

Shout-Outs

To OCR Attorneys & CC's | Fall 2020



Award Recipients

Thank you to all our GALs, CLR's, and SSPs for your tireless work! This quarter, we salute our Annual Conference award recipients and presenters, determined litigators, and more!

Congratulations to the following outstanding OCR attorneys who were recognized during OCR's Annual Conference in September!

- **Brandi Nieto** – Rising Star
- **Hilary Oppie** – Case Consultant of the Year
- **Chelsea Peterson** – Standing Up for Kids
- **Diana Richett** – Distinguished Contribution to the Practice of Dependency and Neglect Law
- **Tausha Riley** – Standing for Justice
- **Karen Stall** – Covino Advocate of the Year



Litigators



Shoutout to **GAL John Stenger**! After the court dismissed a D&N case involving a 17-year-old youth who was on-the-run, at serious risk of trafficking, abandoned by her mother, and with an incarcerated father over John's objection, John filed a motion to reopen the case. The motion reflecting John's thorough research and analysis of the issues. The court granted John's motion, agreed to stay case closure until one week after the youth's 18th birthday, and ordered the department to provide the court and parties with monthly updates on the department's efforts to locate the youth until the case closes. Excellent job, Jon! Thank you for your zealous advocacy!

Shoutout to **GAL Bob Tweedel**! Bob worked with OCR to revise the sample "Termination Testimony – Caseworker" document on OCR's website to include tips and questions related to less drastic alternatives, a popular issue on appeal. Thank you for your leadership and efforts on this project, Bob!

GAL Gina Bischofs nominated **GAL Peter Wasley** for a shoutout related to a termination appeal indicating "Peter did an outstanding job walking a very fine tightrope in (1) taking over the motion to terminate parental rights from the department when they decided not to pursue the motion; and (2) refusing to waive the patient/therapist privilege despite RPC requests that he do so. Peter was very careful not to do anything that could be construed as a partial or limited waiver which would subject the therapist's records to an in-camera review and a hearing on the scope of any waiver. He was incredibly discerning." GAL Gina Bischofs nominated **GAL Peter Wasley** for a shoutout related to a termination appeal indicating "Peter did an outstanding job walking a very fine tightrope in (1) taking over the motion to terminate parental rights from the department when they decided not to pursue the motion; and (2) refusing to waive the patient/therapist privilege despite RPC requests that he do so. Peter was very careful not to do anything that could be construed as a partial or limited waiver which would subject the therapist's records to an in-camera review and a hearing on the scope of any waiver. He was incredibly discerning."

GAL Courtney Dinnel nominated **GAL Katie Hecker** for a shoutout indicating Katie "worked tirelessly to get a young woman out of custody while others dragged their feet. She gave this young woman hope! She keeps a close follow up on the child to ensure her safety and success." Thank you for your diligence, Katie!

GAL Katie Hecker nominated **GAL Courtney Dinnel** for a shoutout indicating "Courtney has hit the ground running advocating for her clients. As always, she leads with her heart and head in equal parts and I'm so happy she has become a GAL!" Welcome to the GAL team, Courtney!

GAL Danny Jackson nominated **GAL Gina Byrd** for a shoutout indicating, "Gina is a new GAL, and she is learning tricks of the trade. Gina has a contagious enthusiasm for being an advocate for children. Keep it up, Gina!" Thanks for your learning and enthusiasm, Gina!

Presenters



Shoutout to the case consultants, GALs, and colleagues who presented during OCR's Fall Conference: **GAL Alison Bettenberg**, **Stacie Colling** from the Office of Alternative Defense Counsel (ADC), **GAL Holly Gummerson**, OCR Education Litigation Support Team Member **Jacqueline Esquibel**, **GAL Anna Hall Owen**, **GAL Mark Jensen**, **GAL Mel Jensen**, **GAL Kate Karstetter**, **GAL Nicole Lyells**, **GAL Josi McCauley**, and OCR Education Litigation Support Team Member **Elie Zwiebel**. Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and expertise with GALs and case consultants across the state!





