

# Meet the New Members of the CBA Executive Council

Please welcome the newest members of the CBA Executive Council: President-Elect Kathleen Hearn Croshal; Vice Presidents Dan Deasy, Judson Hite, and Leslie German; and Council members Melanie Bartlett, Joi Kush, Michelle McCarthy, Kimberley Neilio, Ted Tow, and Mo Watson. We asked them to share a little about themselves, their involvement with the CBA, and what led to their participation on the Executive Council.



**Kathleen Hearn  
Croshal**  
President-Elect

*Please tell us a little about yourself, personally and professionally.*

I am married to James M. Croshal, attorney at law and loving husband. Our blended family consists of seven children, 13 grandchildren, and six foreign exchange students. Professionally, I am a retired Pueblo County judge. Before becoming a judge, I was a partner in the general civil law firm of Petersen & Fonda P.C.

**How did you first get involved with the CBA and how has it enriched your career?**

I first became involved with the CBA when I was an officer of the Pueblo County Bar Association. This led to my becoming a member of the CBA's Board of Governors. What enriched me the most was the people I had the opportunity to meet.

**What is your favorite thing about being a lawyer?**

Working with people to solve problems.

**Why did you say "yes" to serving on the CBA Executive Council and what are you looking forward to this year as you help lead the bar?**

My husband, a past president of the Colorado Trial Lawyers Association, would say ego! I would say that it is an opportunity to give back to, be involved in, and help foster an association that works to provide for the needs of lawyers and supports lawyers.



**Dan Deasy**  
Vice President,  
2nd District

*Please tell us a little about yourself, personally and professionally.*

Now in my 25th year of practicing law, I am blessed to say that every day I wake up, I'm happy to go to work. I've been a prosecutor, an insurance defense attorney, and a personal injury lawyer, and now I practice mostly family law. I love it and am thrilled with my current practice. With my courtroom experience, I've found a rewarding niche in trial advocacy instruction for the bar, NITA, and the University of Denver—all wonderfully fulfilling activities. Outside the law, I have a wife I adore, and we take care of five beautiful kids in our blended family: a sophomore at the University of Colorado; a football player, lacrosse player, and cheerleader at ThunderRidge High School; and a first-grader who is truly our CEO. Don't even

ask. My wife is one of a kind, managing so much more than is humanly possible every single day. She will always deserve better than me!

**How did you first get involved with the CBA and how has it enriched your career?**

I have been a CBA member for more than 20 years. I am a past president of the Douglas Elbert Bar Association and have offered instruction at many CBA-CLE courses over the years, usually focused on evidence or something to do with trial advocacy. I was asked this year to consider serving as a vice president, having served on the Board of Governors in the past. The CBA offers unmatched opportunities and resources for its members. From the Young Lawyers Division to the Family Law Section, the movers and shakers in our industry become active and give voice to important ideas through the CBA. I love the passion and commitment of those involved.

**What is your favorite thing about being a lawyer?**

I have litigated for essentially all of my career, and I enjoy courtroom work more than I can possibly describe. Fighting the right fight for people who need help gives me unmatched satisfaction.

**Why did you say "yes" to serving on the CBA Executive Council and what are you looking forward to this year as you help lead the bar?**

This opportunity was a no-doubter for me. The idea of listening to, and providing, ideas that shape our legal world is extremely exciting. I hope to match the impact and dedication of those who have come before me and those with whom I currently serve.



**Judson Hite**  
Vice President,  
3rd District

*Please tell us a little about yourself, personally and professionally.*

I've been practicing law for 30 years, with a mop of gray hair to prove it. I started in Chicago; got stranded once in

Denver, liked it, and stayed; and then found Boulder and moved to Longmont. My practice is largely corporate and real estate work, with an emphasis on commercial litigation and a minor in general practice. Outside of law I enjoy my family, the outdoors, and my alma mater.

***How did you first get involved with the CBA and how has it enriched your career?***

When I relocated to Colorado, I joined the CBA and used its resources immediately to identify fellow environmental attorneys and potential job opportunities. I continue to use the CBA for networking opportunities, guidance on professionalism and governance standards, and CLE opportunities.

***What is your favorite thing about being a lawyer?***

Being able to help people.

***Why did you say “yes” to serving on the CBA Executive Council and what are you looking forward to this year as you help lead the bar?***

I didn't know what the Executive Council did, nor how I could have an influence—so I took up the challenge. I hope to add to the CBA's relevance to its membership.



**Leslie German**  
Vice President,  
6th District

***Please tell us a little about yourself, personally and professionally.***

As an Illinois native, I never envisioned myself on Colorado's Western Slope; however, since my husband and I relocated to Ridgway in 2008 after law school, I am happy to call Colorado home. We have a 4-year-old son and enjoy spending time outdoors, especially in the mountains. In 2013, I left private practice for a position with the 7th Judicial District. Currently, I am the district's family court facilitator.

