



ALFA International
THE GLOBAL LEGAL NETWORK

**HOSPITALITY & RETAIL PRACTICE GROUP
REGIONAL SEMINAR**



Chicago, IL | August 28, 2023

SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Monday, August 28, 2023

Program at Johnson & Bell, Ltd.

33 West Monroe Street, Chicago | Conference Room on 12th Floor

2:00 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.

REGISTRATION

2:30 P.M. – 2:40 P.M.

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Speakers:

Kimberly Harris, *Regional Programming Co-Chair*, QUILLING, SELANDER, LOWNDS, WINSLETT & MOSER, P.C., Dallas, TX

Julia Jimenez, *Regional Programming Co-Chair*, DANIEL COKER, Oxford, MS

2:40 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

“WHISTLE WHILE YOU WORK” OR “TAKE THIS JOB AND SHOVE IT”? MENTORING & RETAINING EMPLOYEES

Speakers:

Torie Abbott, QUILLING, SELANDER, LOWNDS, WINSLETT & MOSER, P.C., Dallas, TX

Brooke Churchman, HALL & EVANS, LLC, Denver, CO

Kimberly Harris, *Regional Programming Co-Chair*, QUILLING, SELANDER, LOWNDS, WINSLETT & MOSER, P.C., Dallas, TX

This session will address mentoring and retaining valued employees, including tackling the needs of the younger workforce and the expectations of the more experienced. The panel will discuss tools to make your workplace one where employees don't want to leave.

3:00 P.M. – 3:20 P.M.

REDUCING THE RISKS OF BEING AN EV-FRIENDLY BUSINESS

Speaker:

Allen Sydnor, HUIE, FERNAMBUCQ & STEWART, LLP, Birmingham, AL

A short primer on the nature of the risks and how to minimize them. Businesses are having to accommodate an increasing number of employees and customers who are driving EVs. This discussion will identify the risks associated with the change and address ways to minimize them.

SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

3:20 P.M. – 3:40 P.M.

HOT TOPICS IN HOSPITALITY AND RETAIL

Speakers:

Michael Cox, TAYLOR, DAY, GRIMM & BOYD, Jacksonville, FL

David Escobar, MAYER, LLP, Houston, TX

This presentation will focus on hot topics related to liquor liability.

3:40 P.M. – 4:10 P.M.

FINDING YOUR EXIT RAMP

Speaker:

John Tarpley, LEWIS THOMASON, Nashville, TN

Every case should be examined for resolution. Two of the most effective exit ramps are mediation and early settlement protocols. This interactive session will examine each and their applicability to your cases.

4:10 P.M. – 4:20 P.M.

BREAK

4:20 P.M. – 4:40 P.M.

TRENDS IN JURY VERDICTS – HAVE THINGS CHANGED IN THE POST-COVID WORLD?

Speakers:

Bill Salmonowicz, *Senior Litigation Specialist*, CAPSPECIALTY, Middleton, WI

Brad Temple, *Head of Construction and Environmental Claims*, CAPSPECIALTY, Middleton, WI

Kevin Owens, JOHNSON & BELL, LTD., Chicago, IL

As we emerge from the only global pandemic this generation has ever known, and jury trials slowly resume, can we see any change in how juries assess damages in liability cases? Is it safe to go back in the water? (As if it ever was!) The panel will look at recent jury verdicts from the Midwest and beyond to see if we can spot any trends or differences unique to our post-pandemic world.

SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

4:40 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Speakers:

Melanie Cheairs, MAYER, LLP, Houston, TX

Kacie Cheairs, Licensed Professional Counselor, SAGE MINDS COUNSELING, Houston, TX

Mental health awareness is in full swing as we continue to strive for work/life balance. On a professional level, wise and engaged Industries around the globe are putting their employees' mental health at the forefront of workplace priority. The push to provide adequate support and to equip individuals to deal with the stress and pressures of their fast-paced professional lives is being addressed by companies routinely bringing programs and professionals in-house. Beyond that on a personal level, many other industries that cater to personal experiences including the entertainment industry are providing "outlets" of mental health support to add a health and wellness component to the "life" side of the scale. We will discuss how execs in the entertainment industry have realized that a more purposeful experience can be had by making health and wellness resources available. Venues and festivals are noting that these are quickly becoming a vital piece of the experience. It's not just about music, food, and a cold beer anymore.

5:00 P.M. – 5:20 P.M.

THE BENEFITS AND CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILURE TO EXERCISE CIVILITY IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

Speaker:

Robert Marzano, PLUNKETT COONEY, Detroit, MI

This presentation will provide a brief overview of what the word "civility" means, attorney obligations to their client as an advocate, acts of civility, benefits of civility and consequences for lack of civility.

5:20 P.M. – 5:30 P.M.

