

VBA Board of Managers – Nominee Information

Kate Lamson



Biographical Information: Kate Lamson, Public Defender in Bennington County; 42 years old; white female.

Statement of Interest: I am currently a representative on the VBA Board of Bar Managers and have served since July of this year. I currently serve on the Program and Planning Committee. I also currently serve on the Bennington Opioid Response Team and am on the Law Enforcement Committee. This team includes a diverse set of service providers who work together to prioritize our community's responses to the epidemic and includes meeting with our local legislators. I have been a public defender in Bennington County for the past eight years and worked as a prosecutor and law clerk in Bennington for several years before that. I received my JD from Vermont Law School. I am very much enjoying being on the Board of Bar Managers. As a public defender I am frequently in court for jury trials and contested hearings. I hope that I can continue to provide some insight into practicing criminal law in the Southern part of our state and continue to work on the Programs and Planning Committee. As a young lawyer and young parent whose only connection to Vermont was the law school and my husband's family, I struggled financially and worried that becoming a lawyer had been a mistake. With the help of organizations like the Vermont Bar Foundation I found my way and am now doing exactly the kind of work I hoped to be doing and making plenty of money doing it. I hope that this experience will be valuable to the Board as we continue to try to recruit and retain younger lawyers to work in our fair state. I would like the opportunity to serve a full term on the VBA Board.

James Rodgers



Biographical Information: Originally from New York, Attorney Rodgers came to Vermont in 1986 after living and working outside the United States for nearly 15 years as university professor (University of Paris/Sorbonne Nouvelle), consultant to the United Nations (Geneva), and Chief of Party for an international development non-governmental organization. A graduate of Columbia College, the University of Wisconsin

(Madison) and the University of Rochester, where he received his Ph.D., Attorney Rodgers trained with several attorneys as their clerk under the Vermont Clerkship Program and was admitted to the Vermont State and Federal Bars in 1996. He served as Board Member, including as Vice-President, of the Vermont Bar Foundation, from 2003 to 2007. He served as a volunteer of the Bar Foundation until 2015. Attorney Rodgers was recognized in May 2011 by being selected as a Senior Fulbright Fellow and Specialist in Law. He worked as a Fulbright Specialist with the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, located in Port Elizabeth, Republic of South Africa. He also served as a Fulbright Specialist with the Kobe City University of Foreign Studies in Kobe, Japan from November to December 2014. This recognition was the result of a highly competitive selection process available to qualified applicants from throughout the United States and abroad. Attorney Rodgers was formerly a partner with the Brattleboro law firm of Reid & Rodgers, PLC. He opened his own firm in January of 2006 in order to better serve his clients statewide.

Statement of Interest: I am currently a representative on the VBA Board of Bar Managers and have served since 2018. I am chair of the Program and Planning Committee and also serve on the VBA Board Membership Committee and Workforce Development Committee. I have been confirmed as one of the VBA Board representatives to the New England Bar Association (NEBA). I have been in solo practice since 2006 and before that as a partner with David G. Reid from 1996-2006. I read for the law from 1992-1996 prior to my admission to the Vermont Bar in 1996. My background information is available on my website: <http://jamesmrogersattorney.com/> . Prior to joining the VBA Board, I served as a member of the Vermont Bar Foundation (VBF) Board from 2003-2008 and then over the next 7 years as a volunteer member of the committee evaluating loans to prospective candidates. This gave me the chance to meet and join with a number of VBA members from whom I learned a great deal about the role of the VBF and the VBA in promoting justice and equal access to legal services. Most of the members of the VBF Board and VBA Board of Managers do not come from Windham County. From my perspective, it is important that the views and experiences of VBA members from the southern counties be directly represented and understood. This encourages fuller participation and greater comity within the Vermont bar. It also encourages a feeling of collaboration between attorneys who often work far apart and who therefore only meet within an adversarial context. I will be happy to serve another term on the VBA Board and ask for your vote.

