

DON KNAPP

McLean County State's Attorney



LAW & JUSTICE CENTER

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May 12, 2021

To the Young Lawyer Award Review Committee,

I understand this nomination is tardy, but I hope you indulge me and consider Bradley Rigdon for this year's Outstanding Young Lawyer.

At age 34, Brad is well on his way to becoming not just the most successful prosecutor in the history of the McLean County Bar Association but one of the most accomplished trial attorneys to ever grace these halls. As First Assistant State's Attorney for the Criminal Division, Brad has either personally tried or at a minimum supervised trial teams on a growing number of high profile and complex cases.

I have enclosed a spreadsheet put together from the best data that the County's Information Technology department could compile. As you will see, Brad has not only personally tried numerous homicide cases recently but helped lead a team that took 10 murder cases to trial in a 21 month period in McLean County. That is simply unheard of in our County's history and even more impressive considering the dictates of COVID on the trial process starting in 2020.

While the Bar Association may not see it, I know the judiciary and many who work in the courthouse every day experience the advantages of the counsel Brad has provided to not just courthouse personnel but the County enterprise as a whole as policy after policy are adjusted to deal with the realities of COVID and its effect on court operations.

Brad is instrumental in the County's efforts not just to enact criminal e-filing but in building the new Circuit Court's case management system that impacts each and every litigator who practice in McLean County. Without his guidance, input and professionalism the project would undoubtedly suffer terribly.

It is for these reasons and others that are too numerous to list that I submit Brad Rigdon's name and credentials for the Young Lawyer of the Year award.

Regards,

Donald W. Knapp Jr.

Case Number	Defendant	Type	Counsel	Outcome	Date of Trial
1996cf856	Thompson, William	JT		G but Mentally Ill	3/12/1998
1998cf790	Drew, Eric	JT		G	2/12/1999
1998cf633	McNeil, Barton	BT		G	7/2/1999
2001cf90	Griffin, Lona	JT	Griffin/Brucker	G	6/21/2001
2000cf1349	Smith, Calvin	JT	Griffin	G	9/28/2001
2000cf1350	Goodman, Robert	Stip BT	Griffin	NG on M - G on Arm Rob	11/5/2001
2001cf595	Evans, Charles	JT	Wong/Thompson	G	8/22/2002
2002cf545	Campbell, Mark	BT	Wong/Thompson	G	4/11/2003
2002cf1512	Harris, Azeilis	JT	Best/Clifton	NG	12/8/2003
2004cf1005	Rasool, Tauheeday	JT	Messman/Foster	G	11/8/2005
2004cf840	Merriweather, Byron	JT	Campbell/Foster/Thompson	G	2/15/2006
2005cf185	Heard, Dante	JT	Workman/Thompson	NG on M - G on Inv. Man	6/6/2006
2005cf166	Palma, Sheila	JT	Patton/Brooks	G	9/14/2006
2008cf181	Brown, Michael	JT	Workman/Eves	G	4/17/2009
2008cf1381	Gunn, Kendall	JT	Workman/Ghrist	G	1/18/2010
2007cf416	Mendez, Joe	JT	Patton/Barajas	G	5/19/2010
2009cf756	McCaughey, Liam	BT	Foster/McCoskey	G but Mentally Ill	7/27/2010
2010cf763	Owens, Diyez	BT	Horve/Harlow	G	2/25/2011
2010cf1117	Boswell, David	JT	Foster/Yoder	G	8/18/2011
2011cf800	Nowlin, Misook	JT	Workman/Sandborn/Shim	G	12/18/2012
2011cf369	Gharrett, David	BT	Workman/Lee	G	5/22/2013
2013cf136	Carroll, Larron	JT	Shim/Rigdon	NG on M - G on Inv. Man	10/10/2014
2013cf629	Mays, Michael	JT	Eves/Harlow	G	11/21/2014
2013cf418	Compton, Nicholas	JT	Ghrist/Harms	G	1/16/2015
2014cf1391	Newson, Tracy	JT	Ghrist/Rigdon	G	1/15/2016
2016cf845	Petersen, Brian	Stip BT	Rigdon	NGRI	2/27/2017
2015cf894	Zimmerman, Kirk	JT	Ridgon/Koll/Fredrick	NG	5/6/2019
2019cf416	Baker, Cynthia	JT	Reynolds/Koll	G	11/19/2019
2017cf589	Brestan, Kyle	JT	Ridgon/Fredrick	G	12/18/2019
2018cf735	Jackson, Leila	JT	Shim/Wagoner	G	6/11/2020
2018cf426	Harrison, Christopher	JT	Horve/Fitt	G	6/15/2020
2019cf607	Allen, Scott	JT	Ridgon/Fredrick	G	6/19/2020
2019cf15	Grampas, Anthony	JT	Wagoner/Lawson	G	7/23/2020
2019cf14	Bruce, Tyjuan	JT	Wagoner/Lawson	G	8/18/2020
2018cf734	Mays, Sydney	BT	Reynolds/Rigdon/Young	G	2/3/2021
2018cf652	Brown, Hammett	BT	Koll/Lawson	G	2/22/2021
2019cf600	Thornton, Jordyn	Pending			---
2019cf606	McNabb, Amari	Pending			---

