



# THE VOICE

*The Government Lawyer Section of the Florida Bar*

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## *Message from the Chair*

BY JACEK STRAMSKI, GLS CHAIR

Studies show that the vast majority of New Year's resolutions fail by February. To beat the dismal trend of failed resolutions, the GLS has taken the innovative approach of not making any. Rather, we will redouble our efforts on the various fronts that we have been working on—engaging with law students to encourage rising lawyers to consider public service as a career path, presenting CLEs on state of the art legal topics, including with our fellow sections and other bar organizations (check out the upcoming free CLE on Litigating Civil Rights Cases, coming up March 24), advocating for more representation of government lawyers in positions of bar leadership, and working on the critical task of ensuring that government lawyers better reflect the diverse communities we serve.

On a more celebratory note, congratulations to GLS past-chair and current Executive Council member Prof. Anthony Musto, who is the 2021 recipient of the Florida Bar's Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award. The award is the Bar's highest honor for pro bono service and is presented by the Chief Justice of the Florida Supreme Court. Prof. Musto certainly has demonstrated the highest ideals of our profession. The services that he has rendered to others over his career are too numerous to list here, but are certain to inspire anyone who reviews the Bar's press release—do yourself a favor and check it out on the Bar's website if you haven't yet.

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# SPOTLIGHT:

## AMY VOIGT XENOFOS, *SPACE LAWYER*

### *GLS Out of ~~State~~ This World Representative*

#### **Background:**

Amy received her bachelor's degree in Physical Education with a Minor in Chemistry from Florida State University in 1997.

She then received her JD, cum laude from Florida State University in 2000.



#### ***Did you know you wanted to be a lawyer when you were young?***

Absolutely not. My dad was a prosecutor and then criminal defense lawyer in Miami-Dade County when I was growing up and it looked like a very hard job that took an emotional toll on you. I thought I was going to be a marine biologist or maybe some sort of explorer. It was only after I was in college that I decided I wanted to go into law.

#### ***What brought you to government service?***

It was a general career decision I made while I was in law school. As I realized that I could practice law in any area I wanted, even if it didn't relate to my undergraduate degree, I realized that I wanted to work in the public service either at the state or the Federal level. During law school, I had internships with the Miami-Dade County Public Defender's Office as well as the Florida Department of Insurance in Tallahassee. I've always had an interest in space exploration and thought it would be wonderful to combine that interest with a law career if it was possible. So in my 3rd year, I interviewed with the Air Force JAG.

#### ***What is your current role?***

I currently serve as the Assistant Chief Counsel for General Law at NASA's Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center (JSC) in Houston, Texas and have been in this role since 2009.

My areas of responsibility include Government ethics, personnel/equal employment opportunity matters, environmental and real property matters, tort claims and litigation, internal Agency policies and processes, fiscal law, Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act matters, and agreements and partnerships using NASA's "Other Transaction" authority to advance the commercial use of space and to ensure that technology developed by the US space program provides maximum benefits to people on earth.

## ***The Columbia Space Shuttle Incident***

I served as the legal advisor to the NASA Mishap Investigation Team during the Space Shuttle Columbia investigation in 2003 and co-authored two articles on selected legal issues from the recovery and investigation in the University of Mississippi School of Law's Journal of Space Law and the NASA publication Loss of Signal: Aeromedical Lessons Learned from the STS-107 Columbia Space Shuttle Mishap.

For those that may not recall, NASA launched the 113th Space Shuttle mission, more commonly referred to as STS-107, on January 16, 2003. Over the course of Columbia's sixteen day mission, a wide variety of scientific experiments were completed in the areas of life science, physical science, space and earth science, and education. This mission was also historic in that the first Israeli astronaut, Ilan Ramon, was a crewmember.

The Columbia Accident Investigation Board (CAIB) Report determined Columbia was ultimately destined to fail 81.7 seconds after liftoff. It was then that a piece of insulating foam separated from the left bipod ramp section of the External Tank and struck the leading edge of the left wing on the Reinforced Carbon-Carbon Panel Eight causing a breach in the Thermal Protection System of the Orbiter. During Columbia's reentry to the Earth's atmosphere on February 1, superheated plasma penetrated the left wing through the breach in the insulation, which melted the aluminum structure of the wing. This weakening of the wing continued until increasing aerodynamic forces caused its failure and the eventual breakup of the Orbiter.

The purpose of the Space Shuttle Mishap Investigation Team (MIT) was to gather evidence for the board of investigation in the event of a Space Shuttle incident. This team was not put together to play any role in determining cause, but rather was tasked with the responsibility of gathering and preserving evidence to allow the CAIB to conduct its analysis and make a causal determination. Membership of the MIT included a Chair; a Site Investigation Group; an Eyewitnesses, Human Factors, Crew, and Environmental Group; a photographer; and a representative from the Department of Defense Manned Space Flight Support Office (DDMS). Rapid Response Team (RRT) members from the Kennedy Space Center (KSC) as well as contractor support supplemented the MIT. The MIT coordinated with FEMA under emergency declarations made by President Bush to investigate all reports of debris from the re-entering orbiter and recover all debris and remains that were found.

