence to meet with RCBA staff or talk with a member to see how you can strengthen your practice and your own professional well-being by joining the Bar, as well as what service and opportunities are provided. The RCBA is focused on member value. Get the information and then participate in a meaningful way to get all the benefits you can out of this great organization. The RCBA wants a continued active membership base which is one of our greatest strengths.

— Sarah McEllistrem

The Ramsey County Bar Association is lucky to have her at the helm for the next year. She will put her passion and decisiveness into ensuring a great bar year!

By Victoria Elsmore,
Partner at Collins, Buckley, Sauntry, & Haugh, P.L.L.P

UPCOMING EVENTS

Green Line Lunch

Tuesday, July 9, 2019
Family Lao Thai Restaurant
501 University Ave W, St. Paul

Charity Golf Tournament

Monday, July 15, 2019
Keller Golf Course
2166 Maplewood Drive, St. Paul

Solo Small Firm Section CLE Planning Meeting

Thursday, August 8, 2019
Louisiana Café
613 Selby Ave., St. Paul

Green Line Lunch

Tuesday, August 13, 2019
Fasika Ethiopian
510 Snelling Avenue, St. Paul

Fall Kick-Off and Happy Hour

Hosted by New Lawyers
September 12, 2019

Families First Halloween Party

Monday, October 28, 2019
John A. Johnson Elementary
740 York Ave, St. Paul

Bench & Bar Benefit

Saturday, November 2, 2019
The Saint Paul Hotel
350 Market Street, St. Paul

Holiday Party

Thursday, December 12
The Lexington
1096 Grand Ave., St. Paul

Judges' Dinner

Thursday, March 26, 2020
Town & Country Club
300 N Mississippi River Blvd.
St. Paul

Memorials

Friday, April 17, 2020
Sundin Music Hall
1531 Hewitt Avenue St. Paul

Renew your membership



If you haven't done so yet, it's time to renew your RCBA and Minnesota State Bar memberships.

The RCBA provides our 2,700 members with continuing legal education, networking and social events, leadership development, opportunities to give back to the community, and more.

The 2019-2020 Bar Year is Here!

Log in at www.mnbar.org and select Ramsey (District 2) as your District Bar. Contact the MSBA at 612-333-1183 with questions or to renew over the phone.

GET INVOLVED!

Sign up for the committees and free sections you would like to join at our web site:
www.ramseybar.org/get-involved

CLE Oversight Committee – Recruit speakers, plan CLE seminars for RCBA members and oversee the calendar of CLEs presented by sections.

Diversity Committee – Promote diversity within the RCBA and the profession in general. Provide a forum for discussion with other groups.

Memorials Committee – Assist in planning the annual memorials for deceased members of the Ramsey County bench and bar.

New Lawyers Committee – Plan social events, CLEs and community service projects for RCBA new lawyers.

Solo and Small Firm Committee – Plan CLEs, social events and networking opportunities for attorneys in solo or small firm practice.

Youth and the Law Committee – Participate in programs that educate young people about the law and promote volunteerism in education.

FREE SECTIONS: Criminal Law • Trusts & Estates • Family Law • New Lawyers • Real Estate • Solo / Small Firm

HELP US PLAN THESE IMPORTANT MEMBER EVENTS: Bench & Bar Benefit • Judges' Dinner • Golf Tournament • Families First



New Beginnings

I will be newly married at the time you read this. It will be the beginning of long summer days. It is also the start of a new bar year. New beginnings. There is something so great about the start of something new – the anticipation and excitement fill me up. I recall that first summer after law school, so excited by the thought that the worst was over but dreading the bar exam in just a matter of weeks. I've learned that excitement is contagious and so I am sharing mine with you all for the upcoming bar year.



First, as you are likely aware, three of Minnesota's bar associations (Minnesota State, Hennepin County, and Ramsey County) have merged their back-end and administrative functionality, the goal being to better utilize the skills of the combined bar staff to improve the member experience. There are obvious challenges for our profession, and ensuring costs are scrutinized and put to their most beneficial use has guided these decisions. While the back-end functionality has merged, each entity distinctly retains their own personality and traditions. While I certainly think the RCBA is the best of the bunch, not only because we are in the capital city, and closest to the high courts, we will certainly gain information and enhance member offerings as we learn throughout this joined effort. The goal is that all members from each organization gain from these efforts – from solo practitioners, to out-state attorneys, to in-house counsel, and large firms.

