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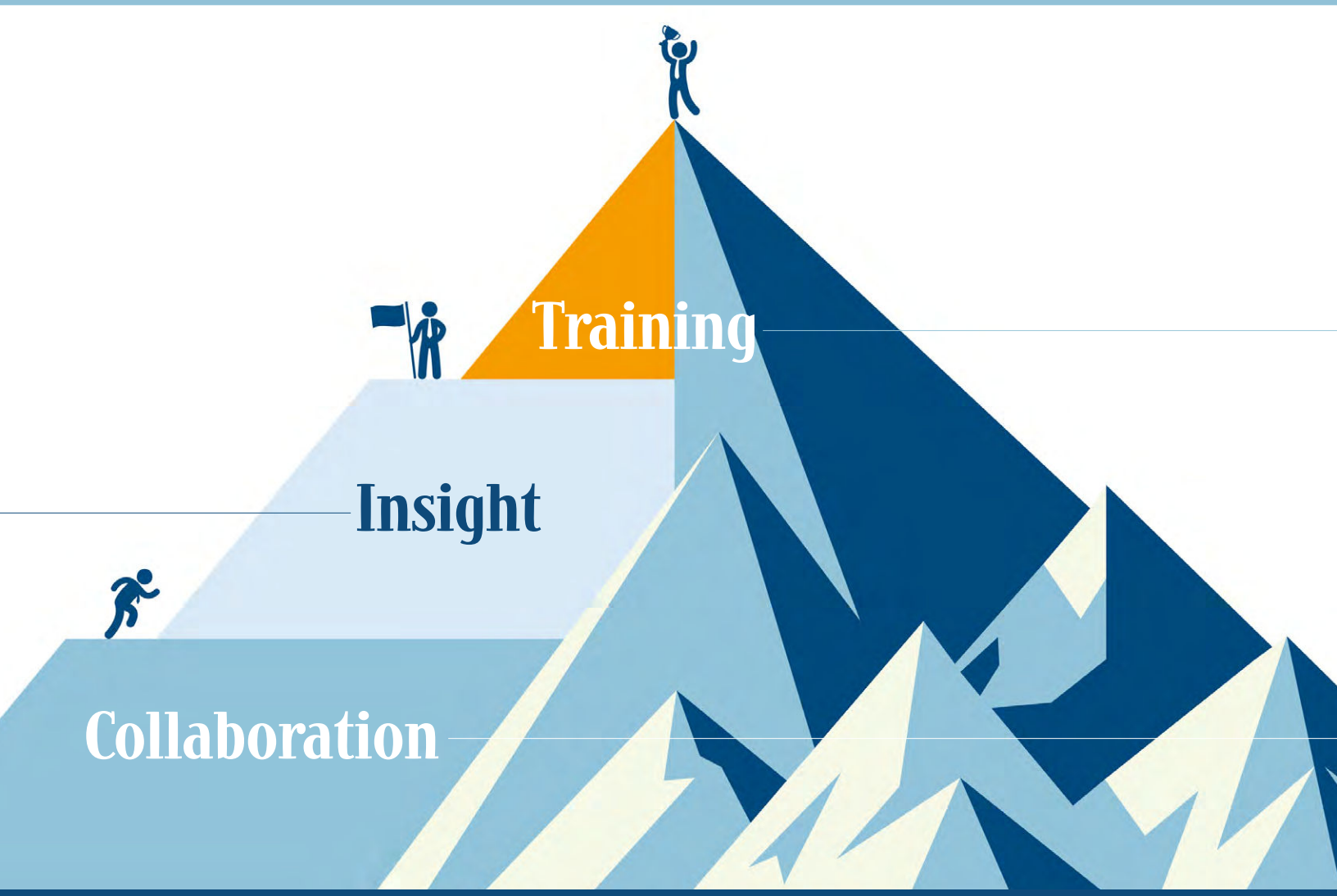

Workers' Compensation at Altitude—Rising Together

2026 WORKERS' COMPENSATION PRACTICE GROUP SEMINAR

SEPTEMBER 9-11, 2026

THE FLYING HORSE RESORT & CLUB | COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

