2014
Voluntary Bar Leaders Conference
July 11-12
Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort and Spa
Bonita Springs
Hosted by the Lee County Bar Association

“UNLOCKING THE MYSTERIES OF BAR LEADERSHIP”
Friday, July 11

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  VBLC Registration & Sponsor Tables – Calusa Prefunction

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  VBLC Early Bird Open Discussion – Calusa FGH
Facilitated by Daniel Zuniga, Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee Chair, and Sarah Cortvriend, Conference Chair

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon  VBLC/LA Beverage Station – Calusa Prefunction

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon  VBLC/LA Boxed Lunch Pick Up – Calusa Prefunction

12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m.  VBLC/LA OPENING SESSION – Calusa FGH

Welcome (12:00 noon – 12:15 p.m.)
Dan Zuniga, 2013-14 Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee Chair, and Sarah Cortvriend, Voluntary Bar Conference Chair

Greetings Coleman, President, The Florida Bar

Greetings from Lee County Bar Association President
John D. Agnew

Greetings from the Mayor
Mayor Randy Henderson, City of Fort Myers

Keynote Speaker (12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.)
“Give VOICE to Leadership”
Nora Riva Bergman, J.D.

1:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.  Beverage Station – Calusa Prefunction

1:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.  LEADERSHIP ACADEMY JOINT MEETING – Blue Heron

1:10 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.  VBLC BREAKOUT SESSION 1

Session A: Tax Regulatory & Financial Management for Non-Profit, Non-Staffed Bars – Great Egret A
Moderator: Karen France, Executive Director, Clearwater Bar Association
Marietta C. Meacham, CPA, McHale, Caruso, Scullion & Knox, Certified Public Accountants

Session B: Informed Voters Project – Great Egret B
The National Association of Women Judges “Informed Voters – Fair Judges” project is a non-partisan voter education project developed to increase public awareness about the judicial system, to inform voters that politics and special interest attacks have no place in the courts, and to give voters the tools they need to exercise an informed vote in favor of fair and impartial courts. Learn how your bar association can help educate voters.
Moderator: Ileana Cruz, Miami-Dade FAWL, Cuban American Bar Association, Puerto Rican Bar Association
Linda Leali, Florida Co-chair, Informed Voters Project of NAWJ
Annette Boyd Pitts, Executive Director, Law Related Education Association
Session C: The ABA, The Florida Bar & Your Bar – Great Egret C
How the ABA and The Florida Bar can help your bar association: available resources, programming, education, CLE, and more.
Moderator: Patience Burns, Executive Director, Palm Beach County Bar Association
Jennifer Lewin, American Bar Association
Francine Walker, The Florida Bar

Session D: Effective Pro Bono Programming – Ibis
Moderators: Robert J. Nader, Past President, Hillsborough County Bar Association, and Hon. Suzanne Van Wyk, Vice Chair, Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee
Hon. John Newton, Past President Tallahassee Bar Association and Tallahassee Bar Legal Aid Foundation
Hon. Catherine Peek McEwen, Chair, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee
Kelly L. Fayer, Lee County Bar Association

2:10 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. VBLC BREAKOUT SESSION 2

Session A: Mentoring – Great Egret A
Moderator: Ginger B. Boyd, Past President, Okaloosa-Walton County Bar Association
Jacina Haston, Assistant Director, The Florida Bar Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism
Kellie Jo Kilberg, Walton President & CEO, Walton Area Chamber of Commerce

Session B: Technology for Bar Associations: The Cloud, Databases & Communications – Great Egret B
Moderator: Patience Burns, Executive Director, Palm Beach County Bar Association
Jane Muir, Gersten & Muir, P.A.
Adriana Linares, LawTech Partners

Session C: Leadership in Your Community – Great Egret C
Introduction to The Florida Bar’s Leadership Academy and Benchmarks: Raising the Bar on Civics Education
Moderator: Francine Walker, Director of Public Information & Bar Services, The Florida Bar
Michael Faehner, Clearwater Bar Association, St. Petersburg Bar Association and Past Chair, Voluntary Bar Leaders Conference
Renee E. Thompson, Chair, Florida Bar Leadership Academy and Florida Bar Board of Governors

Session D: How to Pass the Torch: Effective Continuity and Long Term Planning for Bar Associations – Ibis
E. Ashley Hardee, President, Florida Council of Bar Association Presidents

3:10 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. VBLC BREAKOUT SESSION 3

Session A: Non-dues Revenue and Sponsorships – How to Raise Revenue Without Raising Dues – Great Egret A
Moderator: Brant Bittner, Executive Director, Orange County Bar Association
Karen Fast, Director of Marketing and Membership, Orange County Bar Association

Session B: Effective CLE Programming – Great Egret B
Moderator: John F. Kynes, Executive Director, Hillsborough County Bar Association
Linda Calvert-Hanson, Director, The Florida Bar Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism
Michelle Francis, Education Compliance & Accreditation Manager, The Florida Bar Legal Specialization and Education Department

Session C: Our YLD: The Millennial Generation – Calusa FGH
Moderator: Melanie S. Griffin, Immediate Past President, Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division
Panelists: Michael Fox Orr, President, Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division, and Gordon Glover, President-elect, Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division
Session D – Diversity and Inclusion – Ibis
Moderator: Danialle Riggins, Esq.
Panelists: Arnell Bryant-Willis, Diversity Initiatives Manager, The Florida Bar; Jean Marie Middleton, Immediate Past President, F. Malcolm Cunningham, Sr. Bar Association; and Daniel R. Strader, Chair, Sarasota County Bar Association Diversity Committee

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. VBLC/LA Social Networking Dinner Event – Calusa DE/WATERFALL POOL DECK/CYPRESS COURTYARD

Saturday, July 11

7:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. VBLC/LA Breakfast – Calusa DE
8:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. LEADERSHIP ACADEMY JOINT MEETING – Blue Heron
9:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. VBLC BREAKOUT SESSION 4
Session A: A Conversation with the Florida Bar President Greg Coleman – Great Egret A
Moderator: Sarah Cortvriend, 2014 Voluntary Bar Leaders Conference Chair, and Past President of the Palm Beach County Chapter of FAWL

Session B: Technology for Bar Associations: The Cloud, Databases & Communications – Great Egret B
Moderator: Patience Burns, Executive Director, Palm Beach County Bar Association
Adriana Linares, LawTech Partners

Session C: Mentoring – Great Egret C
Moderator: Ginger B. Boyd, Past President, Okaloosa-Walton County Bar Association
Jacina Haston, Assistant Director, The Florida Bar Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism
Kellie Jo Kilberg, Walton President & CEO, Walton Area Chamber of Commerce

Session D: Association 101 – Ibis
Nora Riva Bergman, J.D.