## ***The Intersection of Space and Administrative Law***

I was also the primary legal advisor for the Commercial Crew and Cargo Program's COTS Project from 2005 until the final demonstration flights to the International Space Station (ISS) were complete in 2013. The Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (COTS) Project was NASA's first time using funded Space Act agreements to invest in private space companies SpaceX and Orbital Sciences Corporation to help them develop the capability to deliver cargo to low Earth orbit destinations such as the ISS. During this time, I also co-authored NASA's Guide on Organizational Conflicts of Interest (OCI) where we help Federal procurement and legal practitioners understand how OCIs are treated in Federal contracts under the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

## ***Why is it important to be in GLS?***

I took a job with NASA Johnson Space Center in Texas right out of law school about 20 years ago and have never practiced law in Florida. But having been born and raised in Coral Gables and then graduating from college and law school at Florida State, I wanted to stay connected to Florida and the Florida Bar. Being able to serve as the Section's out-of-state representative is a wonderful opportunity for me to begin getting to know and network with other government attorneys in Florida who understand the unique aspects of being a Government lawyer and allows me to bring a different perspective. I'm so thrilled to be able to serve as the out-of-state representative and bring a fresh view of the interests of a Federal government lawyer to the Section. I plan to listen and learn a lot from everyone else in the Section too – you're never too old to learn new things to help you be successful.





# GLS HOSTS INFORMATIVE PROGRAM FOR FSU AND UM LAW STUDENTS

On January 27th, GLS members Winifred Acosta (Department of Justice), Sylvia Alderman (Akerman LLP), Judge Bruce Culpepper (Division of Administrative Hearings), and Jacek Stramski (Florida Department of Revenue) participated in an online panel with law students to discuss practicing law in the public service, co-hosted with the Florida State University College of Law Student Advancement Office. Panelists and students discussed strategies for success when practicing law in government, some of the highlights of government practice, as well as some challenges that government practitioners may face.

On Friday, February 5, 2021, the Honorable Francine Ffolkes, Assistant State Attorney Steven Klinger, Assistant Attorney General Jon Bagjer and Assistant Public Defender Patyl A. Oflazian participated in a GLS Lunch & Learn Panel hosted by the University of Miami School of Law. The discussion focused on careers in public service. We were very well received by the Law School and truly enjoyed our time. The Government Lawyers Section continues to plan and host such panels for law schools throughout the State of Florida. We are proud of this initiative which started in 2020 and will certainly continue. Our commitment to encouraging the next generation of lawyers to choose public service is deeply part of our cause as government lawyers.

## Upcoming Law School Events

NSU Law is set March 31,  
2021

STU Law is set April 6-8,  
2021



*It's all smiles talking about government  
service with our Section's leaders!*

# GLS CONGRATULATIONS

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## CONGRATULATIONS PROF. ANTHONY MUSTO!

*Past GLS Chair and Current 3rd  
District Representative Wins  
Prestigious Pro Bono Award!*

Professor Musto is the winner of the 2021 Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award, the highest statewide pro bono award. Professor Musto was awarded this prestigious honor at ceremony at the Florida Supreme Court on January 28th.

According to the Florida Bar, "Musto has recorded more than 1,200 hours of pro bono service, much of it handling juvenile dependency and delinquency appeals. His work has included handling cases through the Defending Best Interests Project of the Florida Statewide Guardian ad Litem Program, which provides representation to children in appeals from orders revoking parental rights. His pro bono work for Guardian ad Litem led to his receiving that office's Children's Champion Award."

Read more at the Florida Bar website! Congratulations, Professor Musto!

# CIVIL RIGHTS CASE LITIGATION CLE SERIES

## UPDATE



**Wednesday, March 24, 2021**  
**12:30-2:30, Zoom (Free)**

Please join us for the CLE live webinar series: Litigating Civil Rights Cases, hosted by:

- The Florida Bar Federal Court Practice Committee
- The Florida Bar Government Lawyers Section
- The Federal Bar Association local chapters in the Southern District of Florida (Broward County, Palm Beach County, and South Florida)
- Cuban-American Bar Association
- Miami-Dade Chapter of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers
- Wilkie D. Ferguson Bar Association

If you're interested in learning more about the first three parts of this excellent series, please check out this link:

<https://www.floridabar.org/directories/courts/fed-corner/federal-corner-cle/>

This is an important topic and as noted in the Florida Bar article on the series, this is a practice area which could use more lawyers becoming involved! For more information, please visit

<https://www.floridabar.org/the-florida-bar-news/federal-court-practice-committee-webinar-series-focuses-on-civil-rights/>

# GLS VIRTUAL CLE OPPORTUNITY

*"Breaking Down Bias Barriers to Promote Diversity & inclusion"  
Tuesday, March 30, 2021, and noon.*

The Government Lawyers Section of the Florida Bar will be hosting a virtual CLE seminar, entitled "Breaking Down Bias Barriers to Promote Diversity & Inclusion." The seminar will be held on Tuesday, March 30, 2021 at noon. It is intended to provide a discussion on identifying biases, which often serve as barriers to the promotion of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. It is important to identify these biases to effectively dismantle them in an effort to embrace our different backgrounds and cultures.