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2025-2026 WORKERS' COMPENSATION PRACTICE GROUP LEADERSHIP

Grace Garcia
Chair, ALFA International Board of Directors
MORRISON MAHONEY LLP
Fall River, Massachusetts

Shannon Blair
Chair, Workers' Compensation Practice Group
HAIGHT BROWN & BONESTEEL LLP
Los Angeles, California

Tom Shires
2026 Program Chair, Workers' Compensation Practice Group Seminar
BAYLOR EVNEN WOLFE & TANNEHILL, LLP
Lincoln, Nebraska

Lauren Hutcheson
Marketing Chair, Workers' Compensation Practice Group
MCCANDLISH HOLTON, PC
Richmond, Virginia

Meredith Rainey
Chair Emeritus, Workers' Compensation Practice Group
MORRISON MAHONEY LLP
Fall River, Massachusetts

Kendra Garstka
Course Book Editor & Co-Compendia Editor
HALL & EVANS, LLC
Denver, Colorado

Julie Murray
Co-Compendia Editor
SEMMES, BOWEN & SEMMES
Baltimore, Maryland

WHAT IS ALFA INTERNATIONAL?

ALFA International is the premier network of independent law firms. Founded in 1980, ALFA International was the first and continues to be one of the largest and strongest legal networks. We have 140 member firms throughout the world. Our 80 U.S. firms represent 95 of the 100 largest metropolitan areas. Our 60 international firms are located throughout Europe, Asia, Australia/New Zealand, Africa, Canada, Mexico and South America.

ALFA International's mission is to provide high quality, cost efficient legal services wherever our clients need them. The ALFA International model enables our members to use their local expertise to deliver highly effective legal solutions, often drawing upon the collective wisdom and experience of other member firms. ALFA International clients benefit from a geographically comprehensive network of exceptional law firms and accomplished trial and business counsel. Our member firms meet high standards to be part of the ALFA International network and are well respected by their peers in the legal and business community.

Workers' Compensation at Altitude—Rising Together Through Training, Insight and Collaboration

2026 WORKERS' COMPENSATION PRACTICE GROUP SEMINAR

SEPTEMBER 9-11, 2026
THE FLYING HORSE RESORT & CLUB
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

The ALFA International Workers' Compensation Practice Group invites you to the 2026 Workers' Compensation Seminar to be held in beautiful Colorado Springs, Colorado from September 9th through September 11th. This seminar will provide timely and useful topics in an effort to assist with navigating the mountainous landscape of the everchanging practice of workers' compensation.

During this collaborative program led by experienced workers' compensation defense attorneys and representatives from numerous national and international companies, attendees will benefit from information and discussions to provide education for their daily climbs in this challenging practice. The comradery of the attendees will spark useful discussions during all aspects of the seminar.

The general session topics include: Hot Topics in Workers' Compensation; Global Settlements; Head Injuries & Concussion Claims; Multijurisdictional Claims; Catastrophic Claims and Claim Management. There will also be informative TIPS given throughout the program by various attendees. In addition to the educational portion, there will be ample time and opportunity to network and collaborate with colleagues and enjoy the amazing scenery. As well as the Women's Initiative Event and an interactive Game Show networking challenge.

We look forward to seeing you in Colorado Springs this September for the ALFA International Workers' Compensation Practice Group Seminar.

Tom Shires
2026 Program Chair, Workers' Compensation Practice Group Seminar
BAYLOR EVNEN WOLFE & TANNEHILL, LLP
Lincoln, Nebraska

ALL ABOUT FLYING HORSE

Nestled in the heart of Colorado Springs with sweeping views of the majestic Rocky Mountains, The Club at Flying Horse is a luxury resort destination combining elegance, recreation, and natural beauty. The property is home to two private 18-hole championship golf courses, a European resort-style Athletic Club and Spa, and world-class dining. Guests can relax in luxurious lodge accommodation or explore the surrounding Pikes Peak region, rich in outdoor adventure and cultural attractions. The closest airport is Colorado Springs Airport, located approximately 30 minutes from the resort. Taxi or rideshare is the suggested mode of transport to The Club at Flying Horse.

