



Minnesota Association for  
Guardianship & Conservatorship

Shaping the Profession, Supporting People

## **2025 State Conference Speakers**

### **Laura Bendson, Supervisor of the Conservator Account Auditing Program (CAAP)**

*(Conservator & Guardian Audit Review and Updates)*

Laura has been a part of CAAP since 2012. In her role, she oversees the CAAP Auditors and the Conservator Helpline, while also collaborating closely with the CARP and GCCP teams. Laura has been instrumental in developing audit procedures for both CAAP and CARP and continues to contribute to enhancements of the MyMNConservator (MMC) application. Before joining CAAP, she held a variety of auditing and accounting positions in the private sector. Laura earned a B.A. in Finance from the University of St. Thomas, an MBA from Metropolitan State University, and is a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE).

### **Ryan Boosinger, Lutheran Social Service**

*(It's Not All or Nothing: Supported Decision Making (SDM) and Guardianship)*

Ryan is a dedicated human services professional and doctoral candidate with over two decades of experience advancing programs that support health equity and person-centered care. With a strong foundation in both public and private sectors, Ryan has led initiatives that improve outcomes for vulnerable populations through thoughtful project design, stakeholder collaboration, and data-informed solutions. Ryan holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and a Master of Arts from St. Mary's University of Minnesota. Known for "leaning in," empathetic leadership, and systems-level thinking, Ryan continues to advocate for inclusive service delivery models that promote dignity, autonomy, and well-being for all.

### **Kathleen Carlson, LSW SHE/HER, Volunteers of America**

*(It's Not All or Nothing: Supported Decision Making (SDM) and Guardianship)*

Kathleen is a licensed social worker and has been practicing since 2008 when she started her career in long term care. Kathleen delved into the world of guardianship and supported decision making when she joined the Center for Excellence in Supported Decision Making in 2016, where she holds the position of lead social worker on in-person assessments. In her role Kathleen facilitates exploration of decision-making options with people across the age spectrum experiencing varying levels of incapacity.

**Nate Danielson, Sr. Director, Lutheran Social Service of MN (Guardianship/Pooled Trust)**

*(Law & Order: Policy Unit/ Legislative Review)*

Nate joined LSS of MN in 2020. He spent previous 15yr at the YMCA of the North, working with all ages and abilities. Nate has served on numerous community boards in MN, he is a proud member of National Plan Alliance, Inc (NPA), Association of Pooled Trust (APT), WING of MN, and National Guardianship Association (NGA). He also currently serves as the Chair of the Legislative Committee for MAGiC. He is a recent graduate of Cannon Financial School in preparations for the Certified Trust Financial Advisor. He is a 2007 Graduate from Minnesota State University of Mankato.

**Kayla Dube, Senior Attorney, Legal Counsel Division, MN State Court Administrator's Office**

*(Conservator & Guardian Audit Review and Updates)*

Kayla focuses on probate, guardianship, and conservatorship matters, providing legal support to the Minnesota Judicial Branch on case processing, policy development, and statewide initiatives. Before joining the Judicial Branch, Kayla practiced in estate planning and probate, gaining hands-on experience with the issues guardians and conservators face. She now uses her internal knowledge of court systems, rules, and procedures to help ensure that policy and practice work together to improve efficiency, consistency, and fairness in court proceedings.

**Sue Eggert, Court Operations Supervisor, Dakota County**

*(Behind the Scenes: Court Administration Panel)*

Sue has over 30 years of experience working with Guardianship and Conservatorship matters within the judicial system. She oversees the daily operations and mentors staff across the district. Known for her expertise in complex case processing and procedural improvements, Sue is a trusted resource at both the district and state levels.

**Bianca Emmons, CarePartner Social Worker, MSW, LGSW, Volunteers of America**

*(Cultural Competency)*

Bianca Emmons is the Caregiver Social Worker with Volunteers of America, Culturally Responsive Caregiver Support and Dementia Services. She received her undergraduate degree in social work from Augsburg College and a master's degree in social work from the University of St. Thomas. As a caregiver social worker, her objective is to provide support to caregivers while they navigate their caregiving journey as they care for their loved one who has Alzheimer's/ dementia. In her role as a caregiver social worker Bianca assists caregivers with problem solving and decision making. She provides caregiver consultation, community resource navigation, respite training, and facilitates caregiver support groups where they discuss experiences and common concerns while caregivers can develop a mutual support system through the group. Through this work she has realized the necessity of educating the community about dementia and spreading awareness about prevention.