10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. VBLC BREAKOUT SESSION 5

Session A: Effective Bench Bar Programming – Great Egret A
Colin L. McMichten, President, Bay County Bar Association

Session B: Informed Voters Project – Great Egret B
The National Association of Women Judges “Informed Voters – Fair Judges” project is a non-partisan voter education project developed to increase public awareness about the judicial system, to inform voters that politics and special interest attacks have no place in the courts, and to give voters the tools they need to exercise an informed vote in favor of fair and impartial courts. Learn how your bar association can help.
Moderator: Ileana Cruz, Miami-Dade FAWL, Cuban American Bar Association
Linda Leali, Florida Co-chair, Informed Voters Project of NAWJ
Annette Boyd Pitts, Executive Director, Law Related Education Association

Session C: Our YLD: The Millennial Generation – Great Egret C
Michael Fox Orr, President, Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division
Gordon Glover, President-elect, Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division

Session D: How to Pass the Torch: Effective Continuity and Long Term Planning for Bar Associations – Ibis
E. Ashley Hardee, President, Florida Council of Bar Association Presidents
11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.  **VBLC BREAKOUT SESSION 6**

**Session A: First District Court of Appeal – Great Egret A**
Colin L. McMitchen, President, Bay County Bar Association
Stan Chapman, President, Tallahassee Bar Association
Jennifer Shoaf Richardson, FAWL; Jacksonville Women Lawyers; Jacksonville Bar Association

**Session B: Second District Court of Appeal – Great Egret B**
Karen France, Clearwater Bar Association
Robert J. Nader, Past President, Hillsborough County Bar Association
James D. Thaler, Jr., St. Petersburg Bar Association

**Session C: Third District Court of Appeal – Great Egret C**
Ileana Cruz, Miami-Dade FAWL, Cuban American Bar Association, Puerto Rican Bar Association

**Session D: Fourth District Court of Appeal – Ibis**
Patience A. Burns, CAE, Executive Director, Palm Beach County Bar Association
Sarah Cortvriend, Past President, Palm Beach County Chapter of FAWL
Daniel Zuniga, Immediate Past Chair, Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee and Past President, Palm Beach County Hispanic Bar Association

**Session E: Fifth District Court of Appeal – Calusa FGH**
Nick Shannin, President, Orange County Bar Association

12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m.  **VBLC CLOSING SESSION – Calusa FGH**

**CLE Credit:** General: 4.0 hours  /  Ethics: 1.0 hour  
Ref. No. 1402523N

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Today, all across the nation, the fairness and impartiality of courts is threatened by powerful special interests seeking to tip the scales of justice in their favor. Help keep our courts fair and free by getting involved in the National Association of Women Judges’ Informed Voters-Fair Judges voter education project. Attend the training on Thursday at 1:10 p.m. or Saturday at 10:00 a.m., check out our website at ivp.nawj.org or email Florida co-chair Linda Leali at lleali@lealilaw.com for more information about how to get involved.
Meet the 2014 Voluntary Bar Leaders Conference Panelists

SARAH CORTVRIEND (Conference chair) is a shareholder at Carlton Fields Jorden Burt’s West Palm Beach office. Her focus is on real property litigation and commercial litigation for title insurance underwriters and national lending institutions. Sarah litigates title insurance claims and coverage disputes in matters of title agent defalcations, forgeries, lien priorities, closing protection letters, insurer bad faith, quiet title, and equitable subrogation. Her work also includes representation of lenders in property disputes and commercial foreclosures involving hotels, residential and commercial condominiums, homeowner associations, agricultural property, industrial property, office buildings, partially developed land, and undeveloped land. Sarah is a past president of the Palm Beach County Chapter of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers, and a member of the FAWL Past Presidents’ Advisory Council. She received her undergraduate degree in Art History from the University of South Florida, and her law degree from the University of Florida. She enjoys traveling, gourmet cooking, and golfing in her spare time.

JOHN AGNEW practices in the areas of commercial litigation and employment law. Regarding commercial litigation matters, John represents clients in a wide range of areas, including those involving contracts, construction and lien law, landlord-tenant issues, banking matters, defending TCPA and other debt collection claims, business break ups, and other civil litigation. With respect to employment law, John handles cases involving enforcement of non-compete agreements and defends employers against complaints involving FLSA and state wage and hour laws, discrimination and harassment. He also writes articles on employment law issues for the Southwest Florida Employment Law Blog. John is admitted to practice in all Florida state courts, as well as the United States District Court, for the Middle District of Florida. He holds an AV® Preeminent™ rating by Martindale-Hubbell and, for the past five years (2009-2013), has been recognized by Florida Super Lawyers® magazine for his work in business litigation. Prior to becoming an attorney, John was a U.S. Army Ranger. When not working, John enjoys spending time with his children and pursuing a variety of outdoor activities. John is active in the local community. He is currently the President of the Lee County Bar Association and has been a member of its Executive Council since 2011. John also serves on the Board of Directors for the PACE Center for Girls of Lee County and is a member of the Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce, having graduated from its Leadership Program and served as a facilitator for other Leadership Program classes. Finally, John is a Fellow of The Florida Bar Foundation, a past member of the Calusa Chapter of the American Inns of Court and has spent a number of seasons coaching youth soccer.

NORA BERGMAN (Keynote speaker) is a law firm coach and certified Atticus Practice Advisor. As a licensed attorney since 1992, Nora brings a deep understanding of the practice and business of law to her work with lawyers, law firms and bar associations. She has practiced as an employment law attorney and certified mediator and has served as an adjunct professor at both Stetson University College of Law and the University of South Florida, teaching courses in alternative dispute resolution and negotiation. Nora has been a speaker at conferences for the American Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association, the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys, the National Association of Bar Executives, The Florida Bar and other national and regional legal organizations. She has also served for eight years as the Executive Director of a voluntary bar association with over 1,200 members. Her background as an attorney, law professor and bar executive gives her a unique perspective on the challenges lawyers face. In addition to her broad experience with all aspects of the law firm, Nora understands the importance of, and is committed to, helping attorneys leverage technology in order to maximize their ultimate success. Nora hosts a popular blog on her Real Life Practice website, and is a frequent contributor to bar association publications. She is also the author of the soon-to-be released 50 Lessons for Lawyers. Nora is a graduate of the Leadership Development Program (LDP) at Eckerd College, and is certified in the DISC Behavioral Style Assessment. Nora has also taken Villanova University’s Lean Six Sigma Program and is certified by Villanova as a Lean Six Sigma Sensei. She teaches the course Lean Six Sigma for Solos for Solo Practice University. She is also a member of the Thought Leader Team at Law Without Walls, an international program for law students founded by the University of Miami School of Law. In 2013, Nora was selected as a faculty member for The Florida Bar’s Wm. Reece Smith, Jr. Leadership Academy.
BRANT S. BITTNER is the Executive Director of the Orange County Bar Association (OCBA). In his nine years in the position, the membership has grown to more than 3,400 and the budget has increased to $1.2 million. His responsibilities include managing the day-to-day operations of the OCBA and directing a staff of 20. He brings many years of corporate experience to this position, after serving as a marketing, advertising, and community relations director for 27 years in the telecommunications industry in both Florida and Ohio. He is a member of The Florida Bar Voluntary Liaison Committee, Lawyer Referral Service Committee, the American Bar Association, plus the National Association of Bar Executives (NABE). He has served as a member of the Program Committee and chaired the Sponsorship Committee for NABE. He is a graduate of the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications, has a master’s degree in business. On a personal note: Brant was a member of the University of Florida Swimming Team, winning the Southeastern Conference Swimming Championships in 1970. Brant established a world’s record in the 800 meter freestyle at the Worlds Masters Swimming Championship in 1988 in Brisbane, Australia, where his mother was born and raised.

