

Kristina C. Kersey

Assistant Professor University of Tennessee College of Law

kkersey1@utk.edu

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

University of Tennessee College of Law

Assistant Professor, June 2023, Knoxville, TN

- Teach 6 credit Advocacy Legal Clinic.
- Co-create ABA Standard 303(c) clinic wide curriculum.
- Co-create novel clinic docket including legislative education and *Booker* parole representation.

Rutgers University, Professional Certification Program- Juvenile Justice and Youth Development

Instructor, May 2022, New Brunswick, NJ

- Teach 6 credit seminar regarding juvenile court history and principles for reform.
- Created curriculum and assignments.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Gault Center-Defenders of Youth Rights, Washington, DC (Formerly The National Juvenile Defender Center)

Senior Youth Defense Counsel, June 2021-June 2023

- Certified Youth Defense Advocacy Program Trainer.
- Lead amicus advocacy team.
- Co-authored Structural Racism lesson.
- Lead Contract Counsel Improvement Project.
- Lead Kansas Youth Defense Ambassador Program.
- Provide national youth defense technical assistance.
- Supervised Gault Fellow.
- Supervised Data Reform Fellow.
- Drafted grant reports.

New Jersey Office of the Public Defender, Newark, NJ

1st Assistant Deputy Public Defender June 2018 – June 2021

- Supervised state's largest youth defense unit.

Kristina C. Kersey

Assistant Professor University of Tennessee College of Law

kkersey1@utk.edu

- Led statewide monthly case rounds.
- Developed and led state post dispositional representation unit.
- Facilitated monthly youth defense specific training series.
- Assigned cases including conflict counsel.
- Created a former client internship program, recruited a diverse expert panel, created a legal educational program for detained youth.
- Drafted comment and testimony in support of proposed legislation.
- Led detention advocacy pilot and expungement protocol.
- Supervised law students and interns.

New Jersey Office of the Public Defender, Newark, NJ

Assistant Deputy Public Defender January 2002- June 2018

- Handled voluminous caseload including Homicide, Carjacking, Robbery and Aggravated Sexual Assault in the OPD's largest office.
- Employed novel and successful motion practice.
- Became a skilled negotiator.
- Continuously researched and developed trial advocacy skills.
- Represented children with severe challenges including cognitive and mental health differences, substance abuse disorder and specialized behavioral needs.
- Meticulously maintained files and records in accordance with best practices.

NOTEWORTHY CASE ADVOCACY

State in the Interest of N.H., 226 N.J. 242, 141 A.3d 1178 (2016). Homicide. Trial attorney for N.H., demanded full and complete discovery prior to the transfer hearing. Although this was an unsettled area of the law, the Appellate and Supreme Court of New Jersey affirmed the trial court's decision. N.H. has been cited 42 times in cases seeking to expand and protect the rights of youth in juvenile court.

State in the Interest of B.D. Homicide. Trial attorney for B.D. charged in a Homicide at the age of 14. Retained national expert to prepare cross of the medical examiner. State dismissed the Homicide charge following cross of the medical examiner and offered a plea to assault for probationary sentence. Years later, I filed a motion to expunge the complaint from B.D.'s record. Following the expungement, B.D. applied to become a firefighter.

Kristina C. Kersey

Assistant Professor University of Tennessee College of Law

kkersey1@utk.edu

State in the Interest of F.S. Interlocutory Appeal of Youth Confidentiality. State moved to reveal my client's name, address and contact information to an alleged victim pursuing a civil complaint. Trial court granted the State's application. I filed an emergent appeal to the Appellate Division and received a stay. The State withdrew its application upon review of my filings.

State in the Interest of S.C. Modification of Sentence. Amid the COVID-19 crisis, I led a statewide effort to file modifications of sentences to have youth released from incarceration at our youth prison. S.C. was one of the youth who was resentenced and released from the care of the Juvenile Justice Commission.

