



Elliot Kolkovich

Summit County Prosecutor

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CONTACT: [Elaine Vilem](#)

(330) 643-8386

PROSECUTOR KOLKOVICH ANNOUNCES PERSONNEL MOVES TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND IMPROVE SAFETY FOR SUMMIT COUNTY RESIDENTS

AKRON, OH – Today, Summit County Prosecutor Elliot Kolkovich announced several personnel moves within his Office that are designed to increase efficiency, further streamline operations, and improve public safety. The Office’s most recent personnel changes build on the teams reorganization that Prosecutor Kolkovich implemented in April 2024 for the Adult Felony Unit of the Criminal Division.

“One of my key priorities is to build on the successes of the Criminal Division’s teams reorganization and to implement an efficient, streamlined management structure throughout the Office,” said Prosecutor Kolkovich. **“It is my central goal to recruit and promote talented individuals and to align their skills within an Office that puts them in a position to flourish.”**

Prosecutor Kolkovich’s most recent personnel appointments are as follows:

Deputy Chief Counsel: Rick Raley, formerly an Assistant Prosecutor in the Appeals and Adult Felony units, has been promoted to serve as Deputy Chief Counsel. In that role, he will oversee the Office’s communications, community outreach, and budget/personnel departments while also advising Prosecutor Kolkovich on all aspects of public affairs and the implementation of his policies. In addition to his service in the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office, Raley has served as Chief Counsel in the Lorain County Prosecutor’s Office, as an Assistant Prosecutor in the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office, and as a Judicial Attorney for the Ohio Court of Appeals. He is an honors graduate of the University of Notre Dame, where he was a member of the Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society, and Case Western Reserve University School of Law, where he was President of the Moot Court Board and Editor of the Law Review.

Director of Communications: Elaine Vilem, formerly the Deputy Press Secretary in the Office of United States Senator Sherrod Brown, has been named as Director of Communications. She will oversee all aspects of the Office’s public relations, marketing, and media strategy. Before joining the Prosecutor’s Office, Vilem rose up the ranks in Senator Brown’s Office, starting as an intern before becoming a Staff Assistant, Constituent Advocate, Press Assistant, and finally Deputy Press Secretary. In those roles, she handled constituent service requests, assisted with the development of digital media strategy, and served as Senator Brown’s spokesperson with state and national reporters. Vilem is an honors graduate of the University of South Carolina, where she was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

Community Outreach Coordinator: Mickey Valdez, formerly a Sexual Violence Specialist and Community Outreach Specialist, has transitioned to the role of Community Outreach Coordinator. In that role, she will coordinate the Office's efforts in organizing or attending scores of community events and educational programs, including the Office's innovative programs like the women's self-defense classes and Start by Believing campaign. Before starting with the Prosecutor's Office in November 2019, Valdez served as Director of Services for the Victim Assistance Program of Summit County, where she ensured that victims of crime received appropriate support and crisis services, and as a Family Advocate for the Children's Center of Medina County, where she worked with victims of child abuse and their families. She is a graduate of Oklahoma City University and holds a Certificate in Advanced Crime Analysis, Criminology, and Criminal Justice from Portland State University.

Major Trial Prosecutors: Ben Carro, Emily Hall, and Zach Neumann were promoted to Major Trial Prosecutors in the Adult Felony Unit of the Criminal Division. All three were previously Senior Prosecutors. In their new roles, they will handle prosecutions for homicides, sexual offenses, and other complex matters.

Carro has been admitted to the practice of law since 2013. He first served as a public defender in both Summit County and Wayne County before becoming an Assistant Prosecutor for the City of Akron. In 2019, Carro became an Assistant Summit County Prosecutor. He is a graduate of John Carrol University and the University of Akron School of Law.

Hall has also been admitted to the practice of law since 2013. In addition to her service in Summit County, she has served as an Assistant Prosecutor in Richland County, where she tried more than 25 felony jury trials. Hall is a graduate of Bowling Green State University and University of Toledo Law School.

Neumann has been admitted to the practice of law since 2015 and has spent his entire career as a licensed attorney with the Summit County Prosecutor's Office. He started in the Child Protection Unit handling abuse, neglect, and dependency cases in Juvenile Court to protect vulnerable children before transferring to the Adult Felony Unit in 2018. Neumann is an honors graduate of Loyola University of Chicago and the Ohio State University College of Law.

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