GINGER BARRY BOYD is a Partner in the Destin Office of Broad and Cassel. She is a member of the Firm’s Commercial Litigation and Labor and Employment Practice Groups. Ginger represents clients in general commercial litigation matters. Ginger handles a wide variety of litigation matters including real estate litigation, securities litigation, bankruptcy litigation, contracts litigation, foreclosures, employment litigation, intellectual property litigation and general business litigation matters. Ginger has represented private and public clients, including the state of Florida, in employment discrimination litigation matters. In addition, Ginger has experience in other areas of law, having handled matters in entertainment and family law. She has represented clients in dissolution of marriage actions, child support, and custody actions. She served as a felony prosecutor in the Leon County State Attorney’s office where she prosecuted property, drug, and sexual assault crimes. She also handled misdemeanor and juvenile prosecutions.

PATIENCE BURNS has been employed by the Palm Beach County Bar Association since December 1980, serving as its Executive Director since 1989. She previously worked for The Florida Bar from 1978 – 1980. She has served on several National Association of Bar Executives and Florida Bar Committees over the years. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Florida Association of Bar Executives and for the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County. The Palm Beach County Bar Association has a membership of 3,100 and a staff of 6 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee and has a budget of $1,160,000 per year.

STAN CHAPMAN is a Director of the Litigation Practice Group of the Equels Law Firm in its Tallahassee office. He concentrates his practice in eminent domain, commercial litigation, and personal injury and wrongful death. He is a descendant of territorial period North Florida settlers (circa 1833, Jackson County), a fifth-generation Floridian, a second-generation Tallahasseean, and in the third generation of his family to attend Florida State and its predecessors. Admitted to The Florida Bar in 1987, he has served on its Eminent Domain Committee continuously since 1990, and on its Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee from 1996-2008, and from 2012-present. He chaired the VBLC in 1999 and was The Florida Bar’s Statewide Law Week Chairman in 1999 and 2006. He has been a member of the Tallahassee Bar Association continuously since 1987 and now serves as the 2014 TBA President. Prior to law school he designed public parks and received a Resolution of the Board of Leon County Commissioners, in 1984, for dedicated service to the public and innovative park designs including Tom Brown Park and J. Lewis Hall Park in Leon County. In law school Stan was Florida State University Law Review’s Research Editor in 1986 and received a Book Award for Real Estate Planning that year. In 1995, Stan received a gubernatorial appointment (by Honorable Lawton Chiles) to be a Trustee on the Historic Tallahassee Preservation Board, and served on that board in 1995 and 1996. Stan was the guest speaker on Historic Preservation Tax Incentives, at the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation Annual Statewide Conference, in 2001, and on Inverse Condemnation Flooding Cases for the Eminent Domain Committee at the Annual Meeting of The Florida Bar in 2004. He is a guest lecturer on tree liability issues for the University of Florida/Leon County Agricultural Extension Office’s Florida Arboriculture Certification Seminars, and has been doing that annually from 2006-present.

GREGORY W. COLEMAN, partner at the Law Firm of Critton, Luttier & Coleman, and President of The Florida Bar, has been practicing law in Palm Beach County for more than two decades. He joined the Law Firm of Critton, Luttier & Coleman in 1995, was named partner in 2000 and owner in 2004. In 2012, Greg was awarded the President’s Award of Merit by The Florida Bar for the third time. Coleman became the first lawyer in the history of The Florida Bar to receive such a distinction. Greg is profiled in The Best
Lawyers in America, is AV-rated by Martindale-Hubbell and included in their Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers. He has also been selected by the South Florida Legal Guide as a Top Lawyer, is listed as one of Florida Trend magazine’s Legal Elite, and has been named a Florida Super Lawyer. He devotes his practice to the areas of complex commercial litigation, insurance bad faith, employment litigation, professional malpractice defense, personal injury and wrongful death. Greg is admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of Florida, all Circuit and County Courts in the State of Florida, the United States Supreme Court, and the United States District Court for the Southern Districts of Florida. Greg received his Bachelor of Business Activities in Finance and a Minor in Political Science from Stetson University in 1985. He then received his Juris Doctor from Stetson University College of Law in 1989. Greg has been a member of the Stetson University College of Law Board of Trustees since 2010. He lives in Palm Beach County with his wife Monica and son Cody.

ILEANA CRUZ, Miami-Dade FAWL Secretary and President-Elect for 2014-2015, serves as Assistant County Attorney for Miami Dade County. Her practice involves advising Miami-Dade’s Property Appraiser and Tax Collector in administrative and litigation matters relating to ad valorem taxes, value adjustment board decisions, and local business tax issues, among other matters. Ileana specializes in representing the interest of the Tax Collector, and other Miami-Dade County departments in federal bankruptcy courts across the country. In addition to her tax and bankruptcy litigation practice, Ileana counsels the Finance department on legislative items, drafts ordinances and resolutions, and advises the Board of County Commissioners on tax and finance matters. Ileana was recently selected by The Florida Bar to the Leadership Academy Class of 2014-2015.

MICHAEL FAEHNER graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1991 with a BBA in Finance along with a BA in History. He attended Valparaiso University School of Law, graduating with multiple honors in 1994. Michael passed the Bar in 1994 and has been a practicing attorney since then. In 2005 he graduated from the University of Florida School of Law with an LLM in taxation. Presently he is the Managing Partner for M. Faehner, ESQ, LLC where he practices in the areas of tax, contract law, estate and trust planning, probate, charitable giving, trustee services, business/corporate consulting, civil litigation and tax controversy work. In addition, he is a co-founder and a Partner of Meruit, LLC, where he serves as General Counsel for a national merchant service provider in the financial services and credit card processing industry which has a niche dealing with the proper and ethical way that attorneys can accept credit cards from their clients. Michael is a past president of The Florida Bar YLD and also served on The Florida Bar Board of Governors. He has served on The Florida Bar Continuing Legal Education Committee, Student Education Student Admission Committee, Long Range Planning Committee and the Law Related Education Committee. He is the immediate past Chair of the 6A Grievance Committee, Vice Chair of the Bar’s Leadership Academy and head of its Northern Division. Michael is a Past Chair of the Voluntary Bar Association Committee and past Chairman of the Standing Committee on Advertising. Michael is a Past President of the Clearwater Bar Association (2002-2003). Presently, he is the Treasurer of the Clearwater Bar Association; he just finished his term as the Board President for the St. Anthony’s Hospital Foundation, Vice Chairman of the Jolley Trolley Board of Clearwater and he sits on the Board of Directors for Suncoast Hospice Foundation, and the St. Anthony’s Hospital Foundation. He also received a special FL Supreme Court Special Citation for his work with Hurricane Disaster Relief. As a result of his work with the Florida Hurricanes in 2004, he was labeled in the legal community as the “Master of Disaster.” In 2011, he was recognized by the St. Petersburg Bar Foundation as a “Rising Star” in the legal community by giving him one of their highest honors for his commitment to the legal profession and the community. In 2013, the Clearwater Bar recognized him with the highest honor the organization gives to a member of the legal profession by bestowing on him the Ralph Richards Award for his dedication to the community and the profession.

