

Captain Art Cody, USN (Retired) directs the Center for Veteran Criminal Advocacy. His military career spans over thirty years of worldwide service, most recently as the Staff Director of the Rule of Law Section, US Embassy, Kabul., Afghanistan. As a civilian lawyer, Art has represented capital clients for over twenty-five years and frequently presents nationally on the defense of veterans. In 2020, he assisted Advancing Real Change and the Southern Center for Human Rights in obtaining clemency in Georgia for Jimmy Meders, an Army veteran. He is the recipient of the New York State Bar Association's 2019 David S. Michaels Award for his representation of veterans in Criminal Courts. In addition to the Navy Bronze Star Medal and Naval Aviator Badge, he received the State Department's Meritorious Honor Award for his Kabul service. He holds an Aerospace Engineering degree from West Point and graduated magna cum laude from Notre Dame Law School where he was Executive Director of the Notre Dame Law Review.

Will Harrell is a seasoned criminal justice reformer with over 25 years in the field. A lawyer, Will has worked for several non-governmental organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union and the Southern Poverty Law Center and in that capacity, he worked on reform efforts in every Gulf South State. He has also monitored prisons and jails in Guatemala for the United Nations. He brought international litigation against the Republic of Ecuador for inhumane prison conditions. He was the Governor's appointed Chief Independent Ombudsman for the Texas Youth Commission. He also monitored the Ohio juvenile justice system as Lead Monitor and Special Master on behalf of a Federal Court in a federal class action. He is currently an internal monitor for the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Department, Orleans Justice Center. Will has provided expert witness testimony in capitol cases involving a defendant who experienced juvenile incarceration.

Emily Reeder Abili, PhD, MSW is a Mitigation Specialist at the Clark County Public Defender in Las Vegas, Nevada. In that capacity, she has been responsible for the investigation of mitigation evidence in capital and non-capital murder cases since 2003. During her tenure at the Public Defender, Dr. Reeder Abili has been responsible for uncovering mitigation evidence in death penalty cases and has extensive experience investigating Atkins claims, assisting with the presentation of mitigation in jury trials, and working with nationally renowned experts as a part of the criminal defense team. She earned her BSW, MSW, and PhD (Public Affairs) from the University of Nevada Las Vegas and previously taught undergraduate courses in quantitative methods and criminology. Professional honors have included Excellence in Legal Defense (Clark County Public Defender), Legal Advocate Award (Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center), and Value in Performance Award (Clark County).

Ali Winters, DSW, MSW is an Associate Professor of Practice in the College of Social Work at the University of Tennessee. She earned her DSW from the University of Tennessee in 2015, her MSW from the University of Alabama in 1996, and her BSSW from the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 1992. With over 30 years of direct social work practice experience, Dr. Winters' primary areas of social work practice have been forensic social work in corrections and juvenile justice, direct trauma-based service delivery, program development and evaluation, and behavioral health in healthcare settings. Dr. Winters has also been active in providing clinical supervision and leadership since earning her LCSW in 2005. Her areas of research interest include mental health and solitary confinement, forensic social work ethics, trauma-informed care, and secondary traumatic stress.

Maria Sapene is an investigator with the Federal Public Defender's Office for the Central District of California where she specializes in the use of open-source investigations and digital forensics in trial and habeas cases. She previously worked as a trial investigator for the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office. A former U.S. Army Intelligence Officer with training and background in intelligence collection and analysis, She regularly presents at state and national conferences on the use of online and social media investigations in capital defense investigations and law enforcement's use of technology.

Mary Elizabeth (M.E.) Wood, PhD, ABPP, is a faculty member in the clinical psychology doctoral (PhD) program at Sam Houston State University (SHSU), where she directs the Psycho-Legal Assessment & Intellectual Disability (PLAID) Lab. She is licensed in Tennessee and Texas, certified through PSYPACT, and board certified in forensic psychology through the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP). She has conducted over 1,500 forensic evaluations for a myriad of issues, and she has testified numerous times in juvenile, criminal, and federal courts. Dr. Wood's primary clinical and research interests fall at the interface of psychology and the law, with a particular emphasis on the appropriate identification, assessment, and treatment of individuals with Intellectual Disability (ID) in forensic settings. She has provided trainings to various groups of professionals, including trainees, mental health providers, and lawyers, and she is principal owner of Wood Forensic Evaluation & Consulting, PLLC, where she continues to conduct forensic evaluations and consult with legal professionals, as well as provide trainings nationwide. Dr. Wood is a member of the American Psychological Association (APA), the American Psychology-Law Society (AP-LS), and the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), and she is a fellow of the American Board of Forensic Psychology (ABFP). She currently serves on the examination faculty and Board of Directors for the ABFP as well, and in 2024, she was a co-recipient of the Saleem Shah Award, given jointly by AP-LS and the American Academy of Forensic Psychology (AAFP).

Cindy Buys is a Professor of Law at the SIU Simmons Law School where she teaches a variety of international and immigration law courses, as well as U.S. constitutional law. She was a Fulbright Senior Specialist in Lithuania and a visiting law professor in Wales and Poland. She also serves as a panelist for NAFTA/USMCA disputes between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. She has written and published dozens of articles, book chapters, and essays, as well as a new book with her co-author, Mark Wojcik, which is titled, INTERNATIONAL LAW: A CONTEMPORARY APPROACH.

Professor Buys has held leadership positions in several state and national organizations, including the American Bar Association and the Illinois State Bar Association, and she has created and led multiple immigration-related service projects and nonprofit organizations. She has served as a Commissioner on the Illinois Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes since 2021 and is a former Vice Chair of the Illinois Advisory Committee to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. She has received several awards for her teaching, scholarship, and service.

Prior to academia, Professor Buys practiced international business and trade law with a private firm and with the U.S. Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C. She holds an LL.M. from Georgetown University School of Law in International and Comparative Law, a J.D. degree and a M.A. in International Relations from Syracuse University, and a B.A. from the State University of New York at Albany.