Alfonso Villegas



Statement of Interest: I respectfully request your vote to re-elect me to the Vermont Bar Association Board of Managers. I am passionate about the law and the legal profession here in Vermont. As a result, I have sought to advocate for the VBA membership – attorneys, paralegals, and student members – during my tenure. As a relatively young attorney (32 years old), a state employee, and a county prosecutor, I have brought a unique perspective and voice to the Board. I hope to continue to represent the best interests of our membership, with your support.

I have happily served 1 term. I sat on the Workforce Development Committee (WDC) and the Membership Committees (MC). I assisted in developing the new report by the WDC that is currently being addressed and whose recommendations are being implemented. As a member of the MC, we are taking up the tasks given to use by the WDC while implementing new initiatives, including a new Mentorship Program that we hope you will engage with to help retain and grow new attorneys to the State of Vermont.

I am a dependable and hard-working advocate. As a result of my work efforts and careful approach, I have been assigned increasing levels of responsibility as a Deputy State's Attorney. I have transitioned from prosecuting misdemeanor traffic offenses to representing the State in Washington County's Adult Drug Treatment Court, drug investigations and prosecutions, and prosecuting various felony level offenses. I have independently tried cases, argued suppression motions, and advocated in front of the Vermont Supreme Court. I will continue to bring my work ethic and ever growing experience to the Board to represent you.

Despite my role as a prosecutor, I take time to engage with the legal community at large. I attend the various meetings sponsored by the VBA and YLD. I have happily volunteered to present CLEs on Criminal Law, Treatment Court, and Implicit Bias for the VBA. I am currently mentoring a Vermont Law School Student from the Latin American Law Student Association. And I am now chairing the Diversity Section of the VBA. I will continue to bring the same passion, intellectual curiosity, and collegiality to our bar and – hopefully – as a re-elected member of the Board.

I ask that you vote for me to remain on the Board.

VBA Board of Managers – ABA Delegate

Elizabeth Kruska



Biographical Information: I am originally from Michigan. I graduated from the University of Michigan in 2000, and moved to Vermont to attend law school in 2001. I earned a J.D. from Vermont Law School in 2004. I practiced with a small firm in White River Junction doing primarily public defense work from 2004 until 2016. In early 2017 I launched a solo firm in Woodstock. I continue to focus on criminal and juvenile defense, and I handle some other family court matters. I live in Woodstock with my husband, Wesley Lawrence, who practices law with Theriault and Joslin in Montpelier.

Statement of Interest: I respectfully seek your vote, appointing me to be the Vermont Bar Association representative to the American Bar Association House of Delegates. I have gladly served the Vermont Bar Association as a member of the Board of Managers since my election in 2014. With the membership's endorsement, I proudly led the Vermont Bar Association as Bar President from October 2020-October 2021. I will be sad to leave the board when my term ends in October 2022. However, I look forward to the opportunity to continue to lead the Vermont Bar on the national level in the American Bar Association House of Delegates. While serving the Vermont Bar Association as President-Elect and President, I had the unique opportunity to work with and lead the bar through both the Odyssey File and Serve rollout and COVID-19 pandemic. The practice of law in Vermont changed drastically, almost overnight. I worked with the Board of Managers, the COVID-19 committee, and county bar presidents and section chairs to help gather and share information to help our bar work as smoothly as possible during an incredibly stressful and strange time. As part of my Vermont Bar leadership role, I was invited in 2020 and 2021 to participate in ABA Day. With Vermont's ABA delegates and VBA Executive Director Therese Corsones, I met with Vermont's Congressional delegation in an effort to seek support for certain initiatives that are important to lawyers. We covered topics such as increased and ongoing funding for the Legal Services Corporation, increased security for judicial officers, and public service loan forgiveness. We will continue to work to ensure that our Senators and Representative understand some concerns lawyers and the justice system face, and how their votes can help move those issues and concerns forward. As Vermont's representative, I will have the opportunity to travel to national-level meetings. I will work to be our bar's ambassador, and will gladly share our successes. I'll listen to other bar leaders, and when I learn of good and positive ideas to bring back to our bar to help make us stronger and more successful, I will do that. I ask for your support and vote as Vermont's American Bar Association representative.