KAREN FAST started at the Orange County Bar Association as Membership Manager in 2010. Recently she was promoted to Strategic Marketing & Membership Manager and has assisted in the development of the Orange County Bar’s educational program, Leadership Law, New Lawyer Training Program, Paralegal Boot Camp, and the 2014 Bench Bar Conference. Karen oversees Sponsorship and Advertising, Membership and the Events Department. Karen came to the position with over 25 years of sales and marketing experience within the hospitality industry. She worked for Morton’s Steakhouse for 15 years and assisted with the growth of the concept from 7 to 61 restaurants within her tenure. She was a key figure in developing a marketing strategy which brought the New York restaurant private dining sales in excess of 1.5 million dollars per year. Karen was Sales and Marketing Manager for other restaurant groups including The Capital Grille and The Palm. With a BA in Graphic Design from The American University in Washington, DC, she has a background that has enhanced advertising and promotional pieces used to assist sales growth. After leaving the hospitality industry in 2008, Karen attended the Notters School of Pasty Arts in Orlando.
**KELLY L. FAYER** received her Juris Doctor from Washington and Lee University School of Law in 1997. She focuses her practice in the areas of Estate Planning and Family Law. Currently, she is Treasurer of the Lee County Bar Association and will be President of the organization in 2017. She is a member of the Communications Committee of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers and serves on the board of the Association of Family Law Professionals. Additionally, she is the Past President of the Lee County Association for Women Lawyers as well as the Estate Planning Council of Lee County. In March 2014, Kelly was the proud recipient of the Five Star Designation for Estate Planning Attorneys, earned in part due to Pro Bono work performed in the community. She served as a member of the Pro Bono Committee for the Lee County Bar Association and worked with the Committee on the Lynn Suzanne Spradley Champions Project.

**KAREN FRANCE** has 32 years of association management. She was a 15-year veteran of the Indiana State Bar Association staff before becoming executive director of the Clearwater Bar Association and Clearwater Bar Foundation in 1997. In 2002, she earned the designation of Certified Association Executive accorded by the American Society of Association Executives signifying excellence in association management. France serves on the Program Committee of the National Association of Bar Executives and The Florida Bar’s Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee and is a member of the Florida Council of Bar Executives. She is a graduate of Indiana University. Karen received 2014 The Florida Bar Marshall R. Cassedy, Sr. Award for outstanding support of the legal profession.

**MICHELLE FRANCIS** graduated from Florida State University 2002 and is the Education Compliance and Accreditation Manager in the Legal Specialization and Education Department of The Florida Bar. She has been employed by The Florida Bar since 1998 and has had various positions within the education department. As the education compliance and accreditation manager, Michelle ensures timely and accurate processing of education compliance requirements, delinquencies, reinstatements, and CLE submissions for credit evaluations as well as proposes and drafts amendments in the CLER and course approval related rules and policies. In addition, she serves as the designated staff custodian managing the records of the department in a manner that complies with all applicable laws, rules, and industry standards.

**MELANIE GRIFFIN** earned her undergraduate degree in business finance (2003) and her law and master of business administration degrees (2006) from Florida State University. She is an AV rated attorney at Dean Mead and practices in the area of commercial litigation. Melanie is the Immediate Past President of The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division, a Past President of the Central Florida Association for Women Lawyers, and also served as an At-Large Executive Board Member of the Orange County Bar Association Young Lawyers Section for several years. She has recently been the recipient of the following awards and honors: 2011 Most Productive Member of The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division Board of Governors, 2011 “40 Under 40” Award Recipient from the Orlando Business Journal, 2010-2014 Super Lawyers Rising Star, 2010-2014 Legal Elite Up and Comer, 2010 Florida Association for Women Lawyers Leader in the Law Award, and the 2009 Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division Most Productive Young Lawyer Award.

**LINDA CALVERT HANSON** joined The Florida Bar as the Director of the Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism in December 2011, and she is the immediate past Chair of the General Practice, Solo and Small Firms Section (GPSSF) of The Florida Bar. She served as a law school administrator for over 10 years that included eight years at the University of Florida College of Law, most recently as the Assistant Dean for Bar Success and Professionalism and previously as Assistant Dean for Career Development. Additionally, she spent two years at Florida Coastal School of Law as the Assistant Dean for Professional Development. Prior to that time, she was an accomplished university civil law educator for nine years and she enjoyed a successful civil and government law practice. She is the co-author of Small Firms, Big Opportunity: How to Get Hired and Succeed in the New Legal Economy (August 2012), and the author of numerous legal articles published in law reviews and other national and local publications. She is a frequent speaker at law schools, Florida Bar CLE’s and for national organizations. In 2003, she was honored as “Woman Lawyer of the Year” by the Jacksonville Women Lawyers Association and she previously served on the University of Florida Athletic Association Board of Directors. A double Gator, she earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Florida College of Law and her Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from the University of Florida.
E. ASHLEY HARDEE is a Senior Trial Court Staff Attorney in the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit, where she has served for the past 18 years. She is currently the President of two statewide voluntary bar associations: the Florida Council of Past Bar Presidents and the Florida Trial Court Staff Attorneys Association. She was elected by membership and served as President for the Brevard County Bar Association in 2009-2010, and previously served as the President of the Florida Trial Court Staff Attorneys Association in 2001. In the Brevard County Bar Association, Ashley founded in 2004 the popular “CLE series” programming and chaired it from 2004 until 2007. In the Florida Trial Court Staff Attorneys Association, Ashley has been very active since its inception in 2000, chairing several committees, including the ethics committee, newsletter committee, and conference and education committee in addition to serving on the Board of Directors for several terms. Ashley taught several courses as an adjunct legal professor for the University of Central Florida. She has been active in her circuit’s local Inn of Court. In 2008, The Supreme Court of Florida appointed Ashley to the Florida Court Personnel Committee and she continues to serve on that committee to date. From 2005 until 2007, she served on the Postconviction Rules Subcommittee for the District Court of Appeal Performance & Accountability Committee. She also was appointed to The Supreme Court of Florida’s workgroup on legal resources. Ashley received the Brevard County Bar Association’s Professionalism Award for Government Lawyers in 2005, and was named the Brevard County Bar Association’s Board Member of the Year in 2004, 2005, and 2006. She received the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit’s Employee of the Month Award in 2002. Ashley received the Vassar B. Carlton Inn of Court’s Mentor of the Year Award in 2009. In 2011, the Florida Trial Court Staff Attorneys Association awarded Ashley the Kathy Pugh Leadership Award in addition to recognizing her in 2003 for outstanding service.

