



*The Court of Appeals
of the
State of Georgia
Atlanta, Georgia 30334*

JUDGE KEITH R. BLACKWELL

(404) 656-3451
blackwellk@gaappeals.us

July 19, 2012

The Honorable Nathan Deal
Governor of Georgia
The State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Governor:

Pursuant to OCGA § 45-5-1 *et seq.*, I hereby tender my resignation from the office of Judge of the Court of Appeals, effective upon my appointment to the office of Justice of the Supreme Court. It has been an honor and pleasure to serve the citizens of Georgia on the Court of Appeals, and I look forward to continuing my service on the Supreme Court.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Keith R. Blackwell".

Keith R. Blackwell

Cc: The Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals
The Clerk of the Court of Appeals



STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ATLANTA 30334-0900

Nathan Deal
GOVERNOR

July 19, 2012

The Honorable Keith R. Blackwell
State Judicial Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Judge Blackwell:

Thank you for the service you have rendered as Judge of the Court of Appeals of the State of Georgia. I appreciate you apprising me of your resignation, effective today, July 19, 2012, upon your swearing-in as Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia.

Your resignation is hereby accepted, and I wish you all the best for your service with the Supreme Court and all your future endeavors. Once again, thank you for your dedicated service to the State of Georgia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nathan Deal".

Nathan Deal

ND:rg

cc: The Honorable John J. Ellington, Chief Judge, Court of Appeals of Georgia
Ms. Holly K.O. Sparrow, Clerk/Court Administrator, Court of Appeals of Georgia



STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ATLANTA 30334-0900

Nathan Deal
GOVERNOR

July 19, 2012

The Honorable Keith R. Blackwell
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nathan Deal".

Nathan Deal

ND:rg

cc: The Honorable John J. Ellington, Chief Judge, Court of Appeals of Georgia
✓ Ms. Holly K.O. Sparrow, Clerk/Court Administrator, Court of Appeals of Georgia



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Very truly yours,

Keith R. Blackwell
Keith R. Blackwell

Cc: The Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals
The Clerk of the Court of Appeals



STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ATLANTA 30334-0900

You are Cordially Invited

to a

Swearing-in Ceremony

Thursday, July 19, 2012

9:30 a.m.

House Chamber

State Capitol

Governor Nathan Deal

will swear in:

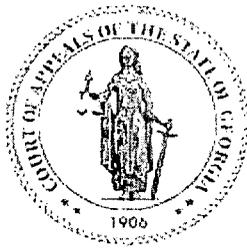
The Honorable Keith R. Blackwell

as

Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia

PLEASE NOTE:

Reserved seating for the Honorable Members of the Georgia Court of Appeals will be available on the second row of the right side of the House Chambers



Court of Appeals

Memorandum

To: Holly
From: Lola 
Subject: Info on New Judges
Date: October 22, 2010

^{A.}
Stephen Louis Dillard's Info

Phone:

478-742-4280

Email:

sdillard@jbpslaw.com

Address:

James Bates Pope & Spivey, LLP
231 Riverside Drive • Suite 100
Macon, Georgia 31201

³
Keith Robert Blackwell's Info

Phone:

404-420-1147

Email:

krb@phrd.com

Address:

Parker Hudson Rainer & Dobbs, LLP
1500 Marquis Two Tower
285 Peachtree Center Avenue, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303



COPY

Court of Appeals

Memorandum

To: All Judges
From: Holly K. O. Sparrow *HS*
Subject: Assignment of Judge Numbers
Date: October 28, 2010

Chief Judge Miller asked me to let you know that she received word from the Governor's Office that Keith Blackwell will be appointed to Judge Blackburn's seat and Stephen Dillard will be appointed to the seat of the late Debra Bernes. Both judges will be members of the 2010 Third Division. For the 2011 panels, Judge Dillard will be assigned to the First Division and Judge Blackwell will be assigned to the Second Division.

Judge Keith R. Blackwell was appointed as a judge of the Court of Appeals by Governor Sonny Perdue on November 1, 2010. Judge Blackwell is a native of Cherokee County and now lives in Cobb County with his wife Angela and their three daughters.