2:00 p.m. –6:00 p.m.

EARLY REGISTRATION

Barolo Lobby

The Flying Horse Resort & Club

2:00 p.m. –5:00 p.m.

FACULTY REHEARSAL

Barolo

*All moderators are encouraged to use this time to set-up a meeting with their panelists to review their session materials.

3:00 p.m. –4:00 p.m.

CLIENT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Verona

*Open to members of the Workers' Compensation Client Advisory Board & Practice Group Leadership.

4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE EVENT:

Uncork & Unwind

Turin & Patio

Sip, savor, and connect at this thoughtfully curated wine tasting! This relaxed and engaging experience offers the perfect setting to build meaningful relationships, share perspectives, and celebrate the power of connection while enjoying a selection of exceptional wines.

Lori Allen
Women's Initiative Liaison
YOUNG MOORE AND HENDERSON, P.A.
Raleigh, North Carolina

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

CLIENT ONLY COCKTAIL HOUR

Barolo Terrace

5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

ALL ALFA INTERNATIONAL ATTORNEY MEETING

Barolo

*All ALFA International attorneys are required to attend.

6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Welcome Reception, Buffet Dinner & Registration

Courtyard

Set against the stunning backdrop of the Flying Horse Resort & Club, this outdoor Welcome Reception and Dinner offer a relaxed and memorable start to the program, with beautiful courtyard views of the mountains. This evening sets the stage for meaningful connections, fresh perspectives, and collaboration in an elevated setting.

Suggested attire: Come as you are! It is recommended to bring a light jacket or layering, as temperatures may cool later in the evening.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

BREAKFAST BUFFET

Fortezza Dining Room & Patio

9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

PROGRAM SESSIONS

Barolo

9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Grace Garcia
Chair, ALFA International Board of Directors
MORRISON MAHONEY LLP
Boston, Massachusetts

Shannon Blair
Chair, Workers' Compensation Practice Group
HAIGHT BROWN & BONESTEEL LLP
Los Angeles, California

Jessica Zaroski Bauer
Chief Executive Officer
ALFA INTERNATIONAL
Chicago, Illinois

Tom Shires
2026 Program Chair, Workers' Compensation Practice Group Seminar
BAYLOR EVNEN WOLFE & TANNEHILL, LLP
Lincoln, Nebraska

9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Hot Topics in Workers' Compensation: Emerging Trends, Legal Developments, and Practical Strategies

This session will explore how workers' compensation continues to evolve in response to changes in the workforce, legal environment, and claims management practices. Topics will include recent developments, emerging issues, and practical considerations for handling claims efficiently. The program is designed to provide a well-rounded perspective to help navigate day-to-day issues and improve overall outcomes.

Julie Murray
Moderator
SEMMES, BOWEN & SEMMES
Baltimore, Maryland

Asher Laliberte
Claims Manager
SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC
Foxboro, Massachusetts

Kendra Garstka
HALL & EVANS, LLC
Denver, Colorado

ALFA International
THE GLOBAL LEGAL NETWORK

10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

FIRST PANEL OF 5 TIPS

During this insightful section of the program, and one additional section that will occur later in the program, ALFA International attorneys and clients will provide valuable tips and strategies to assist you in the administration of your workers' compensation claims. They will share their experience, knowledge gained and lessons learned from years of successfully handling workers' compensation cases throughout the United States.

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

BREAK

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Art of the Global Settlement

When it comes time to settle your case, you want a complete divorce. Can one settlement resolve all of your headaches with your most challenging case? This panel will walk you through this process. With presenters from various areas of the law and with an employer's perspective, discussion will cover relevant workers' compensation and employment-related issues, strategies and pitfalls to help you achieve that elusive global settlement.