JACINA HASTON, a Central Florida native born and raised in the heart of Orlando, has served as the Assistant Director for the Henry Latimer Center for Professionalism with The Florida Bar since July 2012. Prior to becoming Assistant Director, she worked at the Ninth Judicial Circuit Public Defenders Office and with Legal Services of North Florida in Tallahassee for almost five years assisting victims of domestic violence and the elderly primarily in the area of Family Law. At Legal Services, she handled cases before the Northern District Federal Bankruptcy Court and Florida Circuit Courts. She also served as a legal advocate for the Refuge House and as an advocate for the Grandparents as Parents (GAP) Program with Leon County Elder Care Services. Additionally, she is a graduate of The Florida Bar Foundation Leadership Academy and served on the Student Education and Admission to the Bar Committee for The Florida Bar for five years. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Criminology from the University of Florida and earned her Juris Doctor from Stetson College of Law.

MAYOR RANDY HENDERSON has been a resident of Fort Myers for 31 years. He was born and raised in North Carolina where he graduated from Mars Hill College in 1979 with a BS in business administration. Randy’s career in Fort Myers began in banking where he worked his way up to Vice-President. He left banking in 1986 and assumed operating responsibilities for Corbin Henderson Company, a real estate firm, as president. Randy has been involved in community affairs for years and currently serves on the following boards: Advisory Board Member, Edison Pageant of Light; Advisory Board Member, Salvation Army; Director First Community Bank; Fort Myers Kiwanis Club; First United Methodist Church; Lee County Horizon Council; President’s Council of International College now Hodges University; and Uncommon Friends Foundation. He has been happily married to his wife Ginny for 31 years and has three children – Alex, Marcus, Laura and son-in-law, Jay Fraser. Mayor Henderson is a private pilot and enjoys flying both for business and personal pleasure. He enjoys time with family and is an avid fisherman.

KELLIE JO KILBERG serves as the President/Chief Executive Office of the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Walton County Chamber Foundation. In this role Kellie Jo oversees the coordination of activities and implementation of policies for the Walton Area Chamber of Commerce. Kellie Jo has been involved in organizational behavior and management for more than 25 years. Her specialty is organizational communications, strategic thinking and visioning process. She is a graduate of Iowa State University, the US Chamber of Commerce Institute of Organization Management and the University of Oklahoma’s Economic Development Institute. Before joining Walton Area Chamber she served as Clay County Chamber of Commerce President and CEO. Kellie Jo served as Enterprise Florida’s Vice President of Partner Relations for Economic Development, Defense and Space, where she traveled the state working with and linking the local economic development organizations, military bases and installations, space organizations, chambers of commerce, workforce development organizations, community colleges and universities to the states’ economic development programs and services. Kellie Jo is a certified chamber executive, one of 450 in the nation. She serves on the Walton County Education Foundation, Career Source
LINDA LEALI is a seasoned insolvency attorney who has handled countless debtor and creditor representations having spent over twelve years in the Financial Restructuring and Insolvency department of a large international firm. In January 2013, she formed her own firm with an office located in Miami, Florida. She has handled cases both on the creditor and debtor side in a variety of industries, ranging from real estate, energy, manufacturing, telecom and automotive. She received her law degree from the University of Miami School of Law in 1999 graduating magna cum laude. She currently is vice-chair of the Avoidance Power sub-committee of the Business Bankruptcy Committee and chair-elect of the Consumer Bankruptcy Committee of the American Bar Association. She speaks and writes on a regular basis on various insolvency topics and has served as an adjunct professor in business law at Florida Atlantic University’s School of Accounting. She is also very involved in the community including currently serving on the boards of the Miami-Dade Chapter of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers where she serves as leadership chair and the Southeastern Division Children’s Home Society. She currently serves as Florida coordinating co-chair for the National Association of Women Judges’ “Informed Voters, Fair Judges” voter education project.

JOHN F. KYNES has served as executive director of the Hillsborough County Bar Association since 2011. His background includes more than 19 years of public affairs and administrative experience at the federal, state and local levels. From 2000 to 2006, he served as district director for former U.S. Rep. Jim Davis in Tampa. In this position, he managed two local district offices and coordinated all constituent services and public outreach. Previously, he served as director of intergovernmental relations for the City of Tampa, and, also, as an assistant to Florida Lt. Gov. Buddy MacKay in Tallahassee. From 1983 to 1987, he worked as a legislative aide to U.S. Sen. Lawton Chiles in Washington, D.C. He holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Florida and a master’s degree in journalism and public affairs from American University in Washington, D.C. Active in the community, he serves on the foundation board of the Moffitt Cancer Center and on the development council of Bay Area Legal Services. He also serves on the boards of the Salvation Army and Tampa Bay Little League.

JENNIFER LEWIN recently marked her 16th year of working with national, state, local and special-focus bar associations through the ABA’s Division for Bar Services. Bar Services’ mission is to strengthen the bar association community and build the capacity of its leadership. To this end, Jennifer has facilitated more than 70 strategic planning initiatives, board trainings, and operational reviews. She serves on the ABA Bar Leadership Institute planning team and authors the quarterly e-newsletter BoardLink, an educational tool for bar association and foundation boards of directors. In addition, Jennifer is a regular contributor to the division’s blog, Behind Bars, and periodically authors bar management white papers and publications such as the primer, New Bar President and Members of the Board. Jennifer is a member of BoardSource, the National Association of Bar Executives and the Association Forum of Chicagoland. She is an obsessive gardener and food-lover. Prior to bar work, Jennifer taught art history at Northwestern University and wrote about the surrealist movement in Prague.

