



# Declaration of Candidacy

Candidates for election as Second Vice President or Director Elected Nationally must complete this form and submit it to the Executive Director at the principal headquarters of DRI by 5:00 PM (CDT) on July 1<sup>st</sup> of the year in which the election is held.

**National Director Requirements** - Directors Elected Nationally or by Region must be Individual Members of the Corporation admitted to the practice of law. Each such director must meet the following qualifications at the time of election: (a) The candidate shall have been a DRI member for a total of at least five (5) years, and (b) The candidate shall have been a member of at least one DRI substantive law committee for at least three (3) years, and (c) The candidate must have registered for and attended at least one (1) DRI Annual Meeting within the previous three (3) years, and, within the three (3) years prior to the final day of the Annual Meeting, the candidate must have 1) registered for and attended at least two (2) DRI seminars, or 2) registered for and attended one (1) DRI seminar and one (1) DRI Regional Meeting.

Position sought

X Second Vice President\*     Secretary- Treasurer     National Director

\*If you have declared your candidacy for Second Vice President and are not the successful candidate, will you consider the Secretary - Treasurer Officer position?

X Yes     No

**Name** Lana A. Olson

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**Firm/Company** Lightfoot, Franklin & White, LLC

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**Address** 400 20<sup>th</sup> Street North, Birmingham, AL 35203

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**Telephone** 205-581-1514

**Cell Phone** 205-908-4938

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**E-mail** lolson@lightfootlaw.com

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**Born (location)** Gainesville, FL

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**Education** Florida State University (1995); Cumberland School of Law, Samford University (1998)

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**Awards and achievements:**

| <u>Recognition</u>   | <u>Organization</u>      | <u>Year(s)</u> |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|
| DRI Foundation Tribute   | DRI                      | 2018           |
| Top 250 Women in Litigation                                    | Benchmark Litigation     | 2017-18        |
| Litigation Star  | Benchmark Litigation     | 2019           |
| Mid-South Super Lawyer in Environmental Litigation             | Super Lawyers®           | 2014-17        |
| Rising Star  | Super Lawyers®           | 2011-13        |
| Best Lawyer in Environmental Litigation                        | Best Lawyers in America® | 2011-19        |
| Davis Carr Outstanding Committee Chair Award, Women in the Law | DRI                      | 2015           |

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**Areas of practice** Toxic torts and environmental litigation, product liability, catastrophic injury and business litigation

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**Years as a defense attorney** 21 years

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**Employment history** Law Clerk to the Honorable Sam C. Pointer, Jr., Chief Judge of the Northern District of Alabama (1998-99); Lightfoot, Franklin & White, LLC (Associate 1999-2006; Partner 2006-present)

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**Noteworthy defense work:**

**Defense verdict in less than 30 minutes**

First-chaired a million dollar products liability claim involving an 18-wheeler rear-end incident resulting in debilitating back injuries. Successfully defended the moving equipment rental company from plaintiff's claims of defective lights and inadequate warnings.

**Assistant General Counsel (2012-2017) for a leading truck component supplier**

Managed all facets of the company's legal and compliance matters, from day-to-day consultation to complex pieces of litigation.

**Lead defense counsel in the arbitration of a multi-million dollar personal injury case**

The arbitrator found in favor of the defense on the issue of comparative fault, resulting in a 90% reduction of the award.

**Represented a Fortune 100 company in class action and individual lawsuits**

Defended railcar owner against personal injury and property damage claims resulting from a train derailment, as well as assisting in the related NTSB investigation.

**Successfully defended environmental contamination claims**

Represented manufacturing facility in lawsuits involving hundreds of plaintiffs suing for environmental contamination (air, soil, vapor, groundwater, etc.) from trichloroethylene.

**Successfully resolved numerous class action, mass joinder and multi-plaintiff lawsuits**

Defended client against personal and property damage claims resulting from alleged exposure to various wood-treating chemicals, including creosote, pentachlorophenol and arsenic.

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**Professional affiliations:**

| <u>Organization</u>                          | <u>Year(s)</u> |
|--|----------------|
| Federation of Defense and Corporate Counsel  | 2015-present   |
| International Association of Defense Counsel | 2011-present   |
| Alabama Defense Lawyers Association          | 1999-present   |
| American Bar Association                     | 1999-2017      |
| Lawyers for Civil Justice                    | 2013-16        |
| Litigation Counsel of America                | 2008-15        |

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**DRI member since 2000 (19 years)**

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Please describe your previous involvement in DRI, including but not limited to, leadership positions held. Projects contributed to, Committee memberships, presentations given, and written materials authored. Special accomplishments should also be noted.