State in the Interest of S.R. Denial of Motion for Waiver to Adult Court. Demonstrated that the State had abused its discretion in moving to have S.R. transferred to adult court for prosecution due to their failure to reinterview the main witness following my investigation which called into question her identification of S.R.

State in the Interest of S.C. Dismissal of Complaint for Delay of Prosecution/In the Interest of Justice. S.C. was charged in an aggravated sexual assault 20 years after the alleged incident date. The State of New Jersey filed the complaint and a hold while S.C. was serving a sentence in Pennsylvania. The State of New Jersey did not serve a copy of the complaint, nor did they respond to S.C.'s demands for information on the hold which prevented his parole. Despite S.C. being in his late 30s, I convinced the court that the juvenile court was the court of original jurisdiction, that the matter must be heard, confidentially, and that S.C. did not meet the criteria for pre-trial detention. Subsequently, the Court granted a motion to dismiss the complaint based on delay of prosecution and in the interests of justice.

TEACHING AND RESEARCH INTERESTS

Research Interests: Youth Carceral System Reform, Youth Defenders as Incremental Abolitionists, Lessons from International Youth Justice Reform.

Teaching Interests: Clinic - Criminal Procedure - Trial Advocacy - Criminal Law - Youth Defense - Interviewing and Counseling - Lawyering Skills - Professional Responsibility - Structural Racism and the Law.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Present

University of Tennessee

- Co-chair Art Committee
- Member Governance Committee
- Faculty Coach BLSA Moot Court Team
- Co-Faculty Advisor BLSA
- Research Development Academy 2024-2025
- Mentor UT Promise

Kristina C. Kersey

Assistant Professor University of Tennessee College of Law

kkersey1@utk.edu

- Affiliated Faculty Appalachian Justice Research Center
- Field Placement Supervisor
- Directed Study Parole Supervisor

Past

Rutgers University, Advisory Council, Juvenile Justice and Youth Development professional certification subcommittee

EDUCATION

Georgetown Law Center Washington, DC

Juris Doctor, May 2001.

Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ

Bachelor of Art, Political Science, May 1998.

CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS

*Upcoming: Family Court for the State of Delaware, Family Court Retreat, "Effective Communication with Youth", Presenter (April 2025)

*Upcoming: American Association Law Schools, Conference on Clinical Legal Education, "Banned in the USA", Presenter on ABA Standard 303(c) in Clinical Education. (April 2025)

*Upcoming: Georgetown University Juvenile Justice Initiative and The Gault Center YDAP Summer Academy, Faculty (June 2025).

*Upcoming: The Gault Center South Regional Summit, Presenter (June 2025).

- University of Tennessee College of Law, Center for Advocacy and Dispute Resolution Jenkins Mock Trial Competition Final Round, Judge (March 2025).

- University of Tennessee College of Law, Center for Advocacy and Dispute Resolution and Black Law Students Association Constance Baker Motley Mock Trial Competition, Coach (January-February 2025).

- Community Defense of East Tennessee, Inform, Empower, Transform, Panelist (February 2025).

- University of Tennessee College of Law, Black Law Students Association and Law Women Panel, Martesha Johnson Moore for Black History Month, Moderator (February 2025).

- Shelby County Office of the Public Defender and Tennessee Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, Adolescent Development and Transfer, Presenter (December 2024).