Second, there is a renewed and dedicated focus on improving the health of our profession. This is about ensuring lawyers are healthy, productive, and happy in our work. Several months ago, the Minnesota Supreme Court's Call to Action on Lawyer Well-Being was launched. Approximately 250 attended the event in an effort to understand and discuss the concerns facing our profession and start putting together



action plans to address this issue. These concerns include the increasing substance abuse, depression, anxiety, stress, and job dissatisfaction. Improving our overall health is not only the right thing to do in our profession, it impacts the success of our legal organizations, and promotes a positive public perception of our profession. The Minnesota Supreme Court has launched a website to further those efforts: www.mncourts.gov/lawyer-well-being.aspx

There is newness in the bar. Our primary goal is to ensure we are creating and building upon value for all members. However, we should all share in the efforts to strengthen our profession's health. That may mean having difficult conversations, reaching out to others who may be struggling, and helping guide and mentor those newest to our profession.

I hope to meet many of you throughout this upcoming year and hear about opportunities you feel could help enhance the RCBA's value, or what you or your firm is doing to strengthen our profession.

Save the date

2019
Bench & Bar Benefit
 Saturday, November 2, 2019
 The Saint Paul Hotel

Profile: Monica Dooner Lindgren



I began my interview of RCBA in-coming Vice President Monica Dooner Lindgren by asking her three questions that I often use during jury selection: What are you most passionate about? What organization is most important to you? And, what irritates you? In response to the first question, Dooner Lindgren's eyes lit up, she

flashed a radiant smile and said, "That's easy, I am passionate about helping people." Her response began a 40 minute conversation about Dooner Lindgren's life story that began in Colombia, South America, traveled through Northeast Minneapolis, St. Olaf College, Hamline Law School and recently, to Washington D.C. While connected to many organizations dedicated to supporting Latinx immigrants and the adoption community, one of the most important organizations to her is Casa de Esperanza, the largest Latina organization in the country focused on domestic violence. When asked what irritates her, she responded with "injustice."

"... I am passionate about helping people." Her response began a 40 minute conversation about Dooner Lindgren's life story that began in Colombia, South America, traveled through Northeast Minneapolis, St. Olaf College, Hamline Law School and recently, to Washington D.C.

The single, most formative event of Dooner Lindgren's life was being adopted out of an orphanage in Colombia by two loving parents and being raised in Minnesota by a family that encouraged her to explore her identity. At age 13, Dooner Lindgren began taking Spanish in school and by the time she graduated from high school, she was fluent in reading and speaking Spanish. She has traveled to Colombia three times and has visited the orphanage where she lived as a baby. She is well aware of the contrast between what her life would have been in Colombia compared to the opportunities her life in Minnesota provided her. The fact that she was "given a chance at life," she developed an intense desire to help others and her Latina heritage has caused her to direct her efforts primarily towards the Latinx community.

At St. Olaf College, Dooner Lindgren focused her educational efforts on Spanish and Hispanic Studies. During law school, her concentration was Children and the Law. She also served a Minnesota Justice Foundation clerkship at Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services,

Inc. (SMRLS). After law school, she worked as a criminal law clerk, as a grant writer at La Familia Guidance Center, and served as an Immigrant Community Constituent Advocate for U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar.

In January 2008, Dooner Lindgren began her work as a Staff Attorney with SMRLS where she has provided bilingual and bicultural legal services to low-income persons in contested family law proceedings, with an emphasis to victims of domestic violence. She is now a Senior Attorney representing crime victims in civil matters. She describes her work at SMRLS as her "dream job" because it combines her legal education and her desire to help people with her dedication to the Latinx community. She thinks of SMRLS as the legal "emergency room" that works on behalf of people who often do not have a voice due to many barriers placed before them. Her professional and personal goal is to free her clients from abuse, help them to receive the benefits to which they are entitled and empower them to independently move forward.

Dooner Lindgren met her husband, Miguel, who was also adopted into a Minnesota family from Colombia, while volunteering at Children's Home Society/Lutheran Social Services. They have one daughter, Camila, who they adopted from Colombia just 2 years ago at 7 years of age. Camila and her mom are members of a Colombian folk dance group, Grupo de Danzas Colombianas MN, continuing Dooner Lindgren's passion and commitment to her Latina heritage.