THANK YOU AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Speakers:

Kimberly Harris, *Regional Programming Co-Chair*, QUILLING, SELANDER, LOWNDS, WINSLETT & MOSER, P.C., Dallas, TX

Julia Jimenez, *Regional Programming Co-Chair*, DANIEL COKER, Oxford, MS

5:30 P.M. – 10:00 P.M.

SOCIAL EVENT - CUBS GAME

SOCIAL EVENT



WRIGLEY FIELD ROOFTOP CHICAGO CUBS v. MILWAUKEE BREWERS

***3643 N Sheffield
5:30 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.***

NOTE: Attendees will be transported to the baseball game via a charter bus immediately following programming. The game starts at 7:05 pm.



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

SPEAKERS



TORIE ABBOTT is an attorney at Quilling, Selander, Lownds, Winslett & Moser, P.C., the ALFA International member firm in Dallas, Texas. During her career, Torie's practice focuses on a wide range of litigation matters. Torie has experience handling a variety of legal issues associated with premises liability, wrongful death, transportation and automobile litigation, personal injury, tort defense, first-party insurance claims and defamation. During her time in practice, Torie has represented several companies and individuals in defending personal injury disputes while maintaining a high-volume defense docket.



MELANIE CHEAIRS is a partner with Mayer, LLP, the ALFA International member firm in Houston, Texas. Melanie is an experienced trial lawyer, defending her clients in the Hospitality, Retail and Transportation industries in both commercial and injury-related catastrophic loss matters. Melanie was honored as the 2016 Recipient of ALFAI's Nathan Fishbach Attorney of the Year Award. Melanie was also the program chair of ALFAI's 2016 International Client Seminar and previously chaired ALFAI's Hospitality and Retail Practice Group. In addition, she also served as chair of ALFAI's Marketing Committee.



KACIE CHEAIRS is a Licensed Professional Counselor with a passion for promoting mental health and wellness initiatives. As the Program Director and Lead Specialist for Outlet, a unique mental health and wellness space at music festivals, she is dedicated to providing festival-goers with valuable information, activities, and resources to foster a continued sense of well-being beyond the festival experience. Outlet's mission is to empower individuals to prioritize mental health and maintain wellness practices in their everyday lives. In addition to her role at Outlet, Kacie is a respected professional in the field of mental health counseling. She is a member of a group private practice, Sage Minds Counseling, in Wylie, TX, where she offers compassionate and personalized counseling services to her clients. Kacie's approach focuses on empowering individuals to achieve personal growth and navigate life's challenges with resilience and strength.



BROOKE CHURCHMAN serves as special counsel for Hall & Evans, LLC, the ALFA International member firm in Denver, Colorado. Brooke's practice centers on civil litigation with matters involving transportation, premises liability, gig economy, employment, oil and gas, professional liability, and insurance.

SPEAKERS



MICHAEL COX is a partner with Taylor, Day, Grimm & Boyd, the ALFA International member firm in Jacksonville, Florida. Michael's practice focuses on complex and multi-party legal matters, including the defense of serious and catastrophic tort claims and construction defects, job site injuries and fatalities and contractor disputes. He has had the pleasure of representing clients in all phases and forms of dispute resolution, including formal civil litigation, arbitration, administrative venues, and pre-suit investigations and mediations. His experience arises from representing a large spectrum of individuals and businesses. His current focus on complex construction and personal injury defense is strongly informed by his broader litigation experience in a variety of practice areas, including premises liability, negligent security, legal malpractice defense, medical malpractice defense, personal injury defense, real estate agent/broker and insurance agent/broker errors and omissions, non-profit law, legislative/governmental relations and administrative law. Prior to joining Taylor Day, he was a contract attorney for a nationwide veterans' non-profit organization and a litigation attorney for a large insurance defense firm.



DAVID ESCOBAR is a partner with Mayer, LLP, the ALFA International member firm in Houston, Texas, and describes himself as a problem solver who enjoys the competition and energy of litigation. David started his legal career in 1990 at the Tarrant County District Attorney's Office in Fort Worth, Texas, where he developed an interest in cases involving criminal street gangs. In 1992, he helped establish a Gang Prosecution Unit. By the time he left the DA's office in 1994, David had tried more than 80 first-chair jury trials with only one loss and one deadlocked jury. In 1994, David left the DA's office and became a partner in the Litigation Division at Shannon, Gracey, Ratliff & Miller in Fort Worth. At SGRM, David was involved in many different areas of litigation but specialized in Medical Malpractice. In September 2000, David moved back to Houston, Texas, where he grew up. He joined Lorraine Thompson and initially focused on commercial litigation and insurance defense before eventually moving to the health care section. While at LT, David has represented clients in the following areas: medical malpractice, intellectual property, libel and slander, employment law, dram shop litigation, premises liability, legal malpractice, commercial litigation, DTPA, breach of contract, landlord liability, trucking accidents, motor vehicle accidents and criminal law, among others. David became a partner at LT in 2001. David is a competitive baseball and soccer coach. He plays in a 30+ soccer league as well as a Goalkeeping Coach for the Shadow Creek Soccer Club. When not in the office or playing/coaching sports, he is an enthusiast for traveling and reading.