Kristina C. Kersey

Assistant Professor University of Tennessee College of Law

kkersey1@utk.edu

- Barry University School of Law Symposium, “Juvenile Justice is No Child’s Play”, Keynote (March 2024).
- Rutgers Law School, “On the Front Lines: Public Defenders and the Quest for Justice”, Panelist (March 2024).
- American Association Law Schools, Conference on Clinical Legal Education, “Unfinished Arcs: Resistance & Resilience Amid Backlash”, Presenter on ABA Standard 303(c) in Divisive Concepts States (May 2024).
- Georgetown University Juvenile Justice Initiative and The Gault Center YDAP Summer Academy, Faculty (June 2018, June 2019, June 2022, June 2023, June 2024).
- The Gault Center Youth Defender Leadership Summit, Presenter (October 2023, October 2024).
- The Gault Center Southern Regional Summit, Presenter (June 2024).
- ClassCrits Demanding Justice in the Face of Retrenchment: Finding Common Ground and Building Coalition Across Borders, Works in Progress Presentation on Article “Don’t You Forget About Me: Demanding Transfer Conform to Prevailing Notions of Science” (February 2024).
- Southern Clinical Conference, Works in Progress Presentation on Article “Death to Transfer” (October 2023).
- University of Tennessee College of Law, Law Women Panel, Women of Color in Law, Panelist (October 2023).
- Equal Justice University, *Examining the Roots and Branches of Juvenile Court*, Presenter (August 2023).
- The Gault Center Southern Region Summit, Co-presenter, History of Juvenile Court (June 2023).
- Inaugural Knoxville Contract Counsel Improvement Project Training, Community Law Office, Co-facilitator, (August 2022).
- Everyday Injustice Podcast: Kristina Kersey and Youth Justice, Guest (May 2022).
- Rutgers Law School, Guest Lecturer (March 2022).
- Delaware Law School, Guest Lecturer (February 2022).
- The Gault Center Leadership Summit, Virtual Realities, Moderator (October 2021).
- Juvenile Justice Initiative, Defending Children’s Right in a Digital Justice System, Panelist (December 2021).
- Baker McKenzie/Juvenile Justice Initiative, Child Justice in a Virtual World, Panelist (March 2022).
- National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Conference, Fruit of the Poisonous Tree: How Structural Racism Harms Youth (March 2022).

Kristina C. Kersey

Assistant Professor University of Tennessee College of Law

kkersey1@utk.edu

- InterCourt Conference Ohio, Reforming Probation Orders to Increase Success, Co-facilitator (March 2022).
- Summer Institute: Contemporary Issues in Juvenile Law, Creighton University School of Law, Co-facilitator (May 2022).
- Missouri State Public Defense Services, Youth in Court, Co-facilitator (June 2022).
- Pacific Juvenile Defender Center, 707b Training, Co-facilitator (June 2022).
- International Fund for Ireland AMBIT Program, Co-facilitator (March 2022).

PUBLICATIONS

State Court Report, Massachusetts Reminds Youth Defense Attorneys to Consider State Constitutions, January 2024

[Massachusetts Reminds Youth Defense Attorneys to Consider State Constitutions | State Court Report](#)

Time Out for Transfer: Youth Transfer as Punishment, Accepted for Publication Nevada Law Journal

KK Top Ten -Monthly blog entry to inspire, inform and invigorate the youth defense community, Blog Post, author July 2021-June 2023.

- Keeping up with the Joneses: 10 Things I Kinda Maybe Don't Hate About Jones – The Gault Center Amicus Brief to Ohio Supreme Court in support of Defendant/Appellant, Austin M. Fuell Co-author Amanda Powell (November 2021).

BAR ADMISSIONS

- New Jersey (2002).

SERVICE

- The Gault Center, Southern Region, Co-Director, 2024-present.
- Youth Defender Advocacy Program, The Gault Center, Trainor and Mentor, 2024-present.
- Council on Juvenile Justice and System Improvement, New Jersey, Member, 2018 – 2021.
- Juvenile Conference Committee, Neptune, New Jersey, Volunteer, 2016-2019.
- National Juvenile Defender Center, National Advisory Board, Northeast Regional Co-director, 2019-2021.
- Essex County Youth Services Commission, Designee Member, 2018-2021.

Kristina C. Kersey

Assistant Professor University of Tennessee College of Law

kkersey1@utk.edu

SKILLS & INTERESTS

Baking. Sea Glass Collection. Dog Rescue. Tennessee State Park Ambassador (in progress)