



ALFA International
THE GLOBAL LEGAL NETWORK

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION PRACTICE GROUP
REGIONAL SEMINAR**



St. Louis, MO | March 28, 2024

SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Thursday, March 28, 2024

Program at Live! by Loews

799 Clark Avenue | Cardinals C Room | St. Louis, MO

1:30 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.

REGISTRATION

2:00 P.M. – 2:05 P.M.

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Speakers:

Dan Sanchez, *Marketing Chair*, BROWN & JAMES, P.C., St. Louis, MO

Kevin Adrian, BROWN & JAMES, P.C., St. Louis, MO

2:05 P.M. – 2:55 P.M.

LET'S GET THE ZAMBONI ON THE ICE: TIPS AND TOOLS FOR RESURFACING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR TPA

Speakers:

Rebecca Baggett, *Managing Attorney*, AUTOZONE, Memphis, TN

Meredith Rainey, MORRISON MAHONEY LLP, Boston, MA

Jeff Laudenschick, GERMAN, GALLAGHER & MURTAGH, P.C., Philadelphia, PA

During this interactive panel, discussions will center around fostering a collaborative team effort between the employer, their attorney and the TPA to better streamline goals and expectations for the handling of claims.

2:55 P.M. – 3:45 P.M.

HOW TO SCOUT THE BLUES: A GAMEPLAN FOR DEFENDING PTSD CLAIMS

Speakers:

Dr. Michael E. Stachniak, D.O., FAPA, St. Louis, MO

Dan Sanchez, BROWN & JAMES, P.C., St. Louis, MO

Kevin Adrian, BROWN & JAMES, P.C., St. Louis, MO

This session will offer attorney and practitioner insights on PTSD claims, including a greater understanding of the condition and its diagnostic criteria, common comorbidities, levels of dysfunction, best practices for treatment and strategies for reacclimating affected workers.

3:45 P.M. – 3:55 P.M.

BREAK

SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

3:55 P.M. – 4:25 P.M.

DON'T END UP IN THE PENALTY BOX: PITFALLS TO AVOID AT THE INTERSECTION OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYMENT CLAIMS

Speakers:

Sandy Fralich, *President*, JWF SPECIALTY, Indianapolis, IN
Thomas Shires, BAYLOR EVNEN WOLFE & TANNEHILL, LLP, Lincoln, NE

The goal of this presentation is to provide advice to employers from both a workers' compensation perspective and an employment law perspective when an employee has a work injury. Often, the focus is on just the workers' compensation claim, and as such, this presentation looks at the effect workers' compensation decisions can have on employment claims and vice versa.

4:25 P.M. – 4:55 P.M.

SUCCESSION PLANNING: PASSING THE BATON WITHOUT DROPPING IT

Speakers:

Larry Morton, *Workers' Comp Director*, POOLCORP, Royal Oak, MI
Kendra Garstka, HALL & EVANS, LLC, Denver, CO
Doug Kotarek, HALL & EVANS, LLC, Denver, CO

In this presentation, the panel will discuss succession planning for law firms when the contact attorney either retires or leaves and how best to make a seamless and effortless transition to a new lawyer. We will address the three perspectives from the leaving/retiring partner, the succeeding partner and the client in order to learn how to avoid pitfalls and problems in the transition and how to provide the best possible service during and after the transition.

4:55 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

THANK YOU AND CLOSING REMARKS

Speakers:

Dan Sanchez, *Marketing Chair*, BROWN & JAMES, P.C., St. Louis, MO
Kevin Adrian, BROWN & JAMES, P.C., St. Louis, MO

5:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.

SOCIAL EVENT - PRIVATE SUITE AT HOCKEY GAME

Join attendees for an exclusive private suite experience including dinner and cocktails.

SOCIAL EVENT



ST. LOUIS BLUES

V.

**CALGARY FLAMES
HOCKEY GAME**



**PRIVATE SUITE AT ENTERPRISE CENTER
1401 Clark Avenue | St. Louis**

5:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.

SPEAKERS



KEVIN ADRIAN is a principal with Brown & James, P.C., the ALFA International Member firm in St. Louis, Missouri. Kevin is the chair of the firm's Workers' Compensation practice. He represents employers, businesses and insurers in all aspects of workers' compensation law and dispute resolution in Missouri and Illinois. He has represented clients in the retail, construction, manufacturing, nursing, shipping, transportation, educational and aviation sectors. His case experience ranges from minor injuries, such as lacerations and strains, to major claims involving amputations, toxic exposure and fatalities. Kevin previously served as chair and chair emeritus for ALFA's Workers' Compensation Steering Committee.



REBECCA BAGGETT is the Managing Attorney of Casualty Litigation for AutoZone, Inc. in Memphis, Tennessee. She began working with AutoZone in 2013 and managed employment litigation during her first four years as a Zoner. Before joining AutoZone's Legal Department, Rebecca served as Senior Counsel, Litigation Manager with Direct General Insurance and Senior Associate Counsel, Litigation Manager and Assistant Secretary of Regions Bank. Prior to working as in-house counsel, Rebecca represented businesses and individuals in civil litigation in the state and federal Courts of West Tennessee. Rebecca attended Christian Brothers University and obtained her J.D. from the University of Memphis, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law.