supervisory responsibility over approximately 20 attorneys.

3. Individual achievements in the practice of law

Brad has authored articles published in the Journal of Legal Medicine (Bradly Rigdon, Pharmacists on the Front Lines in the Fight Against Meth: A 50-State Comparison of the Laws Regulating the Retail Sale of Pseudoephedrine. Journal of Legal Medicine, June 13, 2012, Vol. 33, Iss. 2). With dozens of jury trials under his belt, and even more bench trials, Brad has tried cases involving everything from traffic offenses to first degree murder. He is lead counsel in the area's highest profile cases including the People of the State of Illinois vs. Kirk Zimmerman as well as the cases involving the Central Illinois Arena Management defendants. The character limit of this form simply does not allow me to list the number of achievements that Brad has had in individual cases for those in the community that are victims of the worst crimes imaginable.

4. Service to the MCBA - community - pro bono service

Brad serves on the courts Forms Committee and has developed a number of forms used daily throughout the courthouse which is a great service to those in the Bar practicing in the criminal courts. Moreover, Brad has conducted numerous instructional seminars on everything from overhears to courtroom technology to basis for search warrants which are routinely attended by more than 20 members of the McLean County Bar Association each time he conducts such training. Brad is a member of the Normal Kiwanis Club and has provided many hours of charitable work through that service organization. Furthermore, Brad belongs to the McLean County FISA (Financial Institution Security Association) through which he and others in the industry coordinate efforts to ensure the security of assets of the community which are so vital to any thriving infrastructure and economy. Not only does Brad's participation in FISA allow him to learn of efforts beyond those of the State's Attorney's Office and law enforcement to keep the community's assets safe, but it allows him to share information and techniques to private entities within the field who serve as gatekeepers for their employers. This organization's value to the community, and Brad's role therein, simply cannot be understated. Brad also serves as a coach for Illinois State University's Mock Trial team, teaching many of the community's best and brightest young students about not just the practice of law but imparting on them real world communication skills that will serve them well regardless of whether they become lawyers.

Submitted Information:

Nominee's Name

Bradly Rigdon

Nominee's phone #

3098885400

Nominee's Date of Birth

November of 1986

Nominee's Email

bradly.rigdon@mcleancountyil.gov

Nominee's Law Firm, Company/Organization and Address

McLean County State's Attorney's Office
104 W. Front Street
Bloomington, IL 61702

1. Statement in Support of Nomination

Please consider this my statement in support of conferring the Young Lawyer of the Year Award on Bradly Rigdon. I cannot advocate strongly enough for you to give serious consideration for Mr. Rigdon when deciding upon which young lawyer to confer this honor. At the age of 34, Brad has not just become a leader in our State's Attorney's Office but a leader in the entire Law & Justice Center. Sought out for his advice from young and more senior lawyers alike, the single best phrase that was ever imparted to me by a member of the judiciary to describe Brad is that he is a "unique talent." That is undoubtedly accurate. Being unfamiliar with every nominee, I suspect that Brad is one of the few lawyers in town that supervises approximately 20 attorneys—some of which are literally either twice his age or almost twice his age. These lawyers, albeit with temporal experience that easily doubles Brads, routinely turn to him for guidance and fellowship on both professional and personal matters. Brad truly is a unique talent, not just professionally but personally.