ADRIANA LINARES is a legal technology trainer and consultant with her company, LawTech Partners. She uses her personal and practical approach to technology to help legal professionals maximize their time and investments in hardware, software and systems. Adriana currently serves as a technology consultant to The Florida Bar Communications Committee, is a board member of the ABA’s Legal Technology Resource Center and serves on the advisory board for the Center for Law Practice Technology at the Florida Coastal School of Law.
HON. CATHERINE PEEK MCEWEN is a United States Bankruptcy Judge for the Middle District of Florida (appointed 2005). Prior to becoming a judge, she was in private practice for almost 23 years in Tampa. She concentrated her practice on commercial litigation with an emphasis on representing parties in bankruptcy cases. She graduated from Stetson University College of Law cum laude in 1982 and received her undergraduate degree from the University of South Florida (B.A., Political Science) in 1979. She is the judicial chair of The Florida Bar Business Law Section Bankruptcy/UCC Committee and a member of The Florida Bar Business Law Section Executive Committee as well as past chair of The Florida Bar Federal Court Practice Committee. She is Editor in Chief of the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges Conference News, a member of the NCBJ’s NBA Liaison Committee, the NCBJ Endowment for Education Board, and a past vice chair of the NCBJ Public Outreach Committee. She serves as chair of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit (of Florida) Pro Bono Committee through August, 2014. She was elected into the American Law Institute in 2012. Among her honors are the Stetson University College of Law Distinguished Alumnus Award (2007), Hillsborough County Bar Association Jimmy Kynes Pro Bono Service Award (2008), the Stetson University College of Law J. Ben Watkins Award (2009), the Florida Association of Women Lawyers Leaders in the Law designation (2010), and the Tampa Bay Hispanic Bar Association’s Luis “Tony” Cabassa Award (2012). Prior to becoming a lawyer, she was a sportswriter from 1975-1979 for the Tampa Tribune and the Tampa Times.

COLIN L. MCMICHEN is the current president of the Bay County Bar Association after serving as the secretary, treasurer, and vice president. He is also a member of The Florida Bar’s Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee, St. Andrews Bay American Inn of Court, and the Kiwanis Club of Panama City. He lives and works in Panama City, Florida and represents injured individuals and their families.

MARIETTA MEACHAM has worked with small businesses and their owners in the Fort Myers area for the past 28 years. In her capacity as an accountant, she has 34 years of public accounting experience. She worked for six years with the international public accounting firm of Deloitte Haskins & Sells both as an auditing and a tax supervisor. After teaching accounting at a small Ohio college, she and her husband moved to Florida and opened a retail/wholesale craft supply business. In 1981, she returned to public accounting with a local Fort Myers firm and opened her own accounting firm in 1992. The merger of her accounting firm with McHale, Caruso, Scullion & Knox occurred in 2003. After returning to public accounting, she has concentrated on accounting, tax planning and tax preparation for small businesses, individuals, trusts and estates. She has a BA from Morehead State University, KY, and is a member of the American and Florida Institutes of Certified Public Accountants. Her community involvement is extensive including the Human Trafficking Awareness partnership and Women’s Institute for Successful Entrepreneurs, to name a few.

JEAN MARIE MIDDLETON focuses her area of practice in general civil litigation, government, employment/labor, civil rights, workers’ compensation, personal injury, and she is certified in human relations law. She received her B.A from Howard University and Juris Doctorate from Howard University Law School. She has been a member of The Florida Bar for 16 years and is also licensed in Indiana. Currently, she serves as the president of the F. Malcolm Cunningham Sr. Bar Association in Palm Beach County. Also, she is a judge for the Palm Beach Youth Court. She is certified as a Florida Supreme Court Circuit Civil Mediator, as well as, a family and civil mediator in Indiana. Previously, she served as the Associate and Sr. Council for the School Board of Palm Beach County and the Chief of Litigation for the School Board of Miami-Dade, Florida. Also, she served as the Assistant City Attorney for the City of Miami and Lake Worth, Florida. She was a staff attorney for both Palm Beach County Florida and the City of Ft. Wayne, Indiana. Middleton held the position as Corporate Attorney and Senior State Relations Consultant for Lincoln National Corporation, Manager for American Bankers Insurance Group, and Associate Attorney for Rigell, Ring & Archman.

JANE MUIR is a commercial litigator with Gersten & Muir, P.A. in Miami, a firm that serves companies in the areas of media, technology and communications. She has served as treasurer, president-elect, president and immediate past-president of the Coral Gables Bar Association, and has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Dade County Bar Association, as well as on the DCBA executive committee from 2010-2013. During her service to the Coral Gables Bar Association, she spearheaded two website re-designs, streamlined the process for maintaining books and records and filing annual reports and taxes, and implemented an automated, collaborative system for informing members of news and events. For the Dade County Bar Association, she implemented a design...
overhaul of the monthly print publication, corresponding with a website redesign, and permitting collaborative use and storage of documents and photos for the communications efforts of the association while serving as Chair of the Bulletin Committee from 2012-2014 and co-chair of the ad hoc Website Committee, 2013-2014.

ROBERT “BOB” J. NADER holds his B.A. degree from the University of Florida, his M.A. from the University of South Florida, and his law degree from the University of Houston. As a civil trial lawyer for more than 31 years and a solo practitioner for 25 years, his field of practice is primarily in the areas of commercial litigation, creditors’ rights, and bankruptcy. He is licensed in both Florida and Texas. He is also certified as a Florida Supreme Court Mediator in the areas of circuit civil, family and appellate law, and mediation is a part of his law practice. In furtherance of his dispute resolution background, he was also trained to negotiate and mediate healthcare disputes. He is currently the past president of the Hillsborough County Bar Association, having previously served in many positions in the organization. He is a mast and board member of the Ferguson-White American Inn of Courts in Tampa. He has authored a number of articles for the HCBA’s award winning periodical, the Lawyer. He was the recipient of the 2009 James “Red” McGewen Memorial Award for outstanding service to the HCBA as the creator and director of its Law Day program, “An Evening with Abraham Lincoln and Friends,” and in 2011, he also produced and directed for the HCBA the Law Day Symposium, “The Life and Times of John Adams.” Between 2009 and 2011, he served as the board member liaison for the HCBA’s Bar Leadership Institute. He is a member of The Florida Bar Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee.

HON. JOHN NEWTON is a sixth generation Floridian and a product of the Florida public education system, start to finish. He graduated from Avon Park High School and South Florida Junior College. John graduated from FSU in 1974 and graduated with Honors from the FSU College of Law in 1977, where he served on the Law Review. Before joining DOAH, John enjoyed 32 years of litigation and appellate practice. He has handled cases at every level of the state and federal courts. John clerked for a Florida Supreme Court Justice and federal Judge. He spent over 20 years in private practice. His broad practice included representation of a Florida Supreme Court Justice, small businesses, health care corporations, professional associations, doctors, contractors, local governments, indigent parents, and a pit bulldog. John’s public service includes work as an Assistant Public Defender, as a Senior Assistant Attorney General for Economic Crimes and Civil Rights, and as General Counsel for Florida’s Agency for Persons with Disabilities. The Tallahassee Bar Association elected John as President of the association and of its Legal Aid Foundation. He chaired the TBA’s 2013 Pro Bono Committee. John was a Master Lawyer of the Inn of Court. He Chaired the Second Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee and the District Examination Committee for the United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida. John served on the Executive Council of The Florida Bar’s Administrative Law Section and edited the section newsletter. He has just been appointed to serve as the Appellate Rules Committee. The Academy of Florida Trial Lawyers awarded John its S. Victor Topin Award for Excellence in Legal Writing. In 2007 and 2009 the editors of Florida Trend selected John as one of Florida's best lawyers, designating him as one of Florida’s “Legal Elite.” The General Counsel Association for all state agencies elected John its President in 2008.