Recently, Dooner Lindgren was selected to participate in a dialogue session on inter-country adoption with the U.S. Department of State's Office of Children's Issues, Domestic Policy Council and adoption professionals from around the country at the White House. There is no doubt that she will bring her unique perspective and commitment to helping others with unbridled enthusiasm.

Our in-coming Vice President was initially drawn to the RCBA through her participation in the Minnesota Hispanic Bar Association. She believes that the voices of legal aid attorneys and attorneys of color provide an important perspective to the entire bar association. During this new, exciting time for the RCBA, she is looking forward to bringing that perspective to her colleagues at the bar association.

By Mark Hallberg, Hallberg Law, P.A.

Save the date

Leadership Kick-off and RCBA Happy Hour Hosted by the New Lawyers

Thursday, September 12

Watch ramseybar.org for details



NEW RCBA LEADERS ELECTED

Monica Dooner Lindgren, Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services, has been elected to the office of vice president. Ms. Dooner Lindgren will serve as president of the Ramsey County Bar Association in 2021-2022.

Sarah McEllistrem, a partner at Collins, Buckley, Sauntry, & Haugh, PLLP, assumed the office of president on July 1, 2019.

Susan Buckley, with Buckley Law Office, will now serve as president-elect.

Elizabeth Clysdale, Ramsey County Court Referee, has been re-elected secretary/treasurer.

New members of the Ramsey County Bar Association Board of Directors: **Joseph Meyer**, Minnesota Attorney General's Office; **Heather Gilbert**, Gilbert Law PLLC; **Kenya Boddien**, Larson • King

Voting Representatives to the Minnesota State Bar Association (MSBA) Assembly: **Landon Ascheman**, **Victoria Brenner**, **R. Leigh Frost**, **Hon. Thomas Gilligan**, **Jessie Nicholson**, **Kelly Rogosheske**

Alternative Representatives to MSBA Assembly: **Hon. Shawn Bartsh**, **Mike Bradley**, **Hon. Juan Hoyos**, **Thomas Plunkett**

MSBA Council Representative: **Caryn Boisen**

MSBA Secretary for 2019-2020 (*MSBA President in 2022- 2023*): **Paul D. Peterson**

Ramsey County Bar Foundation Board of Directors: **Renee Fossen**, **Thomas C. Plunkett**

Ramsey County Law Library Board of Trustees: **Thomas Boyd**, **John Trojack**

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PLACEMENT SERVICE

Let the Bar Association help you find the right staff for your law firm. We specialize in the placement of full-time and part-time legal office support staff: **Paralegals | Legal Assistants | Receptionists | Office Administrators**

What law firms say...

“For years our firm internally managed the hiring process, from start to finish. However, over time we found that fielding inquiries from applicants, perusing resumes, and following up with references was overwhelming and time-consuming. A colleague referred us to the RCBA Placement Services for assistance and it has been an excellent experience. Having the RCBA pre-interview and screen candidates for us has been immensely helpful. Sabina, the Placement Director, in particular, has been amazing to work with.”



GET STARTED! Contact Placement Service Director Sabina Zeenat at szeenat@mnbars.org or 651-222-0846



“Every law firm has unique staffing needs. I’m here to help you find the right person for your office. Let’s work together.”

Sabina Zeenat, Placement Director



“For over 30 years, the RCBA Placement Service has been a go-to-resource for local lawyers and law firms.”

Cheryl Dalby, Chief Executive Officer

Congratulations Melitta Drechsler, Recipient of the 2019 Excellence in Diversity Award



MELITTA DRECHSLER is, and has been, a tireless promoter and supporter of the personal and professional development of Asian Pacific American lawyers, judges, and law students in the local community, as

well as on the national stage. She is the 2019 recipient of the RCBA's Excellence in Diversity Award.

Melitta Drechsler (formerly Melitta George) currently serves as an Assistant Ramsey County Attorney in the Ramsey County Attorney's Office. She has worked in the office's Civil Division since October 2014, where she supports the County's Property Tax department as well as the 911 Center and the County's workforce development efforts. Previously, Drechsler was instrumental in drafting and negotiating Ramsey County's high-dollar-value procurement contracts. Prior to joining the Ramsey County Attorney's Office, she worked as corporate counsel for Taylor Corporation in Mankato, and for five years as an associate in the business law section of Briggs and Morgan.

