

---

**RESOLVING CIVIL CASES WHILE EMERGING FROM A PANDEMIC—  
A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION****Date:**

Wednesday, August 12, 2020

**Time:**

12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. CT

**ABOUT THIS WEBINAR:**

With current limitations on traditional civil jury trials in many states, courts and parties are re-examining alternatives such as bench trials, smaller juries, limitation of issues for trial and ADR options that may have been underutilized. A roundtable of experienced trial attorneys will discuss the pros and cons of the alternatives.

**THE PANELISTS:**

**CHRISTEN C. BLACKBURN** is an attorney with ALFA International member firm, Lewis Thomason, in Nashville, Tennessee. Christen focuses her practice on defending businesses and individuals in complex transportation, products liability and premises liability matters. A significant portion of her practice is devoted to the defense of local and national transportation companies and commercial motor vehicle drivers in high exposure cases. She also represents product manufacturers and retailers, including hospitality and food service providers in investigating and defending products liability and premises liability claims. Christen is active in ALFA International where she serves on the Steering Committee of the Hospitality & Retail and Product Liability & Complex Torts Practice Groups. She serves as the marketing chair of Product Liability & Complex Torts Practice Group. In addition, Christen is the chair of the Women's Initiative Practice Group.

**MELANIE R. CHEAIRS** is a shareholder with ALFA International member firm, Lorange Thompson P.C., in Houston, Texas. Her litigation and trial practice focuses on the hospitality and transportation industries where she represents a broad array of regional and national hotel and restaurant chains and transportation companies in their liability and employment matters. Melanie was recently awarded the prestigious ALFA International Nate Fishbach Attorney of the Year Award for outstanding service to ALFA International. She served a three-year term on the ALFA International Board of Directors from 2013–2016. She is a Chair Emeritus of the Hospitality & Retail Practice Group. Melanie currently serves ALFA International as the Chair of the ALFA International Marketing Committee. Melanie is also active on the Steering Committees of both the Transportation and Women's Initiative Practice Groups and participates in the National Association of Professional Women. Melanie is a frequent author and speaker on matters of importance to her industry clients. Melanie received her Juris Doctor in 1989 from South Texas College of Law- Houston. She is a Fellow with the Texas Bar Foundation. Melanie received her undergraduate degree from Texas A&M University, where she was an All-American Swimmer and was chosen to the Southwest Conference Women's All-Decade Team. As an avid Aggie, she served on the Board of Directors of the Texas A&M Women Former Student's Network and was WFSN President in 2012. Melanie currently serves as president of the Advisory Board of Youth For Christ- Houston, on the National Board of United Methodist Action Reach-Out Mission by Youth-(UM ARMY), and as the director for Kingwood United Methodist Church, UM ARMY Youth Camp.

**LANCE G. EBERHART** is CEO with ALFA International member firm, Hall & Evans, LLC, in Denver, Colorado. Lance practices in the area of complex civil litigation handling the defense of a full range of property and casualty matters including matters directly affecting the Transportation Industry. Prior to joining Hall & Evans, he had significant trial and appellate experience in the field of criminal defense. He is in numerous professional organizations and is a member of both the ALFA International Hospitality & Retail and Transportation Steering Committees. He was the 2016 ALFA International Hospitality & Retail Law Practice Group Chair. Lance is a graduate of the Washington University School of Law.

**ANTHONY W. LIVOTI** is a shareholder with ALFA International member firm, Murphy & Grantland, P.A., in Columbia, South Carolina. Anthony concentrates his practice in the areas of personal injury defense. As a certified circuit court mediator, much of his practice is also dedicated to alternative dispute resolution and mediations. He has presented numerous continuing legal education seminars on mediation and leadership. Prior to joining the firm, Anthony served for four years in the U.S. Navy as a surface warfare officer with two overseas deployments and was a defense trial attorney in the Columbia area. He is a member of the Richland County Bar Association, South Carolina Bar, International Association of Defense Counsel, South Carolina Defense Trial Attorneys Association, and the Defense Research Institute. He recently served a term as the president of the South Carolina Defense Trial Attorneys Association (SCDTAA), the preeminent defense attorney association in South Carolina, and was previously the secretary of SCDTAA (2014-2015) and treasurer (2015-2016). In 2019, Anthony was named the recipient of the Fred. H. Sievert Award in honor of his work in developing the Emerging Leaders Program for the SCDTAA. This nationwide award is presented by the Defense Research Institute (DRI) to an individual who "has made a significant contribution towards achieving the goals and objectives of the organized defense bar." All nominees "must be the current or past president of a state and local defense organization, who have initiated innovative projects for the betterment of the organization and exercised strong leadership." Anthony attended The Citadel, where he obtained his undergraduate degree in political science and graduated cum laude with his J.D. from the University of South Carolina School of Law. While in law school, he was the articles editor of the South Carolina Law Review and was also a member of the Order of Wig and Robe and Order of the Coif.

**CHRISTOPHER A. PAGE** is a partner with ALFA International member firm, Young Moore and Henderson, P.A., in Raleigh, North Carolina, where he is the leader of its Hospitality & Retail Industry Group. Chris is an experienced trial attorney, with special emphasis on the representation of clients in the hospitality & retail industries, where he represents a number of national clients with all of their legal needs, including claims relating to employment, business disputes, trademark infringement, false advertising, premises accidents and construction defects. After graduating summa cum laude from Duke University, Chris earned his law degree from the Yale Law School where he served as Senior Editor for the Yale Law Journal. Chris is the Chairman Emeritus of ALFAI's Hospitality & Retail Practice Group and is the former Chairman of ALFAI's Marketing Committee. He also serves on ALFAI's Board of Directors. Chris is a frequent speaker at ALFAI seminars and has created many presentations on a variety of litigation and management topics, including the 2018 opening session on the Innovation Imperative: Why Businesses Need to Create a Culture of Innovation to Survive.

**J. ALLEN SYDNOR, JR.** is a partner with ALFA International member firm, Huie, Fernambucq & Stewart LLP (Huie), in Birmingham, Alabama. Allen joined Huie in 1987 after four years with a labor firm where he represented unions and their members in Alabama, Virginia and Louisiana. He has tried cases to conclusion in federal and state courts and before administrative law judges in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Virginia. He focuses his practice on the defense of claims against health care providers, other professionals and pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers. He has also defended numerous general insurance, premises liability, product liability, breach of warranty, and motor vehicle accident claims involving serious injuries and deaths, including class actions. His practice has included appearances in matters pending in 52 of the Circuit Courts in Alabama as well as the

Alabama Supreme Court and the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Allen is AV-Rated by Martindale Hubbell and has been listed by The Best Lawyers in America for Medical Malpractice Law - Defendants since 2011. He is a member of the Defense Research Institute and the International Association of Defense Counsel, is a registered mediator with the Alabama Center for Dispute Resolution, and has been inducted into the International Academy of Trial Lawyers and the American Board of Trial Advocates. He has also been recognized by the Boy Scouts of America for his service as a Scoutmaster for a Birmingham Boy Scout Troop.