**Committee Memberships:**

Women in the Law  
Toxic Torts and Environmental Law  
Employment Law  
Drug & Medical Device

Product Liability  
Trucking  
Litigation Skills

**Leadership Positions in DRI:**

| <u>Position</u>   | <u>Year(s)</u>     |
|---|--------------------|
| Secretary/Treasurer   | 2018-19            |
| National Director   | 2015-18            |
| Philanthropic Activities Committee Chair<br>and Vice-Chair            | 2016-18<br>2015-16 |
| Women in the Law Committee Chair<br>and Vice-Chair                    | 2013-15<br>2011-13 |
| Women in the Law International<br>Seminar Chair                       | 2015               |
| Women in the Law Seminar Chair<br>and Vice-Chair                      | 2011<br>2010       |
| Toxic Torts & Environmental Law Seminar Chair<br>and Vice-Chair       | 2014<br>2012-13    |
| Annual Meeting Steering Committee<br>-Substantive Law Committee Chair | 2014               |
| -Blockbuster CLE Program Chair  | 2011               |
| Publications Board  | 2011-13            |
| Corporate Counsel Roundtable<br>Steering Committee                    | 2013-15            |
| Strategic Planning Committee  | 2009-10            |

**Publications:**

*For the Defense* - DRI Membership – It’s Personal (May 2016)

Recurring article – “From the Board” – in the Retail & Hospitality e-  
Newsletter (2015-18)

DRI Defense Series – A Young Lawyer’s Guide to Defense Practice, Chapter Entitled “Don’t Be a Scarlett O’Hara: Start Thinking About Business Development Now” (2015)

TTEL Defense Practice Seminar Course Materials - *Attorney Information Exchange Group (“AIEG”): What It Is, What It Does, and How to Mitigate Its Effect* (co-authored with Nikaa B. Jordan) (2015)

*WITL Newsletter -From the Chair* (2015)

*WITL Newsletter -From the Chair* (2014)

*For the Defense – Ten Things I Wish I’d Known About Business Development* (July 2013)

Product Liability Defense Practice Seminar Course Materials - *Here Today, Gone Tomorrow – How to Handle the Case with the Dying Toxic Tort Plaintiff* (2010)

*For the Defense –Ten Things I Wish I’d Known Before My First Expert Deposition* (Nov 2011)

*For the Defense - Ten Things I Wish I’d Known Before My First Deposition* (April 2008)

*For the Defense – Ten Things I Wish I’d Known Before My First Trial* (Sept 2007)

**Presentations:**

Defense Lawyers Association of Wyoming Annual Meeting – "Issues and Ethics of the Plaintiffs' Attorneys Information Exchange Group" and "Beyond the Billable Hour: Managing Your Work and Your Life as a Lawyer" (2019)

North Dakota Defense Lawyers Association Annual Meeting – "Mindset, Meaning and Marketing: Keys to Happier, More Successful Business Development" (2019)

Atlantic/Central/Mid-Atlantic Regional meeting – DRI Update (2019)

Northwest/Pacific Regional Meeting – DRI Update (2019)

FDCC – “Responding to PR Nightmares” Webinar (2018)

Southern/Southeast Regional Meeting – DRI Update (2018)

DRI Diversity for Success Seminar – Presentation “An Un-level Playing Field: America’s Gender-Based Wage Gap, Binds of Discrimination, and A Path Forward” (2017)

FDCC- “The Art of Marketing” Seminar (2017)

DRI Mid-Atlantic/Southeast/Southern Regional Meeting – Women in the Law Panel Discussion (2017)

Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel Meeting – Presentation on Work/Life Balance for Women Lawyers (2016)

DTCI (Defense Trial Counsel of Indiana) Annual Meeting – Presentation on “Why Gender Equality is Good for Everyone, Including Men” (2016)

DRI Employment Law Seminar, Speaker: “Business Development for the Employment Lawyer” (2015)

DRI Toxic Torts and Environmental Law Seminar, Speaker: “What You Need to Know About the Plaintiffs’ Attorney Information Exchange Group (AIEG)” (2015)

DRI Annual Meeting, Moderator, “Inside the Supreme World of the Supreme Court” with CNN senior analyst Jeffrey Toobin (2014)

Speaker: “Effectively Leveraging Affinity Groups,” DuPont Women Lawyers Network Meeting (2014)

Speaker: “Business Development for Lawyers,” DRI International Seminar (2014)

Women in the Law Seminar, Moderator, “Secrets From the Dark Side: Tips and Insights from the Plaintiffs’ Bar” (2016)