MICHAEL FOX ORR is a civil litigator who tries civil jury and bench trials. He serves as general counsel for local companies and businesses with operations in multiple states. A member of The Florida Bar, he is also admitted to practice before the United States District Court for the Middle and Northern Districts of Florida, and the Federal 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. Michael graduated from East Carolina University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a concentration in financial services. He received his Juris Doctorate from Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville. While in law school, Michael served for two years as President of the Student Bar. In the community, Michael aids various organizations through board service and volunteer work. Michael served as President of the Family Nurturing Center of Florida for two years and is presently serving in his second year as president of his law school’s alumni association. Michael also teaches various classes and makes presentations related to the practice of law. He presented on the topic of Ethics and Professionalism in Law Office Management to Northeast Florida paralegals and law office managers, and has served as a substitute professor in a legal course for accountants. Elected to The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division Board of Governors as one of the Fourth Circuit representatives in 2006, he was re-elected to that seat for each subsequent term until 2012, at which time he was unanimously voted by the Board to serve as President. Michael begins his term as President of The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division July 2014.
ANNETTE BOYD PITTS is founding executive director of the Florida Law Related Education Association Inc., a nonprofit organization in Tallahassee that for 28 years has advanced law related and civic education in Florida’s K-12 public schools. Last month she received the National Center for State Court’s 2014 Sandra Day O’Connor Award for the Advancement of Civics Education. The award honors an organization, court or individual who has promoted, inspired, improved or led an innovation or accomplishment in the field of civics education related to the justice system. She developed the Benchmarks activities working with The Florida Bar’s Constitutional Judiciary Committee and has worked with Supreme Court Justice Barbara Pariente on developing materials for the Informed Voters Project. She is recognized nationally and internationally for her innovative justice education programs. She has trained in more than 20 countries to advance education for democracy efforts. In 2006, working with the League of Women Voters and The Florida Bar, she promoted passage of the law requiring that civics be taught in Florida’s middle schools. She has assisted the Florida Supreme Court in implementing an annual teachers’ institute as well as a high school moot court competition and worked with Justice R. Fred Lewis to develop lessons for Justice Teaching, a statewide program that has trained more than 3,500 attorneys and judges to take civics lessons to Florida schools. She is state coordinator for the ICivics program created by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor (Ret.).

JENNIFER SHOAF RICHARDSON is an associate with the boutique appellate firm of Creed & Gowdy, P.A., in Jacksonville. Her practice is limited to appeals, post-conviction matters, and trial support in state and federal courts in a wide array of substantive areas of the law. She is admitted to practice in both Florida and Georgia. She graduated cum laude from both the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Arts and Florida Coastal School of Law. She is an elected board member for the Jacksonville Women Lawyers Association, Chair of the Young Lawyers Committee for the Florida Association of Women Lawyers, and FAWL Liaison to The Florida Bar’s Young Lawyers Division Board of Governors. She is also involved in the Appellate Practice Section, the Jacksonville Bar Association, and the Jacksonville Justice Association. When she worked as a law clerk at the First District Court of Appeal for three years following law school, she was on the board of the Tallahassee Women Lawyers and was an active member of the Tallahassee Bar Association.

DANIALLE RIGGINS is a shareholder/attorney of Riggins Pisani, PA, the employment and business law firm that she co-founded after successfully commencing a sole-practitioner career as an employment law lawyer in 2008. Danialle handles major litigation in both state and federal employment law cases to successful conclusions. Prior to co-creating Riggins Pisani, she worked as an associate attorney for such firms as Sims, Amat, Stakenborg and Henry, PA and Rosenthal, Levy, & Simon, PA. Both were well-known law firms in the personal injury, workers compensation, and social security disability areas of law. Danialle was instrumental expanding both firms’ areas of law to include employment and labor litigation. In 2008, she opened up her own law firm, Riggins Law Firm, PA in Ocala. During the eight years that she has been an attorney, she has focused her practice on counseling both employees and employers in all aspects of employment law including: hiring techniques, employee handbooks, illegal discrimination, hostile environments, wage and hour issues, employee leave, contract and policies, harassment, retaliation, performance management, accommodations for disabilities, privacy, defamation, and protection of trade secrets. In addition to advocating for employees whose workplace rights have been violated, she zealously educates and assist employers with workplace law issues. She has experience representing parties in civil litigation in state and federal courts and in administrative claims. For employers, she concentrates on reducing the risk of employment litigation and conducts seminars and training sessions for all levels of employees. She also directs internal workplace investigations. She has served the citizens of Marion, Alachua, Palm Beach, St. Lucie, and surrounding counties. Danialle has been practicing law in the state of Florida since 2005. She also teaches corporate responsibility, ethics, and law for business majors course as an adjunct professor for Webster University-Ocala campus. Prior to entering the legal profession, Danialle was an award-winning photojournalist. Since 1999, Danialle has been a guest speaker for various organizations on topics ranging from photography in the news to privacy rights in the workplace.

NICHOLAS A. SHANNIN is a Board Certified Appellate Attorney, licensed to practice law in Florida since graduating with honors from the University of Florida School of Law in 1994. Nick received his undergraduate degree from Rice University in Houston, Texas, graduating from Rice with a double major in Political Science and Sociology. Before receiving his Texas-sized degree, Nick graduated from Osceola High School in nearby Kissimmee, Florida. He remains a proud Osceola Kowboy (yes, spelled with a “K”) to this day. Nick has a passion for the law and for organizations that help
people in need. He has been a long-time board member of both West Orange Habitat for Humanity and the Legal Aid Society of Orange County. He is a past president of the board for both organizations. Nick has also been honored by the Florida Bar Appellate Practice Section as the recipient of its “Pro-Bono Attorney of the Year” award, in large part for his work with the Legal Aid Society. Nick has been reviewed by his peers with Martindale-Hubbel’s highest ranking for ability and ethics, “AV-Preeminent.” Nick has also been recognized by Florida Trend’s Legal Elite and Florida SuperLawyers lists, each recognizing the top 2% and top 5% of Florida attorneys respectively, for each of the last five years. Nick also serves as President of the Orange County Bar Association and has received that Bar’s Lawrence Matthew’s Young Lawyer Professionalism Award. Nick resides in West Orange County with his wife, Carol, a teacher of American Government at Olympia High School, and his two children, Jake and Anna. As a result, Nick is a volunteer at Thornebrooke Elementary, Gotha Middle and Olympia High School and proudly served as Cubmaster for Cub Scout Pack 6, Orlando.