Bo Boyd
Moderator
TAYLOR, DAY, GRIMM, & BOYD
Jacksonville, Florida

PJ Burder
Workers' Compensation Claim Coordinator
ENCOMPASS HEALTH
Birmingham, Alabama

Andrew Ringel
HALL & EVANS, LLC
Denver, Colorado

11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

LUNCH BUFFET

Fortezza Dining Room & Patio

12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Clinical and Legal Approaches to Managing TBI Claims

This session will address strategies for effectively defending and mitigating Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) workers' compensation claims. Effective defense of TBI claims require a proactive, evidence-based approach to address high-cost, subjective symptoms and potential long-term liability. Effective strategies focus on early investigation, expert medical analysis and validating the legitimacy of reported cognitive or behavioral changes.

Kenny Veit
Moderator
LEITNER, WILLIAMS, DOOLEY & NAPOLITAN, PLLC
Brentwood, Tennessee

Dr. Suzanne Kenneally
Clinical Psychologist and Neuropsychologist
OFFICE OF DR. SUZANNE KENNEALLY
Littleton, Colorado

Lauren Hutcheson
MCCANDLISH HOLTON, PC
Richmond, Virgina

1:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

SECOND PANEL OF 5 TIPS

2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m

BREAK

2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Riding the Multi State Range: Navigating WC Claims Across Jurisdictions in the Wild West and Beyond

Join us for a dynamic and practical panel discussion on the unique challenges of multi-jurisdiction workers' compensation claims and exposures. This session will explore how employers can effectively manage claims that cross state lines with conflicting benefit structures, jurisdictional disputes to complex coverage issues and aggressive claimant strategies. We will discuss real claim scenarios and practical takeaways leaving you with actionable strategies to tame the complexities of multi-jurisdiction workers' comp claims in today's mobile workforce.

Doug Kotarek
Moderator
HALL & EVANS, LLC
Denver, Colorado

Kerri Kevlin
Workers' Compensation Manager
SAFELITE GROUP
Columbus, Ohio

Sandi Adkins
Senior Claims Manager
INS INSURANCE, INC.
Green Bay, Wisconsin

Jeff Laudenbach
GERMAN, GALLAGHER
& MURTAGH, P.C.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Game On: The Networking Challenge

Barolo

A. B. C. D.

Get ready for a high-energy, interactive game experience that blends quick thinking, teamwork, and a little bit of luck. Attendees will compete in a series of fast-paced, game show-style challenges—ranging from classic favorites to creative new concepts—designed to spark collaboration and friendly competition. With live hosting, buzzers, music, and dynamic production, this engaging activity brings teams together for an unforgettable networking experience.

6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Winners' Table: A Steakhouse Dinner Experience

Steakhouse Restaurant

Unwind after an energizing afternoon with a refined steakhouse dining experience at Flying Horse Resort & Club. Guests will enjoy a thoughtfully curated plated dinner in an elegant setting, perfect for continued conversation and connection. This evening offers the ideal blend of exceptional cuisine and relaxed networking.

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

BREAKFAST BUFFET

Fortezza Dining Room & Patio

9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

PROGRAM SESSIONS

Barolo

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Avoiding Landslides with Catastrophic Claims

This session will involve discussions amongst those with extensive experience and involvement pertaining to catastrophic and complex claims. Panelists will explore and emphasize the need for focus on the injured worker and family members while simultaneously reducing future financial exposure. Industry experts will further discuss the important role that nurse case managers serve as liaisons.

Meredith Rainey
Moderator
MORRISON MAHONEY LLP
Boston, Massachusetts

Kevin O'Shea
Senior Manager – Risk and Safety
UPBOUND GROUP, INC.
Plano, Texas

Maurice "Moe" Mock
Case Manager
ISYS SOLUTIONS
Brea, California

Arwen Arnold
Risk Manager
REPUBLIC AIRLINES
Indianapolis, Indiana

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

3RD PANEL OF 5 TIPS

10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

BREAK

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

ALFA INTERNATIONAL HQ UPDATE

This session will provide an overview of many new and some improved offerings available at ALFAI as well as resources and opportunities available to our clients.