2. Employment History - written or upload resume

After graduating third in his class from Southern Illinois University's School of Law a semester early and Summa Cum Laude from Western Illinois University, Brad obtained his law license in May of 2012 and began working at the McLean County State's Attorney's Office. He has spent his entire legal career serving the citizens of McLean County. Brad earned promotions from being hired as an ASA 1 to ASA 2 in September of 2013; to an ASA 3 in November of 2014; to an ASA 4 in July of 2017; to First Assistant State's Attorney/ASA 5 in June of 2018. As the First Assistant State's Attorney, Brad not only has significant duties regarding the managing of his case load but also

Bradly A. Rigdon

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Bar Admission

Illinois- Active Illinois Law License, ARDC #6308105

Professional Experience

Office of the McLean County State's Attorney- First Assistant State's Attorney- Bloomington, Illinois, July 2012- Present

- Assigned to the position of First Assistant State's Attorney from June 2018 – present
- Assigned to General Felony division from December 2014 – June 2018
- Assigned to Felony Drug Unit from October 2013 - December 2014
- Assigned to Traffic and DUI division from July 2012 - October 2013
- Supervisor of the Criminal Division, which includes more than 10 attorneys
- Responsible for coordinating and conducting weekly grand jury proceedings in connection with all McLean County felony cases
- Prosecuted more than 20 cases in Jury Trial settings, including five first degree murder cases, and more than 75 cases in Bench Trial and contested Motion settings
- Participated during the investigative and criminal prosecution phase on multiple homicides
- Responsible for consulting with and advising law enforcement personnel during active investigations, drafting in excess of 100 search warrants and overhears, and reviewing reports to determine appropriate charges
- Courtroom practice and responsibilities include: discovery, plea negotiations, contested motions, pleas, jury and bench trials, sentencing, and post-conviction proceedings
- Position requires research into a multitude of legal issues which arise during the various phases of the criminal justice process and the drafting of pleadings and response motions
- Responsible for Article 36 Asset Forfeiture which requires utilization of the Code of Civil Procedure from December 2014-May 2016
- Responsible for overseeing the administration of the Deferred Prosecution Program from December 2014-May 2016
- Developed and assisted in the implementation of multiple policies and procedures within the office and also designed multiple forms used by attorneys in multiple positions within the office

Major Case Experience

2017-CF-589: People v. Kyle Brestan

- First degree murder case
- Conducted jury trial to verdict (guilty)
- Lead Prosecutor

2015-CF-894: People v. Kirk Zimmerman

- First degree murder case involving extensive investigation and years of pretrial litigation
- Conducted 5 + week jury trial to verdict (not guilty)
- Lead Prosecutor

2017-CF-0483: People v. Reginald Cooper

- Organizer of a Continuing Financial Crimes Enterprise
- Resulted in guilty verdict at jury trial
- First known conviction for this offense in McLean County
- Lead Prosecutor

2016-CF-0845: People v. Brian Petersen

- First Degree Murder (two victims)
- Resulted in a verdict of Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity at a stipulated bench trial
- Lead Prosecutor

2015-CF-1011: People v. Keith Offord

- Money Laundering and Identity Theft Ring
- Resulted in the seizure of 4 vehicles, identity theft equipment, and more than \$5,000 in proceeds of money laundering activity
- Resulted in the case being charged Federally
- Lead Prosecutor

2015-CF-0917: People v. Elizabeth Potts

- Involuntary Manslaughter of an Infant
- Resulted in a guilty verdict at bench trial
- Second chair

2014-CF-0931: People v. Tracy Newson

- First Degree Murder with a Firearm
- Resulted in a guilty verdict at jury trial
- Second chair

2014-CF-0364: People v. Jamie Webb

- Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol Involving a Fatality
- Resulted in a guilty plea
- Maximum sentence was imposed at a half-day sentencing hearing
- Lead Prosecutor

2013-CF-0136: People v. Larron Carroll

- First Degree Murder with a Firearm and lesser charges
- Resulted in a guilty verdict of Involuntary Manslaughter
- Second chair

Southern Illinois University Civil Practice Clinic- Student Attorney- Carbondale, Illinois

August 2011- December 2011

- Performed legal services and duties on behalf of elder law clients including drafting of wills, powers of attorney, and quitclaim deeds
- Obtained Illinois Student Practice License (Ill. Sup. Ct. Rule 711).
- Researched, analyzed, and drafted divorce settlements and petitions for indigent clients
- Conducted client interviews in preparation for court appearances as well as for transactional services

Publication

Bradly A. Rigdon, *Pharmacists on the Front Lines in the Fight Against Meth*, 33 J. LEGAL MED. 253 (2012).

- Conducted a 50-state and federal comparison of the laws regulating the retail sale of pseudoephedrine and compared the varying levels of regulation against reported meth incidents within each state.

Professional Training Attended

Basic Trial Advocacy, May 2013

- Week-long course focusing on trial techniques and training for prosecutors
- Provided by the Illinois State Appellate Prosecutor's Office

Asset Forfeiture Analysis, April 2014

- Half-day course focusing on proper procedure and techniques in asset forfeiture
- Provided by the State of Illinois

Advanced Trial Advocacy, October 2014

- Week-long course focusing on more complex trial techniques and strategies for prosecutors
- Provided by the Illinois State Appellate Prosecutor's Office

The Digital Prosecutor, September 2015

- Week-long course which focuses on the use of technology during all facets of a criminal prosecution and provides training and guidance on how to more effectively present information in court
- Included training on cell phone and computer forensics and CDRs
- Provided by the National District Attorney's Association

Courtroom Visuals, February 2017

- 3-day training focusing on the use of PowerPoint and other software for use during trial presentation of evidence and argument
- Provided by the Illinois State Appellate Prosecutor's Office

Cellular Records Analysis and Mapping

- Cellular Carrier-specific training on interpreting, utilizing, and mapping cellular records
 - 7 hours of training
- Provided by PATCTech

Formal Training and Presentations Conducted

Basics of Financial Crimes, September 2016

- 1-hour presentation for FISA
- Provided representatives from local banks and overview on the different types of financial crimes and the evidence used to prosecute those crimes
- Provided instruction on the value of business records affidavits

Courtroom Technology Training, October 2016

- 3-hour training presented to McLean County Assistant State's Attorneys
- Provided basic instruction on the use of PowerPoint for the presentation of evidence and during argument
- Provided an overview and explanation of the various pieces of equipment available to use during a trial setting for enhanced visual presentation

Drafting, Executing, and Interpreting Cellular Phone Search Warrants and CDRs

- 3-hours training presented to investigators from local agencies and Assistant State's Attorneys from multiple counties.
- Provided in-depth instruction on proper form and legal requirements for search warrants and CDRs
- Assisted by Bloomington Police Department to demonstrate the process of searching a cellular telephone and interpreting results from the search and results from CDRs.
- Approved for 2.75 hours of CLE.

Education

Juris Doctor • Graduation: December 2011

Southern Illinois University School of Law- Carbondale, Illinois

- Class Rank: 3 of 115 (*Summa Cum Laude*)
- Southern Illinois University School of Law Dean's List (all grading periods)
- CALI Excellence for the Future Awards received for attaining the top score in individual courses: Criminal Procedure: Pre-Trial, Constitutional Law, Evidence, International Criminal Law, Torts, Family Law, Insurance Law
- Southern Illinois University School of Law Dean's Scholarship Recipient
- Served as a Member of the Advisory Committee to the Director of Public Safety

Bachelor of Science in Law Enforcement and Justice Administration • Graduation: May 2009

Western Illinois University- Macomb, Illinois

- *Summa Cum Laude*
- Minors: 1) Computer Sciences, 2) Spanish
- Western Illinois University Dean's List (all grading periods)
- School of Law Enforcement and Justice Administration Honors (all grading periods)
- Member of Western Illinois University Centennial Honors College

Organizations

McLean County Bar Association

FISA (Financial Institution Security Association)