Drechsler has championed the Asian Pacific American (APA) legal community ever since her first year in law school in 2005, when she served as the Northwest Regional Director for the National Asian Pacific American Law Student Association (NAPALSA).

She has maintained her commitment to the APA community throughout her legal career through her involvement with the Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association (MNAPABA) and the National Asian Pacific Bar Association (NAPABA). NAPABA is the national bar association for APA lawyers, judges, and law professors. Drechsler was President of MNAPABA for the 2017-2018 bar year.

Through her work in these organizations, Drechsler has proven a dedicated and accomplished leader in the APA legal community. As chair of MNAPABA's Award Committee and President of MNAPABA, she has given her time and talents to help many MNAPABA members gain recognition, achieve national awards, and advance in their legal careers. Drechsler has supported MNAPABA's tradition of actively assisting its members seeking judicial appointments by holding mock interviews with applicants

and providing endorsement letters to the Minnesota Judicial Selection Commission and members of the Congressional judiciary committee. She organized and hosted several CLEs concerning aspects of professional development and diversity. Drechsler began a CLE series in partnership with national corporations headquartered in the Twin Cities. She also helped MNAPABA host a Government/Nonprofit Careers Panel at Twin Cities Public Television and worked to draw a record number of sponsorships for the association's 2018 Annual Gala.

Drechsler is now supporting the next generation of leaders as Immediate Past President of MNAPABA, and her legacy of promoting the representation of the APA community on the Bench and in the Bar continues. She serves as a mentor and friend to new attorneys and law students. MNAPABA and the greater APA community owe Drechsler a tremendous debt of gratitude for her tireless efforts to foster diversity and APA representation in the legal community. She exemplifies the Ramsey County Bar Association Diversity Committee's mission in promoting diversity and equal opportunities through her unflagging work in serving and promoting the Asian Pacific American community.

Drechsler is a 2008 graduate of the William Mitchell College of Law. She received her undergraduate degree in piano performance from the University of Kansas and her Masters of Philosophy in music from the University of Birmingham in England. She is married to Joseph Drechsler and the mother of two young sons.

By Greg Egan, Ramsey County Public Defender's Office

GREEN LINE LUNCHES

The **RCBA Diversity Committee** continues its series of "Green Line Lunches" in celebration of the vibrant University Avenue neighborhoods along the light rail line.

No reservation is necessary. Participants order off the regular lunch menu and pay for their own lunch.

Tuesday, July 9, 2019 at Noon

Family Lao Thai Restaurant

501 University Ave W (Western Ave Station)

Tuesday, August 13, 2019 at Noon

Fasika Ethiopian

510 Snelling Avenue (Snelling Ave Station)

Ramsey County Bar Foundation Grant Recipients

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Ramsey County Bar Foundation over the past year. Your generosity allowed us to provide grants to 19 organizations that support the foundation's mission of improving the quality and accessibility of justice and benefitting the legal profession.

The recipients of grants from the foundation during the past year are:

Advocates for Human Rights
Asian Women United of Minnesota
Bridges to Safety, a program of the St Paul & Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
Children's Law Center of Minnesota
Children's Minnesota
Civil Society
Collaborative Community Law Initiative
Dispute Resolution Center
HOME Line
Innocence Project of Minnesota
JustUs Health
Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers
Loan Repayment Assistance Program Minnesota
Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans
Minnesota Elder Justice Center
Minnesota Justice Foundation
Neighborhood Justice Center, Inc.
Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services
Tubman

Law Student Scholarships

The foundation also awarded scholarships to local law students. Each student is a member of a group traditionally under-represented in the legal profession and has a record of academic or professional achievement. In addition, each student has displayed leadership qualities through past work experience, community involvement or student activities.

This year's scholarships were awarded to:

Ria Chakraborty, University of Minnesota Law School
Cara DiMare, Mitchell Hamline School of Law
Souvan Samuel Lee, Mitchell Hamline School of Law
Nikita Luyken, Mitchell Hamline School of Law
Leslie Redmond, University of St Thomas School of Law



MONDAY, JULY 15, 2019 | KELLER GOLF COURSE

Cost: **\$160** for RCBA members, **\$185** for non-members
Foursome Discount: Only \$500 (\$125 each)
Registration and sponsorship opportunities available at
www.ramseybar.org/event/golf2019
For details or questions email
SElmore@mnbars.org or call 651-789-3756

Thank You 2018-2019 Committee and Section Co-Chairs

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Kyle Dareff

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Save the date

2019 RCBA HOLIDAY PARTY

Thursday, December 12, 2019

The Lexington
est. 1935

Contact Sharon Elmore with any questions:
SElmore@mnbars.org or 651-789-3756.