Moderator, “Affirmative Recovery Programs: How to Change Your Law Department from a Cost Center to a Profit Center,” presented at DRI’s Corporate Counsel Roundtable (2014)

Moderator, Mainstage Presentation: “Reinvent the Way You Practice Law: Six Experts in 90 Minutes,” presented at the 2013 DRI Annual Meeting (2013)

Speaker: “The Best in Trial and Courtroom Techniques in Trucking Litigation,” 2013 Transportation Megaconference XI (2013)

Speaker: “Collision Mitigation Technology: The Future is Forward- Looking,” presented at the American Bar Association, TIPS Fall Leadership Meeting/Commercial Transportation Litigation Committee (2013)

Speaker at the Alabama Defense Lawyer’s Association’s Annual “Deposition Boot Camp”

**Other:**

| <u>Description</u>  | <u>Year(s)</u> |
|---|----------------|
| DRI Messaging Task Force                                  | 2019           |
| Officer Liaison to the Philanthropic Activities Committee | 2018-19        |
| Officer Liaison to the Online Programming Committee       | 2018-19        |
| Board Liaison to the Retail and Hospitality Committee     | 2015-18        |
| WITL Media Training                                       | 2014-15        |
| DRI Nominating Committee Member                           | 2011           |
| Member-at-Large Guest, DRI Board of Directors Meeting     | 2011           |
| Founding member of DRI's Women in the Law Committee       | 2010           |
| DRI Media Speaker Training                                | 2008           |

**List any leadership roles in other defense organizations.**

| <u>Organization</u>  | <u>Year(s)</u> |
|--|----------------|
| FDCC Professional Women's Forum, Seminar Committee         | 2017-19        |
| ABA Business Litigation Committee, Subcommittee Vice-Chair | Mid-2000s      |

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**Describe your goals if you are elected to the above position.**

When I ran for a DRI officer position last year, my goal was to positively impact the organization, so that at the end of my term I knew that my contributions made DRI stronger than I found it. I still hold that same desire as I seek the privilege to serve as DRI's Second Vice President. My experience this past year as Secretary/Treasurer provided me with the opportunity to implement a number of my goals for the organization and identify additional ways I can help advance the mission of DRI.

Of the goals that I identified last year, I am pleased to report that DRI has made significant strides. In terms of **INSPIRATION**, DRI's increasing focus and support of philanthropic efforts have inspired members to participate through the organization's coordinated national and state projects. When I first used the hashtag **#DRICares** to promote our burgeoning public service efforts three years ago, I could not have imagined how quickly and widely it would take hold. We watched with pleasure at the proliferation of the **#DRICares** message, leading to estimated completion of more than

50 service projects for 2019 by substantive law committees, SLDOs/NDOs and the Board of Directors.

Now, as the Officer Liaison to DRI's Philanthropic Activities Committee, I continue to have the privilege of working with this group of engaged and enthusiastic leaders who focus on assisting, supporting and encouraging DRI members to make a positive impact in their communities. Even several of DRI's sister organizations have followed the **#DRICares** lead and instituted their own public service events, further cementing the bond that creates lasting relationships between their members and DRI.

The **#DRICares** initiative is exactly the kind of inspiration that DRI should continue to promote in order to meet the needs and desires of its members beyond its historical offerings. As DRI's Second Vice President, I would further expand this program by ensuring robust and expanded leadership, continued support from the organization, and increased visibility for the valuable and inspiring work being done.

With respect to **INNOVATION**, I have been very fortunate to be part of an Executive Committee this past year that is particularly focused on innovation in all areas of the organization. For example, the Law Institute and Executive Committee are working to revamp DRI's seminars to ensure that they are forward-thinking and focused on cutting edge topics of interest to the defense bar, while also re-envisioning their look and feel. The newly created DRI Online Programming Committee, for which I am the Officer Liaison, has exceeded all expectations this year in putting together a robust library of programs to appeal to the modern needs of our members, and is on track to become the largest provider of online legal education for defense lawyers.

DRI is filled with exceptionally smart and creative people, and we must continue to ensure that innovative ideas are not just encouraged, but acted upon and recognized. If elected, I will continue to look for new ways to foster and harness innovation. This could include implementing a "virtual" idea box at every meeting or establishing "innovation think tanks" to allow a diverse group of members to meet and collaborate in an engaging, supportive environment. I would also pursue the idea of appointing a Board member to serve as Innovation Director to lead these various initiatives and provide ongoing structure to ensure ideas are being reviewed and acted upon.