Jessica Zaroski Bauer
Chief Executive Officer
ALFA INTERNATIONAL
Chicago, Illinois

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Claims Management: End-to-End Strategies for Success

This presentation will provide an overview of workers' compensation claims management, focusing on strategies to effectively handle claims across multiple jurisdictions to ensure cost control and optimal employee outcomes. We will discuss claims management in the context of the lifecycle of a workers' compensation claim—from the investigation of newly report claims, to medical management, to return-to-work programs and ultimately, claim closure. We will discuss identification of trends and implementation of best practices that reduce claim duration and overall costs.

Lori Allen
Moderator
YOUNG MOORE AND HENDERSON, P.A.
Raleigh, North Carolina

Alyssum Schluter
Workers' Compensation Claims Specialist
WASTE CONNECTIONS
The Woodlands, Texas

Janice Matson
Vice President, Litigation and Risk
BLOOMIN' BRANDS
Tampa, Florida

Jason Bonnet
LEAKE ANDERSSON
Lafayette, Louisiana

11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

CLOSING REMARKS

Shannon Blair
Chair, Workers' Compensation Practice Group
HAIGHT BROWN & BONESTEEL LLP
Los Angeles, California

Tom Shires
2026 Program Chair, Workers' Compensation Practice Group Seminar
BAYLOR EVNEN WOLFE & TANNEHILL, LLP
Lincoln, Nebraska

FACULTY BIOS

SANDI ADKINS is a Senior Claims Manager with INS, Schneider's captive insurance company. Sandi is actively engaged in the strategic direction of legal risk management and is responsible for the oversight of workers' compensation and cargo claims management. Sandi is a naturally analytical person and enjoys investigation and developing end-to-end strategies that enable efficiency, productivity, cost savings, and optimal customer experiences. The most important parts of Sandi's life are her husband and three rambunctious boys. In her free time, Sandi likes to read, cook, play piano, coach, and spend time with her family outdoors.

LORI ALLEN focuses her practice on workers' compensation defense, representing employers and insurers across North Carolina. She advises clients in the manufacturing, healthcare, transportation, hospitality, and retail industries and defends claims through all stages of litigation before the North Carolina Industrial Commission. complete her law degree at the UNC School of Law. She brings 15 years of experience to her handling of complex workers' compensation issues and is known for her skill in providing efficient and effective resolutions for her clients. Lori handles complex medical issues in injury by accident and occupational disease claims, including catastrophic injuries, asbestosis and death claims. She frequently provides seminars and risk management presentations regarding North Carolina law and best practices. She is named in The Best Lawyers in America© in the area of Workers' Compensation Law – Employers.

SHANNON BLAIR is a partner from Haight Brown & Bonesteel LLP, the ALFA International member firm in Los Angeles, California. She is a Certified Specialist in Workers' Compensation Law by the State Bar of California Board of Legal Specialization. Shannon's practice focuses on

Lori handles complex claims and develops practical strategies to resolve disputes efficiently—whether through negotiated settlements or contested hearings. She is known for providing clear guidance and responsive service, helping clients navigate the legal and operational challenges that arise in workplace injury claims. Lori has been recognized in The Best Lawyers in America® for Workers' Compensation Law – Employers (2024–2026) and was named "Lawyer of the Year" in Raleigh, North Carolina (2026) for her work in this area. A graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Lori earned her undergraduate degree with highest distinction and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. She also received her J.D. from the University of North Carolina School of Law, where she earned the Gressman-Pollitt Award for excellence in appellate oral advocacy. A Raleigh resident, Lori enjoys spending time with her husband and two sons and cheering on her Tar Heels.