After graduating from Cherokee High School in Canton, Judge Blackwell was awarded a University of Georgia Foundation Fellowship. He attended the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Georgia, where he was enrolled in the Honors Program and was elected to *Phi Beta Kappa*. He graduated *summa cum laude* from the College of Arts and Sciences in 1996 with a degree in political science and as a First Honor Graduate. Judge Blackwell then attended the School of Law at the University of Georgia, where he served as the Senior Editor of the *Georgia Law Review* and was elected to the Order of the Coif. He graduated *summa cum laude* from the School of Law in 1999, again as First Honor Graduate.

Following his graduation from law school, Judge Blackwell served as a law clerk to Judge J.L. Edmondson of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. Judge Blackwell then practiced law as an associate at Alston & Bird LLP, where he represented clients in criminal and regulatory investigations and in the defense of consumer class actions and other complex commercial litigation. Beginning in early 2003, Judge Blackwell served for several years as an Assistant District Attorney in Cobb County, where he represented the State of Georgia in several hundred felony prosecutions, including prosecutions for murder, kidnapping, armed robbery, carjacking, drug trafficking and financial crimes. In late 2005, Judge Blackwell joined Parker, Hudson, Rainer & Dobbs LLP in Atlanta as an associate, and three years later, he was elected as a partner in the firm. At Parker, Hudson, Judge Blackwell focused his practice on complex commercial litigation, including in contract, real estate, insurance, and business-tort cases. His practice also included the representation of crime victims in connection with criminal investigations and prosecutions and counseling businesses and nonprofit organizations with respect to trade secrets, computer crimes, the privacy of nonpublic personal information, and other data security issues. In 2010, Judge Blackwell was appointed as a Special Deputy Attorney General to represent the State of Georgia in litigation challenging the constitutionality of federal healthcare reform legislation. In 2007, 2009 and 2010, Judge Blackwell was honored as a *Georgia Super Lawyers Rising Star*.

Judge Blackwell has been active in a number of professional and legal policy organizations. He is a member of the Board of Advisors of the Atlanta Lawyers Chapter of the Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies, and he previously served for three years as the Chapter President and for eight years as a

member of its Executive Board. Judge Blackwell also is a member of the State Bar of Georgia and its Appellate Practice Section, where he has served on the State Practice and Legislation Committee. Judge Blackwell also is a member of the Atlanta Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. In addition, he previously has served as an advisor to the House Judiciary Committee on the revision of the state evidence code and as a member of the Governor's Judicial Nominating Commission.



THE STATE OF GEORGIA

EXECUTIVE ORDER

BY THE GOVERNOR:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

That, effective November 1, 2010, the Honorable Keith Robert Blackwell is hereby appointed Judge, Court of Appeals of Georgia, to fill the vacancy created with the resignation of the Honorable G. Alan Blackburn.

THIS 1ST DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2010.

Sonny Perdue
GOVERNOR



Court of Appeals

Memorandum

To: Holly
From: Lola 
Subject: Info on New Judges
Date: October 22, 2010

Stephen Louis Dillard's Info

Phone: 478-742-4280
Email: sdillard@jbpslaw.com
Address: James Bates Pope & Spivey, LLP
231 Riverside Drive • Suite 100
Macon, Georgia 31201

Keith Robert Blackwell's Info

Phone: 404-420-1147
Email: krb@phrd.com
Address: Parker Hudson Rainer & Dobbs, LLP
1500 Marquis Two Tower
285 Peachtree Center Avenue, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303



STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ATLANTA 30334-0900

You are Cordially Invited
to a
Swearing-in Ceremony
on
Tuesday, November 2, 2010
at
10:00 a.m.

House Chambers
State Capitol

Governor Sonny Perdue
will swear in:

The Honorable Keith Robert Blackwell

and

The Honorable Stephen Louis A. Dillard

to the

Court of Appeals of Georgia

PLEASE NOTE:

Reserved seating for the Honorable Members of the Court of Appeals of Georgia will be available on the second row of the right side of the House Chambers



THE FIRM
PRACTICE GROUPS
ATTORNEYS
RECRUITING
DIVERSITY
NEWSROOM
CONTACT
HOME



Keith R. Blackwell
Partner | Atlanta Office
kblackwell@phrd.com

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F: (678) 533-7727

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Business Torts and Unfair
Competition

Commercial and Contract
Disputes

Regulatory and Internal
Corporate Investigations

White Collar Criminal Defense

Education

University of Georgia - (B.A.,
summa cum laude, 1996)

University of Georgia School of
Law - (J.D., summa cum laude,
1999) Georgia Law Review,
Senior Editor

Admitted to Practice

Georgia

About Keith

Keith's practice focuses on complex business litigation, government and internal investigations, and data security. An experienced trial lawyer and appellate practitioner, Keith has represented financial institutions, health care providers, manufacturers, telecommunications providers, and other businesses in complex civil litigation, arbitration, and appeals in Georgia and elsewhere. He has represented clients in civil litigation and arbitration involving, among other things, contract, warranty, real property and mortgage and title insurance disputes and claims of fraud and other economic torts, unfair and deceptive trade practices, unfair lending practices, consumer fraud, unfair competition, RICO violations, investment fraud, defamation, and the misappropriation of trade secrets. In addition, Keith has litigated consumer class actions and product liability and mass tort lawsuits. Keith also has represented clients in appellate proceedings in numerous federal and state courts, including the Georgia Court of Appeals, the Georgia Supreme Court, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

Keith, a former prosecutor, also has represented both businesses and individuals in connection with federal and state criminal investigations and prosecutions, including matters in which his client is the victim of a crime. He has represented, among other clients, financial institutions victimized by mortgage fraud, employers victimized by employee theft, and victims of identity fraud. In these matters, Keith has conducted internal investigations to assess the nature and extent of the loss, advised clients about regulatory compliance and loss prevention procedures, coordinated client cooperation with federal and state law enforcement agencies and prosecutors, and represented clients in related insurance coverage disputes and parallel civil litigation. Keith also has assisted clients in responding to investigative subpoenas and has prepared client representatives to testify in criminal trials.

In addition, Keith has counseled clients about issues relating to the security of confidential and sensitive data, including computer crimes, economic espionage, the misappropriation of trade secrets and other valuable and confidential business information, identity fraud, and the privacy of consumer and employee information. Keith has conducted internal investigations for clients following incidents in which their data networks have been compromised, counseled clients on compliance with federal and state privacy laws, advised clients on potential remedies for the loss of proprietary information, and represented clients in civil litigation and government investigations involving computer crimes and trade secrets.

Before joining the firm, Keith served as an assistant district attorney in Cobb County, Georgia and as a law clerk on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit for Judge J.L. Edmondson.

Professional and Civic Involvement

The Federalist Society, Atlanta Lawyers' Chapter, member of Executive Board and past president
Georgia Judicial Nominating Commission
Republican National Lawyers Association

[more](#)

Honors

Selected as a Georgia Super Lawyers Rising Star by Law & Politics and Atlanta Magazine (2007 - present)

Representative Engagements

Counseled various clients, including health care providers, manufacturers, and internet retailers, on compliance with federal and state privacy laws following breaches of security involving personal information of employees and consumers

Advised numerous clients on compliance with federal and state computer crime laws

Ongoing representation of international heavy equipment manufacturer in civil litigation involving allegations of computer crimes and misappropriation of trade secrets by former employees and competitor

[more](#)

School of Law, where he was First Honor Graduate, and received his bachelor of arts summa cum laude from the University of Georgia. Among his many community activities and awards, Keith is the former president of the Atlanta chapter of the Federalist Society and a current member of its executive board, a member of the Governor's Judicial Nominating Commission, and has been recognized as a Georgia Super Lawyers "Rising Star". Keith, his wife Angela, and their three children, live in Smyrna.

Stephen Louis A. Dillard - Steve Dillard is of counsel and chair of the appellate practice group of James Bates Pope Spivey LLP in Macon. Previously, Steve practiced at Stone & Baxter LLP. Steve clerked for the Hon. Daniel A. Manion of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. Steve received his law degree cum laude from Mississippi College of Law and received his bachelor of arts from Samford University. Among his many community activities and awards, Steve is the president of the Macon chapter of the Federalist Society, a member of the Governor's Judicial Nominating Commission, and has been recognized as a Georgia Super Lawyers "Rising Star". Steve, his wife Krista, and their three children, live in Macon.

