



Ninth Annual Mid-South Agricultural & Environmental Law Conference

Speaker Biographies

Micah Brown was born and raised in Benton, Arkansas. Growing up, his family owned a small farm which led to his interest in cattle production. He attended the University of Central Arkansas where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science. After graduating from UCA in 2016, he enrolled in law school and graduated cum laude with his Juris Doctor from the University of Arkansas School of Law. While in law school, Micah worked as a law clerk for the Office of the Arkansas Attorney General in the Consumer Protection Division. During his time clerking for the Attorney General, he worked on various agricultural, environmental, and public utility law issues. During his second year of law school, he began working at the Center as a research fellow. As a research fellow, Micah primarily worked on tracking and analyzing agricultural and environmental federal litigation. After graduating law school in May of 2020, he joined the Center full-time. At the Center, his primary areas of research are finance and credit, commercial transactions, and secured transactions. He is licensed to practice law in the state of Arkansas.

Greg Cole joined the Farm Credit System more than 29 years ago as a student intern with what was then known as the Farm Credit Bank of St. Louis. During his tenure, Greg has served in various roles and was named as President and Chief Executive Officer of AgHeritage Farm Credit Services by the Board of Directors in April 2008. Prior to being named CEO, Greg was the Chief Operating Officer for AgHeritage. Greg earned a Bachelor of Science of Agriculture Business and Economics at Arkansas State University and is a graduate of LSU Graduate School of Banking. AgHeritage Farm Credit Services is a cooperative lending institution with managed assets in excess of \$1.1 Billion that services the financial needs of the agricultural community in 24 counties throughout Central and Southeast Arkansas. AgHeritage Farm Credit Services is part of the national Farm Credit System with assets in excess of \$260 billion and is one of four Farm Credit associations in Arkansas with total assets in excess of \$2.8 billion. Farm Credit is the largest single lender to agriculture in the U.S. and in the state of Arkansas. Its mission is to serve agriculture and rural America.

Brandon Davis is a partner at Phelps Dunbar LLP in New Orleans, LA, practices in the areas of labor and employment and business, employment-based and family-based immigration. His employment litigation practice includes representing employers in the defense of employment related claims, alleging retaliation, discrimination and workplace harassment under federal and state statutes. He also handles EEOC charges and other administrative complaints through the administrative and judicial process. He has also represented clients on a variety of human resource and risk management issues, and has assisted employers with implementing effective strategies and labor solutions. Mr. Davis also has an active litigation practice which includes litigation involving class actions, unfair trade practices, non-competition disputes, trade secrets disputes, contract disputes, wrongful termination and employment discrimination, state and federal wage and hour litigation and various commercial litigation matters. In this regard, Mr. Davis primarily represents clients in the oil and gas, agriculture, technology, health care and engineering industries.

Alexandra Dunn, Partner, Baker Botts L.L.P., has more than 25 years of practice at the local, state, and federal levels of government. Alexandra previously served as the Assistant Administrator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, in which she led the Agency in the creation of national policies implementing federal laws governing chemicals, pesticides, and pollution prevention. Prior to that, she was the EPA Administrator for New England (Region 1). Alexandra served as Executive Director and General Counsel of the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS), the national non-profit, non-partisan association of U.S. state and territorial environmental commissioners from 2014-2018. Drawing upon her agency background, Alexandra provides clients with an "EPA insider" perspective on regulations and management of emerging contaminants, particularly integrated per- and polyfluoroalkyl

substances (PFOS/PFAS), and has decades of risk communication and risk management experience to offer clients on chemicals of concern. Alexandra also served as Dean of Environmental Law Programs and Adjunct Professor of Law at the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University, where she taught courses in Environmental Justice and led efforts to create the nation's first L.L.M. in Environmental Law focused on climate change. Alexandra also taught Environmental Justice courses as a Lecturer in Law, Columbus School of Law, Catholic University of America and as an Adjunct Associate Professor of Law, American University Washington College of Law.

Sherie Edwards is the 2021-2022 President of the Tennessee Bar Association where her focus is on business education, attorney wellness, and diversity. In addition, Sherie is Vice President of Corporate and Legal for State Volunteer Mutual Insurance Company (SVMIC) in Brentwood, Tennessee, having joined the company in November of 1998 as a Claims Attorney. In addition to serving as corporate counsel, Ms. Edwards also has responsibility for the areas of regulatory and corporate compliance, government relations, and corporate/facility services. Prior to joining SVMIC, Ms. Edwards was the Director of Risk Management for Sumner Regional Medical Center in Gallatin, Tennessee (1993-98). Sherie has had several articles published on attorney health and wellness, including "Secure Your Mask First, Then Help Others", published in the Association of Corporate Counsel journal *The Docket* in November of 2014, and has presented at several CLE programs on attorney wellness and medical-legal issues. Ms. Edwards received a Bachelor of Science degree in Management and Human Relations from Trevecca Nazarene University in 1991, her J.D. from the Nashville School of Law in 1996, and her M.B.A. from Vanderbilt University in August of 2012. She is a Fellow of the Nashville, Tennessee, and American Bar Foundations and of the TBA YLD. Ms. Edwards is a recipient of Nashville Business Journal's Best of the Bar in 2013, 2014, 2017, 2018 and 2019, the Association of Corporate Counsel's prestigious Jonathan Silber Network Member of the Year (2018), and was an Athena Award nominee in 2014. She is a member of the Harry Phillips Inn of Court.

Ross Pifer is a Clinical Law Professor at Penn State Law where he teaches agricultural law and serves as Director of the Agricultural Law Resource Reference Center. Ross has presented widely throughout Pennsylvania, as well as nationally and internationally, on shale gas and agricultural law topics to audiences comprised of judges, attorneys, legislators, government officials, landowners, and the general public. His research interests are shale gas development and the interface between agricultural and residential development as well as GMO labeling laws. He served as an attorney with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of General Counsel, and has advised military personnel and commands in the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Great Britain, and Germany while on active duty with the U.S. Army JAG Corps at the Netherlands Law Center. Among other publications, Ross has written an article on GMO labeling to be published in the *Penn State Law Review*. Ross earned an LL.M. from the University of Arkansas School of Law Agricultural & Food Law Program, and is an active member of the American Agricultural Law Association.

Harrison Pittman serves as Director of the National Agricultural Law Center, headquartered at the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. He received his Juris Doctor from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law, after attending Mississippi State University and graduating from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. He then earned an LL.M. in Agricultural Law from the University of Arkansas School of Law's Graduate Program in Agricultural Law. Harrison has been with the Center in various capacities since 2001. He has taught at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law as part of the Ben J. Altheimer Distinguished Professorship for Agricultural Law, and has also served as a visiting professor at the Drake University Law School. In addition, he has taught *Environmental and Natural Resources Law* and *Introduction to Agricultural Law* in the Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food, & Life Sciences, Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness. In that role, he was awarded the *2011-2012 Agricultural Business Club Teaching Award*. He is an active member of the American Agricultural Law Association (AALA), and in 2010 became the inaugural recipient of the AALA's *Excellence in Agricultural Law* award in 2010.

Brigit Rollins began her life in Sonoma County, in the heart of California’s wine country. Growing up, she was surrounded by small farms, dairies, and wineries, which ultimately led to a passion for agriculture and the environment. She attended Sonoma State University where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in environmental studies, and a minor in studio arts. While at Sonoma State, Brigit studied different types of agricultural methods and how those methods could be used to promote environmental sustainability. After graduating from Sonoma State in 2015, she started as a law student at Lewis & Clark Law School in Portland, Oregon. While at Lewis & Clark, she worked as a student clerk for the Western Resources Legal Center, where she worked on cases assisting small ranches, farms, and municipalities. During her time at Lewis & Clark, she also interned with the California Farm Bureau Federation, and worked as a law clerk for the Sacramento-based environmental law firm Somach Simmons & Dunn. While at the California Farm Bureau, Brigit focused on Environmental Species Act issues and water law issues, as well as issues specific to California. While at Somach Simmons & Dunn, Brigit expanded her work on water law and participated in work involving federal Indian law. On campus, Brigit was on the board of Lewis & Clark’s Food & Ag Law Society and served as a student member of the ABA Public Lands Committee. In 2019, Brigit graduated from Lewis & Clark and joined the Center full-time. At the Center, her primary area of research and scholarship is environmental law as it intersects with agriculture. She maintains an interest in promoting sustainability and environmental health through agriculture and resource use. She is licensed to practice law in Oregon.