JESSICA ZAROSKI BAUER joined ALFA International (ALFAI) in 2004 as a Coordinator of Events & Member Services. She then worked for several years as a Marketing Manager, Chief Events Officer and Chief Operating Officer. After 17 years with the association, she accepted her current role as Chief Executive Officer. In this position she is the strategic thought leader of the organization, working closely with the Board of Directors and the various ALFAI committees. She manages headquarters staff and maintains constant communication with association members. Jessica oversees the member recruitment, development and retention programs as well as the marketing and business development initiatives for the organization. Prior to joining ALFA International, she worked in the marketing department of the Chicago-based law firm of Gardner, Carton & Douglas, LLP (now Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath). She is a graduate of the University of Iowa Tippie College of Business (Go Hawkeyes!) and is an avid college football fan. In her spare time Jessica can be found enjoying family time with her husband Harry and her two young daughters, Greta and Vivian. She also enjoys swimming in Lake Michigan, playing beach volleyball and watching Oscar nominated movies.

JASON R. BONNET is a Partner at Leake Andersson, the ALFA International member firm in New Orleans and Lafayette, Louisiana. Jason is a native of New Orleans and earned his undergraduate degree from Louisiana State University. After graduating from Louisiana State University Law School in 2003, he has concentrated his practice on assisting employers with all aspects of a workplace accidents including workers' compensation defense, OSHA investigation response, insurance coverage, subrogation and casualty defense throughout the entire state of Louisiana. Jason has participated as a speaker in various seminars and published materials in the areas of workers' compensation. Jason has been "AV Rated" by Martindale Hubble and was named as the "Ones to Watch: Law" by New Orleans City Business. He is a member of the New Orleans Bar Association, Louisiana Bar Association, Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel, New Orleans Association of Defense Counsel, and he is admitted to practice in all state and federal courts in Louisiana.

CHRISTOPHER "BO" BOYD is a shareholder at Taylor, Day, Grimm & Boyd, the ALFA International member firm in Jacksonville, Florida, where he heads the firm's workers' compensation practice group. Bo joined the firm immediately after graduating from law school in 1992 and became a shareholder in 1997. Bo's practice focuses on the defense of claims filed under the Florida Workers' Compensation Act, the Defense Base Act and the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act. Bo frequently speaks at professional organizations' seminars on topics relevant to the defense of employers, self-insureds and insurance carriers in all areas of his practice.

PJ BURDER is a Senior Workers' Compensation Coordinator with Encompass Health Corporation, the nation's largest provider of inpatient rehabilitation care, with 175 hospitals across 36 states and more than 30,000 employees. In her role, she manages multi-state workers' compensation claims in collaboration with adjusters, attorneys, and hospital leadership teams. She specializes in risk management, compliance, injury management, and claims resolution strategies. PJ holds a Workers Recovery Professional Associate (WRPA) designation and is fluent in Spanish, allowing her to effectively communicate with and support diverse employee populations. She is passionate about improving communication and efficiency within the workers' compensation process while maintaining a people-first approach. Outside her career, she is a wife and mother who values resilience, adaptability, and balancing professional leadership with everyday life. She is passionate about contributing to conversations that improve workplace injury management, employee recovery outcomes, and the future of risk management.

GRACE V.B. GARCIA, a Partner in the Boston office of ALFA International member firm Morrison Mahoney LLP, concentrates her practice in the areas of product liability, construction law – including personal injury, construction defect, and contractual - OSHA, commercial litigation, employment litigation, premises liability and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) cases. Grace currently serves as Chair of ALFA International's Board of Directors, and is a former Chair of both ALFA International's Construction Practice Group and Women's Initiative Practice Group. Grace has an AV Preeminent Rating from Martindale Hubbell and in 2020 she was honored by Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly with its "Circle of Excellence" after being honored in 2013 as a "Top Women of Law." Grace has over 25 years of trial practice and litigation experience and has obtained successful outcomes on behalf of her clients in both state and Federal Court trials. She also has successfully argued before the Appeals Court. Beyond ALFA, she is actively involved in many professional groups, and is the Immediate Past-President of the Massachusetts Bar Association. Grace is also a past President of the Massachusetts Defense Lawyers Association and past DRI State Representative for Massachusetts. She is a routine lecturer on defending brain injuries, risk transfer and indemnity issues, best discovery practices and deposition techniques, and OSHA.

KENDRA GARSTKA is an attorney with Hall & Evans, LLC, ALFA International's member firm in Denver, Colorado. Kendra focuses her practice 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.

