



**ALFA International**  
THE GLOBAL LEGAL NETWORK

# WOMEN'S INITIATIVE PRACTICE GROUP REGIONAL SEMINAR



**St. Louis, MO | March 30, 2022**

\*\*The program is approved for 2.9 hours of MO ethics/bias credit and is pending for approval of 2.5 hours of IL and KS ethics credit.

# SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

**Wednesday, March 30, 2022**

**Program at Live! By Loews Hotel**

799 Clark Avenue, St. Louis | Cardinals C Room

**2:30 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.**

**REGISTRATION**

**3:00 P.M. – 3:05 P.M.**

**WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS**

**Speakers:**

Cate Huff, GENTRY LOCKE, Roanoke, VA

Teresa Young, BROWN & JAMES, P.C., St. Louis, MO

**3:05 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.**

**LOOKING AT THE “MAN IN THE MIRROR:” TACKLING  
IMPLICIT BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE – WHAT YOU  
DON’T KNOW CAN HURT YOU**

**Speaker:**

Cate Huff, GENTRY LOCKE, Roanoke, VA

Kate Martz, BAYLOR EVNEN, LLP, Lincoln, NE

Implicit bias suggests that regardless of our conscious thoughts and feelings, subconsciously we carry biases that inherently affect how we view and treat people who are different from us. Companies and individuals who ignore the importance of understanding the challenges that implicit bias create in the workplace are at risk of (1) missing out on (or alienating) great talent; (2) failing to better understand their workforce; and (3) understanding how their biases affect their connections with clients, customers, and vendors. We will take a look in the mirror at our own implicit biases in this session and develop tools that will help you identify issues in your company, attract and retain great talent, improve productivity and ultimately positively affect your bottom line.

# SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

4:00 P.M. – 4:45 P.M.

## BLIND SPOTS: FINDING AND ADDRESSING POINTS OF DISAGREEMENT

### Speakers:

Melanie Cheairs, LORANCE THOMPSON, P.C., Houston, TX  
Jeaneen Johnson, SEMMES, BOWEN & SEMMES, Baltimore, MD

We can't all get along all the time, but we can find value in disagreement. This interactive session will address the incorrect beliefs and opinions surrounding constructive discourse and how we can incorporate points of disagreement into the decision-making process. When it comes to being women professionals, we have to find ways to point out to others when they are operating with blind spots and why some conclusions are just wrong. We will share examples of approaches to necessary discourse that don't come across as "complaints."

4:45 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

## BREAK

5:00 P.M. – 5:45 P.M.

## TRUE GRIT: HOW TO ACHIEVE ULTIMATE SUCCESS IN YOUR CAREER AND LIFE

### Speakers:

Denise Baker-Seal, BROWN & JAMES, P.C., Belleville, IL  
Jessica Holliday, BROWN & JAMES, P.C., Belleville, IL  
Megan Stumph-Turner, BAKER STERCHI COWDEN & RICE L.L.C., Kansas City, MO  
Teresa Young, BROWN & JAMES, P.C., St. Louis, MO

This session will involve a discussion of the podcast "[How to Turn Grit Into a Lifelong Habit](#)" with psychologist Dr. Angela Duckworth. After many years of research, Dr. Duckworth discovered the key factor in what it takes to persevere and succeed, not just in our careers but in all aspects of our lives: grit. She explains what constitutes grit and the experiences that make some persist while others give up, and offers concrete steps to instill and sustain grit. Group leaders will guide participants through conversation and exercise to further explore this concept.

# SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

5:45 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.



## ALFAI WELLNESS WORLDWIDE: CHAIR YOGA AND MEDITATION

Chair Yoga is a gentle form of yoga that can be done almost anywhere: sitting at your desk, riding the subway, or even flying on an airplane. Practicing regularly improves your flexibility and concentration, boosts your mood, and reduces stress and joint strain. Stacey will lead you through a quick practice of basic Chair Yoga poses so you can utilize these beneficial poses next time your feeling tension at work.

**STACEY STUFFLEBEAM** RYT 500/eRYT 200, is an online yoga teacher who has been teaching for over 15 years. Stacey specializes in helping high achievers find peace and joy in the present moment. For more information, contact Stacey at [stacey@staceystufflebeam.com](mailto:stacey@staceystufflebeam.com) or [@staceystufflebeam](https://www.instagram.com/staceystufflebeam) on Instagram.