Elizabeth Rumley was raised on a small family farm in Ida, Michigan. She attended Michigan State University, where she was an active competitor, president, and captain of the Mock Trial team that participated in competitions across the Midwest. She also interned in the chambers of Magistrate Judge Virginia M. Morgan, United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan. After graduating from MSU in 2004, Beth returned home and commuted to law school at the University of Toledo, where she graduated *cum laude* in May of 2007. She is licensed to practice law in Michigan, Ohio and Oklahoma.

At the Center, her primary research and scholarship focus is on legal issues in animal agriculture, and she frequently lectures on those issues and others to audiences nationwide. Additionally, she is an adjunct faculty member in the University of Arkansas’ Center of Excellence for Poultry Science, Animal Science Department, and the Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness Department. Further, Mrs. Rumley works closely with and is on the advisory board of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture’s Center for Food Animal Well-Being.

Rusty Rumley was born and raised on a family farm in Cogar, Oklahoma. He graduated magna cum laude from Oklahoma State University in 2004 with a B.S. in AgriBusiness and in 2007 earned his *juris doctor* from the University of Oklahoma. After law school, Rusty earned his LL.M in Agricultural Law at the University of Arkansas. He is licensed to practice law in the states of Oklahoma and Michigan.

Rusty has published law review articles discussing the future application of special use valuation for inherited farmland, “right to farm” statutes, and the enforcement of animal cruelty statutes by private organizations. He has also written on landowner liability, agritourism, food labeling, local food production, business organizations, crop insurance, estate planning, leasing, and other land use topics in his work at the Center. Further, Rusty presents around the country to producer, consumer, extension, industry and legal groups on an array of topics.

Hunt Shipman has more than two decades of experience in Washington, D.C., including having held a variety of positions in government and the private sector. Prior to joining Cornerstone, Hunt was a senior executive for the largest trade association serving the food and beverage industry, where he led the association’s government affairs and communications programs. From 2001 to 2003, Hunt was Deputy Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services and served as the acting Deputy Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs at the United States Department of Agriculture. In this capacity, he led three agencies

with over 18,000 employees stationed around the world, and administered over \$31 billion in programs. Hunt was the Department of Agriculture's principal negotiator with the Congress for the 2002 Farm Bill. Hunt also served as the staff director of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Professional Staff Member at the Senate Appropriations Committee, and on the personal staff of Senator Thad Cochran.

In his time with Cornerstone, Hunt has used this experience to assist a variety of clients as they pursue their policy, regulatory and legislative goals with key members of various Congressional committees, the White House and executive branch agencies. The industry sectors he has worked with include food and agriculture, higher education, telecommunications, technology, international trade, environment and energy.

Hunt has served on the Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee for Trade at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Board of Directors for the U.S. Committee for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. He is a graduate of Mississippi State University, where he was inducted into the University's Hall of Fame and received the College of Agriculture's Distinguished Service Award and was named the 2012 Alumni Fellow.

Judge Stephen Vaden serves as a judge on the United States Court of International Trade following his confirmation by the United States Senate on November 18, 2020, and appointment by President Donald J. Trump on December 21, 2020.

Before joining the court, Judge Vaden served as General Counsel of the United States Department of Agriculture. Judge Vaden supervised more than 250 legal professionals in thirteen offices across the United States who handled all legal matters on behalf of a Department with more than 100,000 employees and an annual budget approaching \$150 billion. During his nearly four-year tenure as head of the Office of General Counsel, the Department won two cases before the United States Supreme Court, relocated and reorganized the agencies that comprise the Department to better serve rural America, engaged in substantial regulatory reform, developed new regulations to allow for the legal sale of hemp and the labeling of bioengineered products, and implemented the 2018 Farm Bill. The Department averaged more than 5,000 matters in litigation before federal legal and administrative tribunals at any one time.

Judge Vaden also served as a Member of the Board of the Commodity Credit Corporation, a government corporation devoted to helping American agricultural producers. During his tenure from 2017-2020, the Board developed programs to assist American producers affected by foreign trade barriers.

In the private sector, Judge Vaden worked for two law firms – Jones Day and Patton Boggs. At both, Judge Vaden served as an appellate litigator and as part of the firms' political law practices. In this role, he counseled political candidates, donors, and others involved in the political process on compliance with the litany of federal and state laws that govern seeking and holding elective office.