***How did you first get involved with the CBA and how has it enriched your career?***

I joined the CBA and my local bar association

after moving to Colorado. Through my local bar association, I've met numerous friends and mentors. Having strong professional relationships with members of the local bar gives me the support I need to implement new programs in my judicial district.

***What is your favorite thing about being a lawyer?***

My favorite thing about being a lawyer is the potential I have to make a positive impact on families that I work with in domestic relations and dependency and neglect cases.

***Why did you say “yes” to serving on the CBA Executive Council and what are you looking forward to this year as you help lead the bar?***

I said “yes” to serving on the CBA Executive Council to bring awareness to issues that are unique to Southwest Colorado, and I look forward to exploring solutions to those issues with other CBA leaders.



**Melanie Bartlett**  
Council Member,  
At Large Member

***Please tell us a little about yourself, personally and professionally.***

I moved to Colorado about four years ago after meeting my husband on our annual family vacation. Before making the transition to mountain life, I grew up in Texas and then worked with nonprofit organizations in Washington, DC for over 10 years as both in house and outside counsel. I continue to advise nonprofits as a solo practitioner and try to fly fish and take advantage of all the area has to offer as much as possible.

***How did you first get involved with the CBA and how has it enriched your career?***

After moving to Colorado, I joined the CBA immediately to meet my new contemporaries and foster relationships with attorneys across the state. The CBA provides a place for me to collaborate with others in my field and a hub to locate useful resources to assist clients.

***What is your favorite thing about being a lawyer?***

My practice focuses on advising nonprofit organizations, and I feel a sense of helping the community and furthering the charitable purposes of my clients in issuing guidance. When I receive a difficult problem to tackle, I enjoy searching the tax code to find the solution—it's like solving a puzzle.

***Why did you say “yes” to serving on the CBA Executive Council and what are you looking forward to this year as you help lead the bar?***

As a rural Colorado attorney, I look forward to representing the interests of those outside the metro areas and helping to foster greater access to justice across the state. I think this is an important aspect of serving in the legal profession. John Vaught has been a friend for a long time, and it will be a pleasure to work with him on his initiatives this term.



**Joi Kush**  
Council Member,  
CBA YLD Chair

***Please tell us a little about yourself, personally and professionally.***

I was born and practically raised in Colorado, but I have spent some time outside the state. I have traveled all over Asia, North America, and Europe and can speak some Mandarin Chinese. I am married to a personal chef and my biggest cheerleader, Corey Wilson. I have two amazing parents—one a manager and one a teacher—who have been married for 45 years, an older brother in the military, and a younger brother who is an entrepreneur. My practice, Johnson Kush, P.C., is located in my hometown of Colorado Springs, and I am dedicated to the practice of family law.

***How did you first get involved with the CBA and how has it enriched your career?***

I've been part of the CBA since I was admitted in 2011. I became more actively involved in 2014 when I joined the CBA YLD Executive Council. Through the years, I've served various roles and

am now the CBA YLD chair. My participation in the CBA has facilitated my success as a lawyer. I've gained lifelong friends, great referral sources, and valuable mentors.

***What is your favorite thing about being a lawyer?***

I enjoy being an advocate for those who are encountering one of the most stressful events in their lives and providing them hope for their (and their family's) future.

***Why did you say "yes" to serving on the CBA Executive Council and what are you looking forward to this year as you help lead the bar?***

I firmly believe that "life will not wait." So "no" is rarely an option in my life. I look forward to strengthening and growing our association. We already have a great foundation to work off of, but we can always do more.



**Michelle McCarthy**  
Council Member,  
Section  
Representative

*Please tell us a little about yourself, personally and professionally.*

I was born and raised in Canada and moved to Colorado before law school. I love the outdoors and am an avid college football fan. I currently practice primarily tax and corporate law, with a little bit of real estate and probate work thrown in as well. I received my JD and an LL.M. in taxation from the University of Denver.

***How did you first get involved with the CBA and how has it enriched your career?***

I got involved in the CBA after graduating from law school by joining the Tax Law Section. I joined the Legislative Policy Committee as a tax section liaison and love watching the legislative process. Without my connections through the CBA, I would likely not be practicing corporate and tax law.

***What is your favorite thing about being a lawyer?***

I really enjoy helping clients and looking for creative ways to solve problems. Being a lawyer has changed the way I see the world and provided me insight into the struggles of all different groups in society. I love knowing that if I can't solve a problem myself, I can easily find someone who can. Practicing law has been a very empowering experience for me.