SPEAKERS



KIMBERLY HARRIS is a shareholder of Quilling, Selander, Lownds, Winslett & Moser, P.C., the ALFA International member firm in Dallas, Texas. During her career, Kimberly has gained extensive experience in commercial and civil defense litigation, trying cases in both Texas state and federal courts. She has also prosecuted and defended appeals in Texas courts of appeal and in the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Kimberly regularly defends both national and local companies on general liability and non-subscriber claims of premises liability, wrongful death and other general negligence claims. Kimberly also defends companies on contract, product liability and Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act claims.



JULIA JIMENEZ is a shareholder of Daniel Coker, the ALFA International member firm in Oxford, Mississippi. She focuses her practice on general defense litigation, including product liability and hospitality, in both state and federal courts. Before transitioning to civil litigation, Julia's practice was devoted to family law. Julia has the distinction of being recognized as a Best Lawyers in America® "Ones to Watch" in two practice areas: personal injury litigation defense and product liability defense. Julia is a member of ALFAI's Hospitality & Retail and Future Leaders Practice Groups. Julia was the Women's Initiative Liaison at the 2023 ALFA International Hospitality & Retail Practice Group Seminar in Ojai, California. Julia enjoys adventures with her family, yoga, reading, and DIY projects.



ROBERT MARZANO is a partner with Plunkett Cooney, the ALFA International member firm in Detroit, Michigan. Robert concentrates his practice in the areas of premises liability law, food service and hospitality law, and real estate law. He also serves as general counsel for two southeastern Michigan cities and handles all aspects of civil litigation. Robert represents several national retailers, hotel chains, restaurants and apartment complexes in disputes involving premises liability claims, security guard litigation, dramshop/liquor liability issues, general negligence claims, mold litigation, third-party auto negligence claims and trucking litigation. He also routinely handles catastrophic accidents involving gas stations, parking lots and premise design. He routinely litigates matters involving dramshop/liquor liability and handles liquor license requirements involving application, renewal, and transfer process, as well as license violations.



KEVIN OWENS is a shareholder of Johnson & Bell, Ltd., the ALFA International member firm in Chicago, Illinois. Kevin's civil litigation practice includes the defense and trial of catastrophic injury, consumer and other product liability actions, construction and general negligence actions, and the litigation of commercial disputes in state and federal courts. His experience also includes litigation of construction product defect actions and litigation of contract actions at law and equity. Kevin served as the chair of ALFA International from 2020-2022 and is currently chair emeritus.

SPEAKERS



BILL SALMONOWICZ is a senior litigation specialist for CapSpecialty, located in the company's office near Madison, Wisconsin. Bill has been with CapSpecialty since 2019. He currently handles a wide variety of claims, primarily arising from the company's construction and environmental book. This includes claims involving construction defect, catastrophic injury, property damage, mold exposure and traditional pollution. Previously, Bill spent 10 years in private practice, working for small firms specializing in insurance defense litigation. Bill received his bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and his JD from the University of Wisconsin.



ALLEN SYDNOR is a partner with Huie, Fernambucq & Stewart LLP (HUIE), the ALFA International member firm 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 healthcare 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 DRI 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.



JOHN TARPLEY is a shareholder residing in the Nashville office of Lewis Thomason, one of ALFA International's Nashville member firms. John has practiced in Nashville since graduating from the University of Tennessee College of Law. He joined the firm in 1989 after clerking with an appellate judge and serving as an Assistant Attorney General for the state of Tennessee. He is a leader in the firm's Commercial Transportation and Complex Litigation Practice Group. As a certified mediator, he is called on a regular basis to mediate and arbitrate a wide range of disputes. He has been inducted into the Tennessee Academy of Mediators. In addition, John is a former president of the Tennessee Bar Association, the Nashville Bar Foundation and of the American Bar Association's Tort, Trial and Insurance Practice Section. He also is a former chair of the Board of Editors of the ABA Journal. Likewise, he is a member of the ABA's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary, which conducts evaluations of all nominees for federal judgeships. He is active in the community and formerly served as the president of the Music City Chapter of the March of Dimes and as a member of the leadership team of Leadership Nashville. John is a former chair of ALFAI's Transportation Practice Group.

S P E A K E R S



BRAD TEMPLE is the head of construction and environmental claims for CapSpecialty, located in the company's office near Madison, Wisconsin. Brad has been with CapSpecialty since 2016 and currently manages a team of claims professionals who handle a wide variety of claims arising from the company's construction and environmental book. This includes claims involving construction defect, catastrophic injury, property damage, mold exposure and traditional pollution. Previously, Brad spent 12 years at West Bend Mutual Insurance Company as a senior attorney handling complex claims and insurance coverage matters. Brad has experience as a litigator in private practice in both Iowa and Wisconsin. Brad received his bachelor's degree and JD (with honors) from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa.