



## PARTNER OFFICE PROFILE

# 16TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT PUBLIC DEFENDERS' OFFICE

NEW IBERIA, LA

# OF GIDEON'S  
PROMISE LAWYERS  
IN YOUR OFFICE:

2

### WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT UNITS IN YOUR PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICE?

Fellow will handle felony cases, however, depending on the structure of our staff at the time of hiring, it may be necessary for him or her to begin with misdemeanors or probation matters for a few months at most.

### WHAT MAKES PRACTICING IN YOUR JURISDICTION UNIQUELY CHALLENGING? (I.E. HARSH DRUG LAWS)

We try to keep our caseloads below the state standard of 200 felonies for felony attorneys, and 450 misdemeanors for misdemeanor attorneys. We are a rather large jurisdiction physically comprised of three parishes (like counties). The demographics of each are roughly similar: 60% White, 30% Black, 5% Hispanic. New Iberia is about 20 miles from Lafayette, which is a larger city and a great place to live (many of our attorneys live there). In our office we encourage collaboration among the attorneys especially when it comes to trial preparation. Practicing in Iberia Parish criminal court in particular can be quite demanding, so we welcome anyone who is looking for a challenge.

### WORDS FROM THE CHIEF OF WHY A CANDIDATE SHOULD CONSIDER THIS OFFICE AND WHY GIDEON'S PROMISE IS IMPORTANT TO THIS OFFICE:

"Gideon's Promise is important to this office because we value client-centered representation, and need more attorneys who will put it into practice. Our jurisdiction, both the bench and the bar, is bound to a way of doing things because it's the way it's always been done, and we need help changing that. I am especially interested in implementing bail reform, yet we do not currently have enough staff to dedicate the necessary time to visiting clients in jail before their first appearances."

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RIP VAN WINKLE GARDENS



WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP GUMBO COOK-OFF

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### A MESSAGE FROM ONE OF OUR STAFF ATTORNEYS:

"Gideon's Promise is important to the 16th Judicial District Public Defenders Office because it is our mission to improve the quality of representation that our clients receive from our office. Louisiana has one of the highest incarceration rates in the country and in the world. The laws in our state are designed to keep poor people and people of color behind bars and under government supervision. In order to protect our clients from these misguided "tough on crime" laws and prosecutors is to employ well-trained and passionate public defenders to stand up for, stand next to, and stand behind our clients during what is likely to be the worst moments of their lives. Historically, this office has struggled to fill attorney positions with lawyers who are committed to keeping Gideon's promise. We have incarcerated clients who spend several months in jail without knowing so much as their attorney's name. For a variety of factors, we simply do not receive applications from the caliber of attorney that our clients deserve. This office needs the Gideon's Promise applicants because our clients deserve far more than what we have been able to provide, and need help in our mission to make necessary change."

**AMANDA CANNON**

GIDEON'S PROMISE - CLASS OF 2017

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