

# DAILY REPORT

A SPECIAL SECTION • JUNE 27, 2018

## 2018 GEORGIA LEGAL AWARDS



### ON THE RISE

#### NICOLE C. LEET

**Title:** Partner

**Current primary practice area:**  
Litigation

**Experience:**

Gray, Rust, St. Amand, Moffett,  
Brieske 2011-present  
Cruser & Mitchell 2009 – 2011  
Hedrick & Edenfield, 2008-2009

**Education:** Cumberland School of  
Law, Samford University, 2008;  
Texas A&M University, 2003

**What drew you to a career in law?**

Being a lawyer was not a career plan during my undergraduate years. I was studying to become a veterinarian. My mother loves to tell everyone that it was her suggestion, as a joke, to go to law school. It actually is a career I love, so credit is due to her for that joking suggestion. What other profession can combine a love of reading, writing and arguing into a viable career?

**Have you set a specific goal that you want to achieve in the next year?**

As a personal goal, I would like to continue expanding my appellate experience with an oral argument before the Georgia Supreme Court or the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. Those are two appellate courts I have not yet had the opportunity to present oral argument in front of, and I hope to have that experience in this next year.

**What has been your proudest career moment and your biggest hurdle?**

Surprisingly, my proudest career moment has not been one of my defense verdicts at trial. My proudest career moment has been seeing a case I had worked on from initiation through appeal cited in the updated pattern jury charge for premises liability. That case, *Pirkle v. QuikTrip*, was not revolutionary in any new point of law. I do believe, however, that it outlined a cogent outline of the premises liability law in Georgia. And it is thrilling that I was a part of that, obtaining summary judgment in the trial court and



affirmed by the Court of Appeals and continuing to see that case cited as I draft jury charges in other cases.

The biggest hurdle I have faced in practice is the 2008 recession, which hit just as I was coming out of law school and taking the bar. Opportunities that had existed before the recession were drying up, and it was a struggle. Many of my fellow law school graduates facing similar situations chose to pursue other careers outside the legal profession. I was fortunate to be able to take contract work and turn that into a full-time position.