Even more importantly, however, I believe it is crucial for DRI to train its leaders so they can inspire innovation at every level of the organization. The business community has already seen the value of this type of leadership development and how it can transform a company's culture. DRI should develop similar programs to teach lawyers how to better inspire creativity and promote outside-the-box thinking within their teams. This training could be done at DRI's Annual Leadership Meeting, Board Meetings, fly-in meetings, and even during



seminars. Such proactive training would benefit DRI as a whole, ultimately promoting a more innovative organizational culture.

Perhaps the most significant achievements from my list of goals from 2018 are in the area of **INSIGHT**. As I noted in my declaration last year, DRI's broad reach enables it to make a continued, substantial impact on behalf of the civil defense bar. With its breadth and scope, DRI's varied offerings are truly astounding. However, the many moving parts can often lead to confusion for both members and non-members regarding all that DRI is doing and the impact that it is making.

In order to address this issue, the Executive Committee has approved the creation of a DRI Annual Report, which will be published in early 2020. It will ensure that DRI's many programs and benefits can reach a broader audience in a modern, cohesive format. When someone seeks to quantify the value of his or her DRI membership, this report would provide an excellent resource to answer that question.

Similarly, I worked with the Chair of the Board Training Committee, Jeff Lowe, and DRI's Director of Membership Strategy, this year to create a monthly benefits communications package for use by DRI's Board Liaisons and State Representatives. This coordinated dissemination of information over time focuses on a particular aspect of the organization each month, with ideas for how to articulate the message to others inside and outside the organization in a format that it is modern, interactive, and memorable. The program allows DRI leaders to have one voice with focused messages about what the organization is doing - - with an opportunity for members to provide thoughts, feedback and ideas.

Lastly, in order to facilitate more regular and timely communication between the DRI Board of Directors and the Executive Committee, I spearheaded the creation of a Monthly Executive Committee Update. This report helps keep the Directors informed of key issues affecting the organization between board meetings. These updates have been well-received and have fostered a more robust discussion and presentation of ideas by the Board.

In this time of significant transition for the organization, DRI needs leaders who are both experienced and innovative. DRI today is not the same as it was when I joined nearly twenty years ago, nor should it be. We are more nimble, technologically savvy and willing to take calculated risks. DRI has also become a more diverse organization with a greater focus on the needs of our members than ever before. Having also grown during my many years in leadership with DRI, I feel well-prepared to serve as Second Vice President as we enter this next, exciting chapter.

**What do you believe is the most important issue confronting the defense bar?**

I think we, as a profession, are not as prepared as we should be for the "rise of the robot lawyer" due to unprecedented disruption created by artificial intelligence. The exponential growth of technology in the legal sector continues to change the role of lawyers in civil litigation. There are many things that human litigators have traditionally done that a machine can now do faster and more cost effectively. And while not everything done by a skilled lawyer is likely to be replaced by a robot, the key to future success and survival in our profession is the ability to identify and learn the specific areas where technology can serve as a valuable tool, while at the same time promoting and delivering the legal services that computers alone are not able to provide in a creative and valuable way. We should make sure that AI *increases* the value of attorneys, not diminishes it.

DRI must play a critical role in assisting members with this transition. There is no dispute that AI is going to impact the future of the practice of law and will affect both inside and outside counsel. DRI's Center for Law and Public Policy is already focused on understanding the ways AI is currently being used and analyzing how it may be used by civil defense lawyers in a valuable way. DRI must continue this type of work and provide training and education as technology continues to evolve.

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**Define the appropriate role for DRI as the national defense bar organization.**

First and foremost, DRI should be the go-to organization for matters related to the defense bar and the civil justice system. We must always take action on issues that affect our members and clients, with committed focus on full utilization of the Center for Law and Public Policy.

Internally, the organization must continue to provide world class education in new and innovative ways, as technology evolves and methods members use to access professional development resources continue to change. We must be more creative about finding opportunities for members to network and to build the personal relationships that are the heart of DRI.

But DRI must be more than just "The Voice of Defense Bar" from an external perspective. We have made great strides. However, DRI must work even harder to become a role model for what a truly inclusive organization should be - - one that continues to emphasize the promotion and advancement of its diverse members.

Finally, DRI should continue to expand and support its philanthropic efforts so that it can provide more opportunities for members to participate in public service efforts.

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**Hobbies and/or interests**

Traveling the world, yoga, reading (especially historical fiction novels), community service work, and spending as much time as possible with my amazing and vivacious 8 year old daughter

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**Family**

One daughter, Maggie (age 8, a blonde), a Shih Tzu (George Bailey, age 4) and a toothless but loveable Maltese (Hoover, age 14)

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