SPEAKERS



SANDY FRALICH is the President of JWF Speciality and is responsible for the overall service and growth strategies at JWF Specialty. Sandy has been responsible for solidifying JWF Specialty's position in the marketplace as a best-in-class TPA with a strong focus on client relationships. Sandy fosters teams who deliver customized program design and improvements that are measured for success. As an organizational leader, Sandy is dedicated to building JWF Specialty's culture through meaningful engagement and professional support for her colleagues. Sandy is a change-agent at JWF and in the marketplace, pushing the envelope on the status quo. Sandy served as Executive Director under 4 Governors and was a dedicated steward of the public trust. In that role, Sandy was responsible for agency administration; leading public policy discussions during legislative sessions; streamlining the administrative hearing process; creating efficiencies in agency responsibilities to the worker's compensation community; and, overseeing alternative and formal dispute resolution of more than 5000 worker's compensation disputes annually. Sandy has been a trusted resource nationwide, presenting topics on risk management, best practices, and fostering institutional change.



KENDRA GARSTKA is special counsel at Hall & Evans, LLC, ALFA International's member firm in Denver, Colorado. Her practice focuses on the representation of insurance carriers and employers in Colorado and Utah workers' compensation and subrogation cases. Kendra defends and argues cases before the Colorado Division of Workers' Compensation, the Utah Labor Commission and the Colorado Court of Appeals.



DOUG KOTAREK is a member of Hall & Evans, LLC, ALFA International's member firm in Denver, Colorado, where he heads the firm's Workers' Compensation Department. Since 1988, Doug has practiced insurance defense litigation, focusing exclusively on workers' compensation defense since 1992. He is currently on the Executive and Legislative Committees of the Colorado Self-Insurers' Association and lobbies the Colorado legislature regarding workers' compensation legislation for the Association. He is also on the Legal Advisory Board of the Colorado Civil Justice League as their workers' compensation advisor. Doug is a past chair of the ALFA International Workers' Compensation Practice Group.

SPEAKERS



JEFF LAUDENBACH is a partner with German, Gallagher & Murtagh, P.C., ALFA International's member firm in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Jeff is a graduate of Lehigh University and Widener School of Law and has over 25 years of experience litigating workers' compensation and employment-related matters. His practice involves representing employers in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of New Jersey. He has developed a national client base through client education, communication and goal-oriented results. In addition to his litigation experience, he served as vice president of a privately held business where he was responsible for the legal, operational, retail web development and financial management matters. Jeff served as the program chair for the 2014 ALFA Workers' Compensation Program in Charleston, SC, and was the former chair of ALFA's Workers' Compensation Practice Group. He is a former member of the ALFA Board of Directors and has been recognized in the 2008-2023 editions of Super Lawyers® for the practice area of workers' compensation defense litigation.



LARRY MORTON has 47 years of claim experience in the workers' compensation and liability field working for insurance companies, a third party claim administrator, and insurance brokerage. The last 30 years were in the role of brokerage claim consultant in various positions of leadership, for Marsh USA in San Francisco, Dallas, Chicago and Detroit, prior to retirement in 2019. He joined Pool Corporation in a part time workers' compensation role consulting overseeing the national WC program.

SPEAKERS



MEREDITH RAINEY is a partner with Morrison Mahoney LLP, ALFA International's member firm in Boston, Massachusetts. She specializes in workers' compensation and represents numerous national self-insurers, insurers and third-party administrators throughout all stages of litigation at the Department of Industrial Accidents. Meredith is an active member of the ALFAI's Workers' Compensation steering committee, a current faculty member and speaker for the Workers' Compensation Section of the Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education, and a former faculty member at Roger Williams University. She is also the former president of the Fall River Bar Association and the co-chair of the Women's Initiative Group and Hiring Committee within her firm. Meredith frequently speaks and provides training seminars throughout the country on the workers' compensation law in Massachusetts.



DAN SANCHEZ is a senior associate with Brown & James, P.C., ALFA International's member firm in St. Louis, Missouri. His practice focuses primarily on workers' compensation cases in Missouri and Illinois. However, he also has experience in general civil litigation, defending cases involving auto accidents, discrimination, pharmacy liability and prisoners' allegations of civil rights violations. He has defended workers' compensation claims at all stages, from initial filing to appellate oral argument. Dan is the marketing chair of ALFAI's Workers' Compensation Practice Group.



THOMAS SHIRES is a partner with Baylor Evnen Wolfe & Tannehill, LLP, ALFA International's member firm in Lincoln, Nebraska. Tom handles workers' compensation matters in Nebraska and Iowa for a broad range of clients, from local family-owned businesses to large national corporations. He focuses his practice on understanding his client's businesses and tailoring individual workers' compensation and litigation strategies to meet individual businesses' needs. Tom has given numerous presentations to employers and insurers on workers' compensation issues.

S P E A K E R S



DR. MICHAEL E. STACHNIAK, D.O. is a practicing psychiatrist in private practice in the St. Louis region. He graduated medical school from Midwestern University in Chicago and completed both his General Adult Psychiatry Residency as well as his Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Washington D.C. He presented his graduation research dissertation at John Hopkin's prior to leaving the National Capital Region. He practiced as an army psychiatrist for over a decade assessing, diagnosing, and treating PTSD and various other psychiatric diagnoses with active-duty soldiers and their dependents. He holds double board certification in both Adult Psychiatry as well as Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.