



Attorney Spotlight: Shawn Bratton, GCBA Law Day Chair

By: The Honorable Warren Davis, Gwinnett Superior Court
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Q: What's your family history?

A: I was born in St. Louis, Missouri. My Father was transferred to Georgia in 1973, and I have lived in Gwinnett County since I was 19 months old. I grew up in a blended family; I am one of five children. I've lived in Lawrenceville and Centerville, and I graduated from Shiloh High School.

Q: What inspired you to practice law?

A: My involvement in Mock Trials initially spurred my interest in the law.

Q: Do you have any interesting work history?

A: I served in the U.S. Navy from 1991-1995. I was a Missile Technician on the trident submarine USS Pennsylvania and was stationed in St. Mary's, Georgia. So basically, I have spent one year of my life under-water. That was really the first time I realized how important it is to exercise. I spent a lot of time on a recumbent bike. I was discharged as E-4.

Q: What's your educational background?

A: Undergraduate at UGA, studied German. Law School at Georgia State University. I am family friends of Christine Koehler, and Georgia State was highly recommended.

Q: Have you done any international travel?

A: I left during the 1996 Olympics and went to Bavaria. I participated in a summer abroad program for about eight weeks in Erlangen.

That's a city located a short distance from Nuremberg. I put myself through college with GI Bill funds and waiting tables at Applebee's. In December of 1997, I worked with a friend at Applebee's whose husband was an executive at Siemens, a German company. She helped me get a job with them, and I worked as an Engineering Aide.

Q: Why did you attend law school?

A: I wanted a professional degree. I took the LSAT and did very well, so I figured it had to be destiny. I liked the challenge of presenting a case in a trial setting, so I ended up at Georgia State.



Q: What courses did you like?

A: I loved criminal procedure and litigation classes.

Q: What was your practice after law school?

A: I spent four weeks in a law firm in Cologne, Germany. Then I landed a job with Bobby Lee Cook, Cook & Connelly, and worked there for two summers from 2001 to 2003. Every Thursday and Friday was always an adventure. You never knew who he was going to meet.

Q: Any other notable work experiences?

A: I was an ADA in Walton and Newton counties. I was encouraged by Bobby Lee Cook to get prosecutorial experience so I could learn how it is done. I got a wealth of trial experience. I left there to accept a job with the

Solicitor's Office in Gwinnett County where I actually got a raise. I spent a few years there and then entered private practice and joined the McGarity Group.

Q: So what is your current practice?

A: Mike McGarity brings in a lot of diverse work. Currently he has me focusing heavily on personal injury work. I also handle business disputes, commercial claims, and criminal cases.

Q: Any notable successes?

A: One of our big cases was a wrongful death case involving a trucking company. In discovery, we came across a note written in the driver's own hand-writing where he had made a disability claim stating that he could not stay awake on the highway.

Q: Anything that folks may be surprised to learn about you?

A: I play the bagpipes, wear a kilt and am a scuba diver.

