

Plunkett Cooney attorneys contribute to ABA civil rights book

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The fifth edition of a popular American Bar Association (ABA) book on civil rights law was recently released and includes significant contributions by four attorneys from Plunkett Cooney, one of the Midwest's oldest and largest law firms.

Partners Mary Massaron and Josephine A. DeLorenzo served as co-editors of "*Sword and Shield: A Practical Approach to Section 1983 Litigation*," which examines civil rights laws and the federal statute 42 USC § 1983. First published in 1998, "Sword and Shield" provides a comprehensive review of the fundamentals of Section 1983 litigation in state court.

"Having kept practitioners in mind, this new edition was reorganized to provide easier access to the information needed when handling civil rights claims," said Massaron, who is one of Plunkett Cooney's most accomplished appellate attorneys and who has edited this volume for each its past editions. "This treatise provides the readers with an analysis of practical considerations and a roadmap for handling litigation under Section 1983."

Also contributing chapters to "Sword and Shield" are Plunkett Cooney partner Michael S. Bogren and senior attorney Rhonda R. Stowers. Bogren, a member of Plunkett Cooney's Board of Directors and Governmental Law Practice Group, wrote Chapter 4: "Claims Under 42 U.S.C. § 1983: A discussion of Procedural Issues and Immunities." Stowers, who is a senior attorney and member of the Michigan

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Association of Municipal Attorneys (MAMA) board of directors, authored Chapter 9: “The Eighth Amendment.”

42 U.S. Code § 1983 - Civil action for deprivation of rights – commonly referred to as the Civil Rights Act, is a federal statute that allows lawsuits to be brought by people alleging that their rights protected by the U.S. Constitution or federal statutes have been violated by state or local governments or the agents of those governments.

This multi-author treatise, written by prominent practitioners and academics from around the country, includes a discussion of the procedural intricacies in federal court, a defense-oriented view of municipal liability under Section 1983, a plaintiff’s perspective on bringing claims, analysis of police misconduct claims in the context of the complex search and seizure rules that police must follow under the Fourth Amendment, and the constitutional rights of public employees. It also offers background on the Supreme Court’s recent expansion of the right of property owners, as well as students’ constitutional rights in public school settings and individual immunity defenses under Section 1983. And it discusses jurisdiction, forum choice considerations, and the state courts’ methodology.

Massaron is one Plunkett Cooney’s most accomplished appellate attorneys with over 400 appeals to her credit, approximately 50 of which are published decisions. She is a past chair of the American Bar Association State and Local Government Law Section and a past president of DRI – The Voice of the Defense Bar. She has the distinction of being inducted into the prestigious American Academy of Appellate Attorneys, and she is perennially identified as a top appellate attorney in Michigan by Martindale-Hubbell, Best Lawyers in America and other leading peer review organizations.

DeLorenzo serves as Co-Leader of Plunkett Cooney’s Appellate Law Practice Group. A member of the firm’s Bloomfield Hills office, she focuses her practice exclusively in the areas of appellate and insurance law with particular expertise in governmental law, professional liability, no-fault law and insurance coverage. A 2008 *summa cum laude* graduate of the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, DeLorenzo serves as Commissioner-at-large for the State Bar of Michigan’s Board of Commissioners and treasurer of the Federalist Society - Michigan Lawyers Chapter.

Bogren has extensive experience representing municipalities in both state and federal courts in civil rights cases, police liability claims, first amendment law, due process claims, Open Meetings Act claims, FOIA claims, zoning matters and employment litigation. He is a member of the Kalamazoo County and American bar associations, as well as the Public Corporation Section of the State Bar of Michigan and the Civil Rights Section of the Federal Bar Association.

An attorney in the firm’s Flint office, Stowers focuses her practice in the areas of general litigation, governmental law and title insurance law. Her governmental law practice includes advising and defending municipalities on a range of topics, including the Freedom of Information Act, the Open Meetings Act, federal and state constitutions, civil rights, zoning law, charter amendments, ordinance

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drafting, and employment-related issues. In addition to her service on the MAMA board, Stowers serves a board member for the Michigan Municipal League Legal Defense Fund. She is also a member of the Genesee County Bar Association and the State Bar of Michigan.

Established in 1913, Plunkett Cooney is a leading provider of business and litigation services to clients in the private and public sectors. The firm employs approximately 150 attorneys in seven Michigan cities, Chicago, Illinois, Indianapolis, Indiana and Columbus, Ohio. Plunkett Cooney has achieved the highest rating (AV) awarded by Martindale-Hubbell, a leading, international directory of law firms.

For more information about the firm's contributions to the ABA's Sword & Shield book, contact Plunkett Cooney's Director of Marketing & Business Development John Cornwell at (248) 901-4008; jcornwell@plunkettcooney.com.

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