**Tuesday Glover, Program Director, Culturally Responsive Caregiver Support & Dementia Services, Volunteers of America**  
*(Cultural Competency)*

Tuesday is the Program Director at the Culturally Responsive Caregiver Support and Dementia Services team at Volunteer of America Minnesota whose mission is to address and decrease health disparities and advocate for social justice. Her personal vision in this work is to decrease health disparities, provide equal access to quality healthcare, increase health literacy in communities of color, promote ways to be proactive for dementia risk factors and continue to provide caregiver support for families caring for loved ones with dementia. She advocates that culture matters in all systems.

**Sarah Gregerson, Lead Eligibility Specialist, Wright County**  
*(Navigating Medical Assistance)*

Sarah joined Wright County in September of 2020 as an Eligibility Specialist. She was promoted to Lead Eligibility Specialist in April 2024. Sarah is a detail-oriented perfectionist. She works through the most difficult cases and resolves issues, even when the case is not assigned to her. Sarah has worked with nearly all Financial Assistance programs, Family, Childcare, Long Term Care, and GRH to name a few. Sarah has a unique ability to review a case and identify what is in the best interest of the client. She then takes that best interest of the client and advocates for the best possible outcome. Sarah has a passion to serve her clients and community, and it shows in the work she does.

**Kristine Hamm, Lead Eligibility Specialist, Wright County**  
*(Navigating Medical Assistance)*

Kristine joined Wright County in March of 2011 as an Eligibility Specialist. She was promoted to Lead Eligibility Specialist in December 2022. Kristine has experience working with nearly all Financial Assistance programs, Adult, Family, Childcare, Long Term Care, and GRH to name a few. Her vast knowledge makes her the go-to-person for all questions. Kristine has a passion to provide clients with all possible resources and programs to enable clients to create their own best possible outcomes. She truly cares for her clients, and it shows in the work she does.

**Katie Hestness, Lutheran Social Service**  
*(When, How, and Why to Impose Restrictions)*

Katie brings over 10 years of experience serving as a guardian with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota. For the past six years, she has held a supervisory role, overseeing a team of guardians. Katie is a National Certified Guardian and has been serving as a board member of the Minnesota Association of Guardianship and Conservatorship (MAGiC) for the last five years.

**Deb Hubley, Court Operations Manager, Dakota County**  
*(Behind the Scenes: Court Administration Panel)*

Deb has over 30 years of experience working with Guardianship and Conservatorship matters within the judicial system. She has contributed to statewide and district initiatives focused on improving guardianship and conservatorship case processing. Deb also serves on statewide committees, with a focus on court operations that enhance procedure efficiency.

**Kimberly Johnson, Financial Services Manager, Wright County***(Navigating Medical Assistance)*

Kim joined Wright County as a Child Support Officer in August 2007. She was promoted to Child Support Supervisor in 2012 and promoted to Financial Services Manager March of 2014. Kim's Child Support background laid a solid foundation for learning and growing in the area of Financial Assistance. As a member of the Wright County Health and Human Services management team Kim embraces the county mission to Strengthen, Support and Serve our community and citizens. Kim's vision is to inspire staff to provide timely eligibility determinations along with support and resources that will lead to self-sufficiency.

**Judge Jonathan Judd, Otter Tail County***(A View from the Bench/ Judges Panel)*

Judge Judd was appointed to the bench in March 2021 by Governor Tim Walz. Judge Judd is currently chambered in Fergus Falls, Otter Tail County. Judge Judd attended the University of North Dakota School of Law and holds bachelor's degrees in political science and history from North Dakota State University. Before his judicial appointment, Judge Judd served in a wide range of legal and public service roles. He has served as the Mayor of the City of Moorhead, an Assistant County Attorney with the Clay County Attorney's Office, an Assistant Public Defender with the Minnesota Board of Public Defense, and worked in private practice. He also held positions with the Minnesota Department of Commerce and served as a law clerk to Judge Gerald J. Seibel in Morris, Minnesota. Additionally, Judd worked as Director of Multicultural Affairs at Concordia College and has worked as a contract attorney for child protection matters in several counties in northwest Minnesota. Deeply involved in the community, Judd has served as an adjunct instructor at Minnesota State University Moorhead and North Dakota State University and has participated in various commissions and committees within the City of Moorhead, as well as on several local non-profit boards. Outside of his work, he and his spouse are busy chasing after his three children and their various activities, and he also serves as a football referee.

**Jamie Majerus, Minnesota Judicial Branch Audit Manager***(Conservator & Guardian Audit Review and Updates)*

Jamie has worked for the Minnesota Judicial Branch since 2011. Jamie has over 18 years of state service as an auditor. In her role, Jamie oversees and manages the Internal Audit, the Conservator Account Auditing/Review Program divisions, and the Conservator/Guardian Complaint Program. The Internal Audit division is responsible for the examination and evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the organization's governance, risk management, policies and procedures and internal processes. The Conservator Account Auditing Program (CAAP) and Conservator Account Review Program (CARP) operate statewide to audit and review conservator accounts, to provide information and recommendations to the district courts and to conservators. The Complaint Program receives and investigates complaints regarding guardianship and conservatorship under court jurisdiction. Jamie also serves as the Co-Convener of WINGS-MN (Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders).