For more information, please contact the GLS Diversity Committee Chair, Winifred L. Acosta, @ Winifred.Acosta@usdoj.gov.

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## CHAIR'S MESSAGE

I will end this note by inviting you to regularly check in with us—on our website, through social media, or by contacting your Executive Council members—to see the latest events and initiatives we have coming up. And, if there is an issue you would like to be involved in or believe the section should address, let us know. We are here to serve you and our profession, and your input is always appreciated. And you will be hearing more from us soon as well.

Until then, thank you to all our members who work to serve the public, and to those who have furthered the efforts of the GLS to better serve our profession. It is an honor to be your colleague.

Jacek  
Stramski



GET TO KNOW A GOVERNMENT  
LAWYER

# ANGELA HUSTON MILLER, ESQ.

*Attorney,*  
The Chief Counsel's Office,  
Internal Revenue Service

GLS Executive Council,  
Treasurer, Social Media Chair



## **How long have you been a government lawyer?**

I started as a government lawyer straight out of law school for 5 years and then went into private practice. I recently rejoined the government after a three year hiatus.

## **What made you want to become a government lawyer?**

I initially went into law school with the idea of going into entertainment. I fell into public service through an internship opportunity. I absolutely loved the people I worked with and they are what kept me there.

## **What advice would you give to yourself in law school?**

Take the opportunity to really learn from the seasoned attorneys. The experience you will gain from your time in the government will be invaluable. Also make sure your loans qualify and are on the right payment plan if you're doing public service for loan forgiveness.

## **What do you do for fun?**

I'm a runner and use that as my outlet. I started running in law school and trained for my first half marathon while studying for the bar exam. The pandemic actually got me back to running for fun and not training for anything. I took on a few challenges during that time and completed my first ultra marathon for "fun".

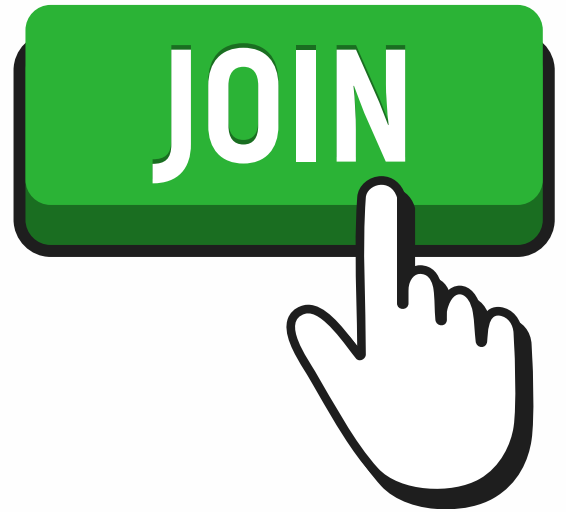
## **Why do you like being a government lawyer?**

It's probably played out, but having been on both sides, I can honestly say the work/life balance. But also as a young attorney getting actual trial and hearing experience is something you won't necessarily get in private practice.

# WE NEED YOUR VOICE!

Looking for a way to support GLS and your resume? The Publications Committee needs YOU! We are looking for volunteers to help with our quarterly publication. It is a time-friendly and fun way to be involved with our Section while also providing important updates to our government lawyers! We are looking for volunteers who can provide a quarterly update on topics such as PSLF, career development, federal/state/local government updates, and more!

Have an idea for a different topic? Interested in being in our "Get to Know A Government Lawyer" or in our Spotlight? Don't wait another second- send an email to Maria Pecoraro-McCorkle at [mvpmmcorkle@gmail.com](mailto:mvpmmcorkle@gmail.com) TODAY!



## The Voice

PUBLISHED BY THE GLS PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Mission of the Section:

The Government Lawyer Section is dedicated to promoting the professionalism and competence of its members; improving the delivery of legal services to all governmental entities; improving the administration of the legal system; and enhancing The Florida Bar's and the public's understanding of the unique needs of the government lawyer.

## **GLS IS ONLINE**



Are you social with us? Click and like today!



Have great news to share? Submit your good news to our Facebook Page and email the Voice! Let's celebrate our government lawyers!