Trainings

Shoutout to **OCR Advisory Board Member Tori Shuler!** Tori joined OCR to prepare and complete engaging and empowering youth presentations during OCR's Core Competencies I, the National Conference of the Association of Counsel for Children (NACC), Colorado Youth Awareness Week sponsored by the Colorado Youth Leadership Network (COYLN), and OCR's fall conference. Tori is also playing an instrumental role in OCR's preliminary discussions about the creation of an OCR youth action council. Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and expertise with us and others, Tori!

Shoutout to **GALs Heather Cannon, Shirley Gien, Holly Gummerson, Alison Jensen, Jen Lundin, Brandi Nieto, Anna Ulrich, and Peter Wasley** for serving as faculty during OCR's July 2020 Core Competencies I Training. Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and expertise with new GALs!

Shoutout to **GALs Josi McCauley, Bob Tweedell, and Anna Ulrich** for presenting during recent less drastic alternatives trainings. Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and expertise with GALs across the state!

Advocates

OCR recently received an email complimenting **GAL Shirley Gien and Case Consultant Hilary Oppie** stating the following. "I have been a licensed foster parent [...] and I run [...] (a non-profit supplying [...] bags for kids entering foster care. I have worked with Ms. Gien both through a foster case and through referrals for supplies [...]. I wish there was a book I could write as a review for what Shirley brings to children in care and their families. She goes above and beyond on a consistent basis, both in supporting the caretakers and the loving she gives to each of the children she represents. She answers emails and questions on nights and weekends to continue to support the families and kids. This week, she reached out about clothing for one of her kiddos and dance apparel for another case. She facilitated contact between myself and the families so [...] the foundation could better support them. We currently have an ICWA case [...with Hilary Oppie] and both women have gone above and beyond to get these three children the educational and emotional supports they deserve and need. They have tirelessly worked to push for these kids' needs both in court and with the team. As a foster parent, I understand [...] burnout is so high in this [area ...], but people like Hilary and Shirley keep foster parents like myself continuing on for these kids." Wow! Thank you to your tireless efforts for Colorado children, Shirley and Hilary!

Juvenile Law Section Council

Shoutout and congratulations to the GALs serving on the 2020-21 Juvenile Law Section Council of the Colorado Bar Association: **Alison Baker Jensen** (Chair), **Alison Bettenberg** (Secretary), **Holly Gummerson** (Second Year Position at Large: Programs), and **Katie Hecker** (Vice Chair/Board of Governors). Thank you for your volunteerism and leadership!



Case Consultants

Shout out to **Case Consultant Matt Cloven** and **OCR Education [Litigation Support Team Members](#) Jacqueline Esquibel and Elie Zwiebel** for joining OCR's town hall meetings! The knowledge and expertise you shared on education issues have been invaluable, given the current state of public education across Colorado.

GALs Mary Davis and Mel Jensen and nominated **Case Consultant Matt Cloven** for a shoutout indicating "Matt Cloven is a special education and disability rights expert and case consultant working with our office. His insight into community resources, disability benefits, and school district obligations is appreciated in 'normal' times but has become invaluable in the time of COVID. Matt is able to explain and contextualize what is available and what is needed not only to the OCR attorneys in our office but also to children's placements, providers, schools, and the Department." Excellent work, Matt!

GAL Dani Diercks nominated **Case Consultant Ivy Mosely** for a shoutout indicating "I am blessed to work alongside Ms. Moseley, she is truly the gold standard in clinical consulting. She has the strongest rapport with our youth, professionals, the bench and community at large. During COVID, she continues to go above and beyond for our youth and gets creative to make sure all needs are being met." Way to go, Ivy!

NOMINATE at tinyurl.com/ShoutOutOCR

Nominate an OCR Attorney or SSP for a "shout-out" (a.k.a. kudos) in our next OCR Newsletter! OCR will review your nomination, contact you with any questions, and, if your shout-out is selected, we will contact the nominee and celebrate them!