RCBA OFFERS



DEMAND CLES

www.ramseybar.org/on-demand-cles
for more details.

DISCOUNT
Packages!

RCBA is offering flexible
CLE packages again for
the 2019-2020 CLE season.
Great savings over
buying individual CLEs
High Quality, Relevant CLEs
presented by local experts

5 CLEs \$60 | 10 CLEs \$110 | 15 CLEs \$150

Any length: 1 credit hour, 1.5 hours, 2 hours, 3 hours
Any format – live, teleconference, on-demand
Includes lunch, if applicable

Register at www.ramseybar.org/continuing-legal-education

SEPTEMBER CLEs

- Sept 12** Trusts & Estates Section CLE
- Sept 16** Tough Cases: Judges' Hidden Struggles in Dispensing Justice
- Sept 17** Real Estate Section CLE
- Sept 25** Family Law Section CLE
- Sept 26** Solo Small Firm Section CLE

 Families First
Halloween Party 

MONDAY OCTOBER 28
Volunteers Needed 5-8pm

SElmore@mnbars.org
651.789.3756

Solo Small Firm Section CLE Opportunities

www.ramseybar.org/get-involved/solosmall-firms

RCBA Solo Small Firm Section CLE Planning Meeting

Help plan this year's Solo Small Firm Section CLEs – Bring your CLE topic requests!

**Thursday, August 8, 2019 at 9am
at the Louisiana Cafe.**

No reservation necessary.
Participants order off the regular breakfast menu and pay for their own meal.

Solo Small Firm Section CLEs

Join us for informal CLE presentations and networking gatherings at the Louisiana Cafe (613 Selby Avenue) in St. Paul the fourth Thursday of every month.

Registration and networking:
8 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

CLE presentations: 8:30am-10am

Cost (includes breakfast): \$20
RCBA members* \$30 non-members

**MSBA Solo Small Firm Section is now co-sponsoring the RCBA Solo Small Firm Section!*

Members of the MSBA Solo Small Firm Section may attend at the RCBA member price (\$20). To do so, send an email to info@ramseybar.org.

**Watch for information about the
SEPTEMBER 26th Solo Small
Firm Section CLE**

Attorney Referral Service Enrollment Period!

We are currently accepting applications for the 2019-2020 enrollment period. Please consider becoming a member of our Attorney Referral Service, our Modest Means Program, or both! We will help you build your practice by providing quality referrals in your area of practice.

For more details about these programs please contact
Thea Anderson, tanderson@mnbars.org or 651-224-1775

Girl Scouts Career Fair

RCBA Diversity Committee seeks a woman attorney and a woman judge to participate in the Girl Scouts Connectz Career Fair September 28, 2019, from noon to 2:30p.m. at Comcast, 10 River Park Plz in St. Paul. The Connectz program provides culturally responsive programming to girls in historically underrepresented communities. Volunteers would help reduce access barriers for low-income girls and girls of color and inspire a career of service in the law for bright, enthusiastic girls we may soon call colleagues in the Ramsey County legal community.

Contact Greg Egan if interested call 651-757-1606 or email greg.egan@pubdef.state.mn.us

MEMBER NEWS

Larson King welcomes 2019 Summer Associates **Ana Peña** and **Derek Thomas**.

Safe Harbor Estate Law is thrilled to announce that **Michael Teeter** has joined the team as an associate attorney, working in estate planning, estate administration, business succession planning, asset protection and real estate.



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Immediate Opening. Peterson, Logren & Kilbury located in Roseville, MN has an immediate opening for an Associate Attorney in its growing, defense-oriented workers' compensation firm. Our six-attorney firm offers challenging work representing high-level clientele in a collegial, but professional, small-firm atmosphere. The ideal candidate would have 2-5 years of workers' compensation litigation experience. Other practice areas in our firm include employment law, commercial litigation, personal injury, and insurance litigation. We offer a competitive, comprehensive benefit package, with substantial opportunity for professional growth as our litigation practice expands. Candidate must be admitted to the Minnesota Bar. E-mail letter of application and resume to: Brent Kleffman at bkleffman@pkllaw.net

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