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OF COUNSEL

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PIONEER SPIRIT Sarah Lee Gossett Parrish is a third-generation attorney who is passionate about the healing qualities of cannabis. "Its medicinal value is unquestionable." Her interest has been fueled by friends who have fought cancer, including her best friend who passed away from acute myeloid leukemia. "I keep thinking how cannabis would have eased the side effects of chemo, the nausea and the pain. I also have a friend whose father recently passed away from Parkinson's, and he would have benefited from the medicinal properties of marijuana." Last June, Oklahoma voters passed Question 788, which legalized medical marijuana. "I was surprised, as were so many Oklahomans, and also thrilled. After watching those states with cannabis track records, this area of the law intrigued me, and I knew a cannabis law practice was in my future if SQ 788 passed. I joined NORML, the National Cannabis Bar Association, the National Cannabis Industry Association, the Oklahoma Cannabis Trade Association and the Oklahoma Cannabis Business Alliance. I attended their events and networked with lawyers and industry professionals. I put the word out that I was shifting my law practice to cannabis, and before long, people started calling me. It was the wild, wild west back then."

In July 2018, the Oklahoma Bar Association had not yet addressed the issues faced by cannabis industry lawyers. Parrish started to get calls from potential clients whose own attorneys refused to get involved. "I was one of the very first lawyers in Oklahoma who came out and said, 'I'm a cannabis industry lawyer.' I accepted cannabis clients when no one else would. I've been blessed with amazing clients, great referrals and solid media coverage. I'm very thankful."

TRAILS BLAZED As one of the first Oklahoma attorneys to develop a cannabis industry practice, Parrish faced potential exposure in this uncharted territory in helping clients navigate those early days in the world of Oklahoma medical marijuana. Parrish works with clients to create and structure business entities, obtain licenses and funding and open doors to grows, dispensaries, processing operations and ancillary businesses as quickly and efficiently as possible. She educates her clients and ensures they comply with Oklahoma's continually evolving regulatory landscape. "SQ 788 provides an open door to entrepreneurs here in Oklahoma. The commercial business license fees are only \$2500 each, and currently there are no limits on the number of licenses available. Anyone with a vision and some funding can enter this industry." Parrish was chair of the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women and one of the founders of the Oklahoma's Women's Hall of Fame. "The fact a significant number of women are entering the cannabis industry is exciting and encouraging. It is a female-friendly space, and that is just outstanding."

Parrish is regularly quoted in the media, including the New York Times, L.A. Times, Denver Post, Chicago Tribune, Marijuana Business Daily, Cannabis & Tech, Leafbuyer, the Oklahoman, the Journal Record and the Oklahoma Gazette. She is also a guest on nationally syndicated radio shows and enjoys educating the public about the benefits of cannabis and the policy issues surrounding it and, to that end, writes a column for Herb-Age magazine.

Active in her community, Parrish has served as president of the Oklahoma City Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, president of the Oklahoma City Pi Beta Phi Alumnae Club and is a sustaining member of the Oklahoma City Junior League. She has served on numerous boards, including the Oklahoma City Ballet, Travelers Aid and the Lynn Institute for Healthcare Research. Active in the arts, Parrish is a photographer. Among her subjects are flowers and marijuana plants grown by her clients. "People don't realize how beautiful the plants are."

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS Parrish believes Congress will act to protect the industry in states that have legalized it. If not, "it will be a central campaign issue in 2020. The advent of interstate commerce and banking will cause the cannabis industry to grow exponentially, and federal dollars will fund research to establish the many benefits of cannabis." In the interim, "I'm proud of Oklahoma. OMMA has rolled out our program in record time. We don't mess around once we make up our minds in Oklahoma."

Congratulations

to the fellow 2019 Cannabis Law Trailblazers!



Sarah Lee Gossett Parrish is a third-generation attorney. She maintains a business litigation practice with an emphasis in Oklahoma's cannabis industry, and is also admitted to practice in Texas. She has achieved Martindale-Hubbell's™ highest AV™ rating, and is the founder of the Oklahoma Center for Cannabis Law™. She is a member of the American Bar Association, National Cannabis Bar Association, National Cannabis Industry Association, NORML,

the Oklahoma Cannabis Industry Association, and the Oklahoma Cannabis Business Alliance. While chairing the Oklahoma Governor's Commission on the Status of Women, she was instrumental in starting the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame. Her legal thriller took second place in the New York Law Journal's 2006 Fiction Writing Contest and she has shown her fine art photography at Art San Diego and during Miami's Art Basel week at Spectrum Miami.

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Excellence. Efficiency. Integrity.

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