***Why did you say "yes" to serving on the CBA Executive Council and what are you looking forward to this year as you help lead the bar?***

I wanted to join the CBA Executive Council so that I can help shape the legal field in Colorado and find ways for the CBA to better serve lawyers, specifically lawyers coming right out of law school. I look forward to assisting the CBA in its transition to new offices and hope to make a meaningful impact on the way the CBA educates practicing lawyers.



**Kimberley Neilio**  
Council Member,  
At Large Member

*Please tell us a little about yourself, personally and professionally.*

I am a graduate of the University of Denver Sturm College of Law and currently practice employment law in Greenberg Traurig's Denver office. I started my legal career at Holland & Hart. In addition to private practice experience, I have worked as in-house employment counsel for two large companies. On a personal note, I grew up in Virginia, have three children, and enjoy Green Bay Packers football.

***How did you first get involved with the CBA and how has it enriched your career?***

I am only beginning to become involved in the CBA and am excited that my involvement has already allowed me to feel more connected to the Colorado legal community. That is sometimes difficult when you work at a large law firm and represent clients outside of Colorado. I am looking forward to further developing new relationships.

***What is your favorite thing about being a lawyer?***

As the daughter of a Korean immigrant and the first lawyer in my family, I'm just generally proud to be a lawyer. I feel grateful that I have a legal education. It is empowering and can be used to help others. Once I am no longer running kids to various sports practices, ensuring that homework is completed and packing school lunches, I hope to get more involved in pro bono work.



**Ted Tow**  
Council Member,  
Section  
Representative

*Please tell us a little about yourself, personally and professionally.*

Professionally, I have served as a judge on the Colorado Court of Appeals since February of this year, after having served on the trial bench in Adams County for approximately seven years. Before my appointment to the bench, I spent three years as the executive director of the Colorado District Attorneys' Council, after working as a prosecutor for seven years. I began my career as a labor and employment lawyer, first in Chicago, and then in Denver at Sherman & Howard. Personally, I am married, and have three children and two grandchildren. I am a diehard fan of the Colorado Rockies and Kansas Jayhawks basketball. I enjoy hiking, skiing, and reading, but my true passion is performing, whether with the Law Club, my local community theater troupe, or on occasion with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra Chorale.

***How did you first get involved with the CBA and how has it enriched your career?***

I first joined the CBA when I moved to Denver in 1998. But I first became truly engaged when I joined the Executive Council of the Criminal Law Section in 2007. Since then I have been an active member of the Board of Governors, and this is my third stint as a section rep on the Executive Council. In my view, the greatest benefit of the CBA is twofold: the advancement, development, and protection of our legal system,

including the judiciary; and the fostering of civility and professionalism through the support of community, social engagement, and education of lawyers.

***What is your favorite thing about being a lawyer?***

My favorite thing about being a lawyer (and a judge) is serving my community, and the opportunity to be a part of the development and protection of the rule of law, which I continue to believe is truly what makes this country special.

***Why did you say “yes” to serving on the CBA Executive Council and what are you looking forward to this year as you help lead the bar?***

Honestly, I said yes largely because no other section rep was willing to do it. But I enjoyed serving the bar in my previous time on the EC, so I was happy to step forward. I most look forward

to being a part of the final implementation of REFOCUS 2020.



**Mo Watson**  
**Council Member,**  
**DBA President**

***Please tell us a little about yourself, personally and professionally.***

I am the general counsel at CQG, Inc., a software company in the financial services industry. I am married to Jon Watson, a labor and employment lawyer at Sherman & Howard, and we love parenting our daughter, Avery, and dog, Atticus.

***How did you first get involved with the CBA and how has it enriched your career?***

I first got involved with the CBA through the DBA YLD. In that role, I was able to collaborate with the CBA and CBA YLD on numerous events and I got to know some of the amazing CBA members. The experience has helped me connect with a huge number of attorney peers who I now call mentors and friends.

***What is your favorite thing about being a lawyer?***

That, particularly in my current role, I am always learning something new.

***Why did you say “yes” to serving on the CBA Executive Council and what are you looking forward to this year as you help lead the bar?***

It is part and parcel of serving as the DBA president; it is an honor to be able to represent the DBA on this broader platform. I am looking forward to working with my many talented colleagues to bring issues of diversity and inclusion to the forefront for the CBA. 

## CBA ETHICS HOTLINE

### *A Service for Attorneys*

The CBA Ethics Hotline is a free resource for attorneys who need immediate assistance with an ethical dilemma or question. Inquiries are handled by individual members of the CBA Ethics Committee. Attorneys can expect to briefly discuss an ethical issue with a hotline volunteer and are asked to do their own research before calling the hotline.

**To contact a hotline volunteer,  
please call the CBA offices at 303-860-1115.**



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