LAUREN HUTCHESON is a Partner at the ALFA International law firm of McCandlish Holton in Richmond, Virginia. She graduated from Penn State University with a BA in Pre-Law and obtained her JD from the University of Richmond. Ms. Hutcheson began practicing law in 1999 and specializes in workers' compensation and civil litigation defense. She represents numerous employers, insurers and third-party administrators in all aspects of Virginia workers' compensation law. She frequently defends employers and insurers in claims pending before the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission and Virginia Court of Appeals. In addition, Ms. Hutcheson frequently trains and advises insurers and third party administrators on best practices to handle claims to avoid unnecessary litigation. Ms. Hutcheson is an active member of the ALFA steering committee for the Workers' Compensation Practice Group.

DR. SUZANNE KENNEALLY received her doctorate in Psychology from the University of Denver in 1992. She completed 3 additional post- doctoral years of education and supervision in neuropsychology. She has been a practicing clinical neuropsychologist and licensed clinical psychologist in Denver for the past 30 years. She sees a broad cross-section of adults - providing neuropsychological and psychological evaluation and treatment. Particular areas of interest are: traumatic brain injury, dementia, progressive neurologic disorders, and chronic pain. Dr. Kenneally is a member of the National Academy of Neuropsychology, the American Psychological Association, and past president of the Colorado Neuropsychological Society.

DOUG KOTAREK is a member of Hall & Evans, LLC, the ALFA International 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.

ASHER LALIBERTE is the Claims Manager for Schneider Electric. Schneider Electric is a multinational company headquartered outside of Paris, France and operates in 100 countries with a workforce of over 135,000. The company provides energy and automation digital products for efficiency and sustainability. It addresses homes, buildings, data centers, infrastructure and industries, by combining energy technologies, real-time automation, software and services. Ashers' primary responsibilities include management of the US workers compensation program, defense of various product and general liability claims and cargo for the US and Canada. Asher has over 18 years of experience in managing claims for a regional insurance carrier including; The Hanover Insurance Group. Outside of work, Asher is a beekeeper and mentor to new beekeepers. He is a graduate of Nichols College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History. He holds a SCLA designation from the Society of Claim Law Associates. He has a son and daughter and resides in Massachusetts with his wife, Miranda.

JEFF LAUDENBACH is a partner with ALFA International member firm, German, Gallagher & Murtagh, P.C., 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. Mr. Laudenbach's practice involves representing employers in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and 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 to a privately held business where he was responsible for the legal, operational, retail web development and financial management matters. Mr. Laudenbach served as the Program Chair for the 2014 ALFA Workers' Compensation Program in Charleston, SC, and former chair for ALFA International's Workers' Compensation Practice Group. He is a former member of the ALFA International Board of Directors and has been recognized in the 2008-2023 editions of Super Lawyers® for the practice area of workers' compensation defense litigation.

JANICE MATSON is Vice President of Litigation and Risk at Bloomin' Brands, Inc., where she leads the company's U.S. commercial litigation and general liability and workers' compensation programs while partnering cross-functionally with operations, accounting, finance, development, and asset management teams to manage enterprise risk across the business. In her role, Janice oversees a high-volume, nationwide portfolio while driving strategies focused on early resolution, cost control, and consistency in outcomes. She works closely with third-party administrators, defense counsel, and operations teams to ensure litigation and claims handling reflects the realities of a complex, multi-brand restaurant environment. She is particularly focused on building scalable processes, improving claim intake and triage, and leveraging data and partnerships to reduce claim frequency and severity. Her approach is grounded in bridging the gap between legal, risk, and operations so that business realities inform strategy and decision-making.