###

Any tax information or written tax advice contained herein (including any attachments) is not intended to be and cannot be used by any taxpayer for the purpose of avoiding tax penalties that may be imposed on the taxpayer. (The foregoing legend has been affixed pursuant to U.S. Treasury Regulations governing tax practice.)

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James Bates Pope & Spivey

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- [of counsel](#)
- [G. Bryant Culpepper](#)
- [Stephen Louis A. Dillard](#)
- [David J. Grindle](#)
- [Jeffrey M. Rutledge](#)
- [John B. 'Burt' Wilkerson, Jr.](#)

- [associates](#)
- [Scott Eric Anderson](#)
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Court of Appeals

DRAFT Memorandum

To: Judge Keith Blackwell and Judge Stephen Dillard

From: Holly Sparrow

Subject: New Judges and Potential Staff Members

Date: October 22, 2010

Chief Judge Miller asked me to prepare this memorandum to assist you as you begin to make hiring decisions for your staff. The memorandum shows a list of the employees whom you might be interested to hire and it also shows their status. The list you received yesterday was not complete or accurate and you may want to discard it.

Staff Attorneys

There are four staff attorneys formerly employed by the late Judge Debra Bernes or Judge G. Alan Blackburn whose jobs will be terminated unless hired by one of the new judges: Dirk Christensen; Ida Dorvee; Robert Elzey, and Tiffani Moody.

There are also a number of staff attorneys who may want to apply for a position on your staff. First, there are the staff attorneys employed by Judge Edward H. Johnson who will be terminated unless hired by the year's end when Judge Johnson retires. They are: Mark Cloud, John Earles, and Lorre Gaudiosi. The current central staff attorneys and floating central staff attorneys may also be interested in an in-chamber's staff attorney position with you. These include: Rachel Derrico, Amy Doyle, Kathryn Mattuch, Jule Felton, and Sara O'Dea.

Administrative Assistants

Terry Miller, the former AA to the late Judge Bernes, will be terminated unless hired by one of the new judges. We have two floating administrative assistants, Tracey Parker and Crystal Willis, who may also apply for a position in-chambers with one of you.

I hope this information will be useful to you as you begin hiring your office staff.

From: "Keith R. Blackwell" <krb@phrd.com>
To: "Holly Sparrow" <SPARROWH@appeals.courts.state.ga.us>, "sdillard@jbpsl...
CC: Yvette Miller <millery@appeals.courts.state.ga.us>
Date: 10/22/2010 3:44 PM
Subject: RE: Correction of Memorandum on Available COA Staff

I will generally be available next week, and you certainly can call me at either my office (404-420-1147) or on my cell phone (404-312-5527).

Keith

From: Holly Sparrow [mailto:SPARROWH@appeals.courts.state.ga.us]
Sent: Friday, October 22, 2010 2:33 PM
To: sdillard@jbpslaw.com; Keith R. Blackwell
Cc: Yvette Miller
Subject: Correction of Memorandum on Available COA Staff

Dear Judge Blackwell and Judge Dillard:

Good afternoon. I am sending the attached memorandum to you at Chief Judge Miller's request.

Also, it would be helpful if you could send me a photograph of you (head and shoulders shot) and a short biography that we could place on the Court's website on the day that you are sworn in to office. There will be an announcement which will state the Division to which you are assigned. In addition, we will update the web page that shows current judges and contains short biographies. You can review the current judges biographies as an example of what we would like to have. You can review our website at: www.gaappeals.us<<http://www.gaappeals.us>> .

May I contact you at your office telephone number next week. I would like to discuss with you the deadline the Court has for court actions and the upcoming end of the term in December. I believe it might be helpful to discuss this as soon as possible.

Holly Sparrow
Clerk/Court Administrator
Court of Appeals of Georgia
404-651-8498



*The Court of Appeals
of the
State of Georgia
Atlanta, Georgia 30334*

JUDGE KEITH R. BLACKWELL

(404) 656-3451
blackwellk@gaappeals.us

July 19, 2012

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The State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia

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Keith R. Blackwell

Cc: The Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals
The Clerk of the Court of Appeals