Jamie is a graduate of Winona State University, where she received her bachelor's degree in accounting. Jamie also holds the following professional licenses: Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) and Certified Internal Auditor (CIA).

### **Judge Tracy Perzel, First Judicial District**

*(A View from the Bench/ Judges Panel)*

Tracy Perzel has been a district court judge in the First Judicial District for more than six years. Dakota County judges are generalists and handle all types of cases. In addition to this varied rotation, Judge Perzel is assigned to a two-judge team to address all of Dakota County's guardianship, conservatorship and probate cases and also oversees a Dakota County drug court. Before joining Dakota County, Judge Perzel worked at the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota for more than 13 years. In this role, she served as the office's criminal division chief, senior litigation counsel, and an assistant United States Attorney. Judge Perzel also served as an assistant attorney general with the Minnesota Attorney General's Office and as an assistant county attorney with the Kandiyohi County Attorney's Office in Willmar, Minnesota, for more than four years. Judge Perzel was selected to preside over the election contest in Scott County in 2024 and, in her various prosecutorial positions, has led national criminal investigations and tried to juries numerous criminal cases involving large-scale fraud, violent crime, drug distribution and manufacture, and government corruption including a six-week multi-defendant investment fraud scheme.

### **Mary Frances Price, Attorney and Founding Member of Bravura Group P.C.**

*(Dementia & Firearms)*

Mary Frances has been licensed to practice law since 2005 and has counseled and advised hundreds of clients on their estate, tax, and elder care plans. She is the author of the chapter on Veterans Benefits for the Elder Law Handbook published by Minnesota Continuing Legal Education since 2012. Accordingly, her peers have recognized her as a leader in planning for veteran's benefits.

### **Glenda Ridley, G.S. Ridley LLC**

*(When, How, and Why to Impose Restrictions)*

Glenda Ridley is a dedicated Guardian, Conservator, and Court Visitor. Glenda Ridley began her work as a Guardian, Conservator, and Court Visitor in 2013, following an 18-year career in law enforcement. She is committed to helping others achieve their greatest independence and aims to elevate the guardianship profession through active involvement and mentorship. Glenda is a member-at-large on the MAGiC Board. Her passion for this field stems from a belief in her ability to be an effective guardian and a strong desire to assist individuals in living their most independent lives. Outside of her professional life, Glenda has been married to her husband, Russ, for 26 years and has a son and three stepchildren. She values time with family, friends, and her cat, Shadow. Her hobbies include camping, traveling, playing Pickleball, and bowling. One of her most memorable experiences was a six-week adventure in New Zealand and Australia, highlighted by snorkeling in the Great Barrier Reef. Glenda's core focus is on providing service to others, making their journeys a little easier. She wants everyone to feel loved and to know they are perfect just as they are.

**Brian Smith, St. Louis County**

*(When, How, and Why to Impose Restrictions)*

Brian has extensive experience in Guardianship, having worked with adults in south St. Louis County since 2005 (20 years!), and has been a member of MAGIC through his employer, St. Louis County PHHS, for about that same amount of time!

**Referee Elizabeth Wendt, Second Judicial District**

*(A View from the Bench/ Judges Panel)*

Elizabeth Wendt has been employed with the Minnesota Judicial Branch for over 14 years. She is currently serving as the probate referee in the Second Judicial District, presiding over estate, trust, and guardianship/conservatorship matters. Elizabeth is also the court operations manager for the civil and probate divisions at Ramsey County District Court. Before joining the Second District, Elizabeth was a senior attorney with the Legal Counsel Division at State Court Administration. Her assignments included probate, civil intake, judgments, appeals, conciliation court, housing, digital accessibility, and the Board of Pardons. Elizabeth also staffed the civil, general, and civil appellate rules committees. Her Branch career began at the Fourth Judicial District, where she served as a law clerk and staff attorney. Elizabeth graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in 2009 and is licensed to practice law in Minnesota and with Minnesota federal courts. Although a Texas native, Elizabeth loves Minnesota and has called it home for over 18 years. She is married with two kids and enjoys swimming and reading historical fiction novels.

**PaKou Yang, Court Operations Specialist, Second District**

*(Behind the Scenes: Court Administration Panel)*

PaKou has been with the Courts for 2 years with a focus in Guardianship and Conservator Matters.