**S O C I A L   E V E N T**



**GOODBYE YELLOW BRICK ROAD**  
**E L T O N   J O H N   C O N C E R T**

**ENTERPRISE CENTER SUITE**

**1401 Clark Ave, St. Louis**

**6:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M. Reception**

**8:00 P.M. Concert**



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980 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE, SUITE 1180 | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60611 | 312.642.2532

# SPEAKERS



**DENISE BAKER-SEAL** is a principal with the ALFA International law firm of Brown & James, P.C., practicing in the firm's Belleville, Illinois, office. Denise counsels clients inside and outside the courtroom on employment and complex litigation matters. She regularly defends employers in state and federal cases alleging harassment, discrimination and retaliation claims and offers guidance and training to help employers minimize the risk of workplace misconduct. Denise also handles cases involving catastrophic injuries, primarily in premises liability, product liability and transportation matters. In addition to her skills as a litigator, Denise is experienced in effective dispute resolution alternatives and regularly represents clients in mediations and arbitrations.



**MELANIE CHEAIRS** is a shareholder with ALFA International member firm Lorance 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.

# SPEAKERS



**JESSICA HOLLIDAY** is a principal at Brown & James, P.C. in the firm's Belleville, Illinois office. Jessica focuses her practice on employment matters. She defends employers in an array of matters, including harassment and discrimination claims under Title VII, the American with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Illinois Human Rights Act, as well as other federal and state issues. In addition to her employment practice, Jessica counsels and represents universities in Title IX matters, as well as defends companies and individuals in premises liability and transportation cases. She received her B.A. from the University of Tennessee in 2005 and her Juris Doctor from the St. Louis University School of Law in 2010. She is the Employment Law Chair for the Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel, and is a member of ALFA's Labor and Employment Law Steering Committee and Women's Initiative Steering Committee.



**CATE HUFF** is a partner with ALFA International member firm, Gentry Locke, in Roanoke, VA. Cate focuses her practice on labor and employment, professional liability and workers' compensation. She also advises businesses in the restaurant and hospitality industry on employment matters. Cate has tried a number of cases in both state and federal trial courts and has extensive experience with motions practice. Cate regularly speaks and conducts training on a variety of employment and workers' compensation issues in and outside of Virginia. She received her bachelor's degree from Virginia Tech and her J.D. from Liberty University.



**JEANEEN JOHNSON** is counsel to the law firm of Semmes, Bowen & Semmes, the ALFA International member firm in Baltimore, Maryland. She focuses her practice in general civil litigation, concentrating on life, health, and disability insurance defense and ERISA claims, administrative claims before insurance regulators, insurance coverage, and general liability defense. Jeaneen has also represented clients in EEOC matters and employment law cases. She practices in the state and federal courts of Maryland and the District of Columbia and is also admitted to practice in the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and the United States Supreme Court. She is an experienced mediator.

# SPEAKERS



**KATE MARTZ** is a partner with ALFA International member firm Baylor Evnen, LLP, in Lincoln, Nebraska. She is a member of the firm's litigation practice group and handles matters involving transportation, premises liability, employment and professional malpractice. Kate has successfully tried cases in Iowa and Nebraska and handled appeals in the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Kate strives to simplify complex issues and provide practical advice throughout litigation to best achieve her clients' goals. Kate is a member of ALFAI's Future Leaders Forum, Transportation steering committee, Women in the Law steering committee and Diversity and Inclusion Leaders Forum. She is a leader and firm representative in initiatives supporting diversity and inclusion in the legal field.



**MEGAN STUMPH-TURNER** is a member of Baker Sterchi Cowden and Rice LLC, the ALFA International member firm in Kansas City, Missouri. Megan's civil litigation practice includes creditors' rights, financial services, real estate, construction, and commercial litigation. Megan has successfully represented clients in thousands of cases throughout all stages of litigation, including bench and jury trials. While financial services and real estate litigation remain her primary area of focus, Megan's litigation practice has also included representation of defendants in commercial disputes, construction cases, employment litigation, and product liability claims. Megan has also been retained as an expert witness in litigation relating to a mortgage servicing dispute. Megan received her undergraduate degree from William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri, and her Juris Doctor from the University of Missouri – Columbia.



**TERESA YOUNG** is a principal with ALFA International member firm Brown & James, P.C., practicing in the firm's St. Louis, Missouri, office. Within her specialty of insurance defense, Teresa regularly takes on cases that fall into the category of complex litigation, including coverage analysis, multi-party and multi-jurisdictional cases, as well as cases that contain intricate factual or legal issues. She also consistently handles appellate matters for her insurance clients and was recently named an Influential Appellate Advocate by Missouri Lawyers Weekly for her work in bringing a seminal case on co-employee liability before the Missouri Supreme Court. She received her Bachelor's and Master's degree from the University of Kansas, and her J.D. from Washington University in St. Louis.