KEVIN O'SHEA recently rejoined Upbound Group, Inc. (dba RentACenter) as Senior Manager – Risk & Safety, returning to the organization for his sixth year with an expanded leadership mandate. In this role, Kevin has broad oversight of Enterprise Risk Management, including Insurance, Loss Control, Safety, and all Insurance Claims programs, reflecting a significant evolution from his prior responsibilities and reinforcing Upbound Group's commitment to proactive risk and safety excellence. Prior to rejoining Upbound Group, Kevin served as Senior Risk Analyst at Lennox International, a global leader in residential and commercial HVAC solutions. Across 34 years in the Workers' Compensation industry, Kevin has built a deep and comprehensive career that spans both the carrier/TPA and employer sides of the business. Much of Kevin's early career was rooted in the Workers' Compensation claims world, where he held progressively senior roles including Senior Adjuster, Complex Claims Manager, and Supervisor, managing claims nationwide and in Puerto Rico. Over the last 14 years on the employer side, Kevin has distinguished himself by designing and leading highly successful Workers' Compensation programs that significantly reduced costs while ensuring employees received timely, highquality medical care. Throughout his career, Kevin has partnered closely with Loss Control, Risk Management, InHouse Legal, Safety, and Operations, as well as ThirdParty Administrators, Insurance Brokers and Carriers, Defense Counsel, and Managed Care vendors. His collaborative, outcomesdriven approach has consistently strengthened claims performance, compliance, and employee wellbeing. With his return to Upbound Group, Kevin now brings this extensive background to a broader Risk Manager–level role, providing strategic oversight across the organization and driving alignment between safety, insurance, and claims to support both employee protection and business objectives.

MEREDITH RAINEY is a Partner at the ALFA International law firm of Morrison Mahoney LLP in Fall River, Massachusetts. She specializes in the area of workers' compensation and represents numerous national self-insurers, insurers and third-party administrators throughout all stages of litigation at the Department of Industrial Accidents. Ms. Rainey is an active member of the ALFAI steering committee for the Workers' Compensation Practice Group, 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. Ms. Rainey frequently speaks and provides training seminars throughout the country on the workers' compensation law in Massachusetts.

TOM SHIRES is an attorney 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. Tom focuses his practice on understanding his client's business and tailoring individual workers' compensation and litigation strategies to meet the individual business's needs. Tom has given numerous presentations to employers and insurers on workers' compensation issues.

KENNETH D. VEIT is a Member of Leitner, Williams, Dooley, & Napolitan, PLLC, the ALFA International firm in Nashville, Tennessee. Mr. Veit has been practicing law since 2003 with a primary focus on workers compensation defense throughout Tennessee and Kentucky. Mr. Veit represents clients at administrative, trial and appellate levels. He is an active member of the ALFA International Workers' Compensation Practice Group, including a member of the ALFAI steering committee. Mr. Veit is also a member of the American Bar Association, Tennessee and Nashville Bar Associations, Kentucky Bar Association, Defense Research Institute, and Tennessee Defense Lawyers Association. Mr. Veit is regularly asked to present lectures on Tennessee Workers' Compensation to employers and insurance companies.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

MEETING LOCATION

The Flying Horse Resort & Club
1880 Weiskopf Point
Colorado Springs, CO 80921
Tel: (719) 494-1222
Hotel Website

REGISTRATION

Please contact ALFA International Headquarters to register.

ATTENDANCE IS OPEN ONLY TO MEMBERS OF ALFA INTERNATIONAL AND THEIR INVITED GUESTS AND IS LIMITED TO AGES 21+.

ATTIRE

The attire for the educational sessions throughout the conference, and for the dinners on Wednesday and Thursday night, is business casual.

CLE CREDIT

ALFA International is an approved CLE provider in Illinois, California & Pennsylvania and certifies this program has been approved for six hours of general CLE in these states. However, seminars are designed to meet CLE requirements, regardless of jurisdiction. To receive CLE credit outside of these states, attorneys should apply directly to their state's governing CLE board. Helpful links and information on how to apply for course credit are available on the ALFA International website and staff are available to assist with any concerns.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION

If you need any special accommodations including a nursing room, special dietary meals, ADA access or other needs, please reach out to ALFAI staff in advance of the meeting and we will ensure that necessary accommodations are provided.

SEMINAR CONTACT

Halle Sweis
hsweis@alfainternational.com

STAY CONNECTED WITH ALFA INTERNATIONAL

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