DANIEL R. STRADER, of Shoemaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP, focuses his area of practice on employment and civil litigation. Daniel received his undergraduate degree from Stetson University where he graduated with honors and as a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He then went onto obtain his Juris Doctor from Stetson University College of Law where he received multiple scholastic awards including the Stetson Dean Merit Scholarship, Presidential Award Merit Scholarship, Dean’s List and various book awards. He was published and recognized for writing “Florida Supreme Court Declares “Superpriority” Municipal Liens Invalid News Alert” and “Bridging the Gap: Amending the Federal Arbitration Act to Allow Discovery of Nonparties.” Also, he was the Assistant Executive Editor and Digest Writer for the Stetson Law Review. In the summer of 2010, he was selected to intern under the Honorable Elizabeth A. Kovachevich, U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Florida. Currently, he is a member of the Sarasota Community Board for the Big Brother, Big Sister program and the Diversity Committee and Young Lawyers Division for the Sarasota Bar Association. Previously, he served as a student member for the Judge John M. Scheb American Inn of Courts and the Chamber of Commerce Engage Sarasota team.

JAMES (“JIM”) D. THALER, JR. practices in the areas of Business Law, Real Estate and Estate Planning. He also serves as corporate counsel to several small businesses and family owned companies. Jim lectures locally and nationally to lawyers, accountants and other professionals on Professionalism, Diversity, Business Law, Estate Planning and Practice Management issues, and has written numerous law practice related articles. He is a Special Magistrate for Code Enforcement Hearings for the City of Gulfport, a Hearing Officer for the Pinellas County Housing Authority and serves as an Arbitrator for the Better Business Bureau’s AutoLine Program. Jim is admitted to The Florida Bar, the US Supreme Court, the US Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit, the US Tax Court and the US Court of International Trade. He served for 10 years as a Visiting Assistant Professor and the Associate Director of Graduate Business Programs at the Stetson University School of Business Administration, overseeing the J.D./M.B.A. Program on Stetson University’s College of Law campus. He has taught graduate courses on Strategic Management, Organizational Theory and Behavior, Business Law, Ethics and Marketing. Over the past 25 years, he has owned and operated several businesses as a manufacturer’s representative, restaurateur and commercial real estate developer, and is the principal broker for real estate firms in Florida and Kentucky. Jim is a Past President of the St. Petersburg Bar Association and a Past-President of the St. Petersburg Bar Foundation. He has served as the Chair of the Lawyer Referral Service Committee and has chaired the Solo, Small Firm and Practice Management Section of the St. Petersburg Bar Association. Jim is an appointed member of the Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee of The Florida Bar, a member of the Business Law Section of The Florida Bar, a past member of the Professionalism Committee and a Certified Diversity Trainer through the Center for Professionalism. He has also served on the Executive Committee of the Tampa Bay Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

RENÉE THOMPSON is a Partner at Matteer & Harbert, P.A. practicing in their Ocala office as a civil litigator handling commercial litigation and equine law matters. She is an honors graduate of the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where she was chosen as an Outstanding Young Alumnus in 2012. Renée currently serves as the Fifth Circuit Representative on The Florida Bar Board of Governors, is a member of the Executive Committee of The Florida Bar and serves as the Chair of The Florida Bar Wm. Reece Smith, Jr. Leadership Academy Committee. She previously served as President of The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division from 2010-2011, and was the recipient of the YLD Board of Governor’s Most Productive Board Member Award in 2008. She also served as a Vice-Chair on the Hawkins Commission Review of the Disciple System. She is a member of the Florida Supreme Court Historical Society Board of Trustees and the D.R. Smith American Inn of Court. Renée currently serves as the President-Elect of the Marion County Bar and as the Chair of the U.S. Middle District Grievance Committee for the Ocala Division. Renée has been recognized as a Florida Association of Women Lawyers Leader in the Law, Florida Trend Magazine’s Legal Elite Up and Comer, Super Lawyers Florida Rising Star, and as one of Ocala Magazine’s ‘Forty Under Forty.’
HON. SUZANNE VAN WYK joined the Florida Division of Administrative Hearings as an Administrative Law Judge in August 2012. She was formerly a shareholder with Bryant Miller Olive in Tallahassee, where she focused her practice on land use and local government law. Prior to joining Bryant Miller Olive, she spent 10 years in government practice including representation of statewide and locally-elected and appointed boards, state agencies and a Florida Senate committee. She is Board Certified by The Florida Bar as a Specialist in City, County and Local Government Law. She serves on the Executive Council of The Florida Bar Administrative Law section. She is Vice Chair of The Florida Bar Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee; a member of the Board of Directors of the Florida State College of Law Alumni Association, Chair of the Board’s Student Recruitment Committee; a fellow of The Florida Bar Foundation; and an active member of Tallahassee Women Lawyers.

FRANCINE ANDIA WALKER, APR, CPRC, is Director of Public Information and Bar Services for The Florida Bar in Tallahassee. She has spent 33 years in communications and public relations. At The Florida Bar, she works closely with leadership on strategic communications and is responsible for media relations, consumer awareness programs, law related education, the voluntary bar liaison program and the Website: www.floridabar.org. A native of Jacksonville, she graduated from Episcopal High School in 1977 and received a Bachelor of Science in Journalism from the University of Florida in 1981. After college she held several positions in hospital and association public relations in Jacksonville. In 1996, she relocated to Tallahassee with the Florida Medical Association as Vice President of Communications, Education and Meeting Services. She joined The Florida Bar in February 2000 in her current position. Nationally accredited in public relations (APR), she is also a Certified Public Relations Counselor (CPRC). She has held leadership roles in the Public Relations Society of America/ North Florida Chapter and in the Florida Public Relations Association, and has also been active in Leadership Tallahassee, the Junior League and many non-profit/charitable organizations. She is a former chair of the National Association of Bar Executives (NABE) Communications Section. She currently chairs the NABE Scholarship Committee and has chaired and served on section committees and as a speaker for educational programs. In 2013, she received the E. A. “Wally” Richter Leadership Award for outstanding professional achievement in bar communications and extraordinary service to NABE and the section. She is a founding and active member of St. Peter’s Anglican Church, Tallahassee. She enjoys reading, beach and river activities, and spending time with her 2-year-old grandson, Buddy. She plays a tenor pan in “Pandemonium” -- an adult community steel drum band.

ARNELL BRYANT-WILLIS is the Diversity Initiatives Manager for The Florida Bar and has a diverse background in leadership roles in both the public and private sector to include employment and training on the state and national levels. She has served as chief operating officer of the Coca Cola Company community based organization for migrant and seasonal farmworkers, counselor in the criminal justice system and training consultant with EW Bryant Associates where she taught in areas of leadership, effective communication, diversity and board and council development. Arnell, a native of Florida, holds a B.A. in sociology from Florida State University and a Master of Education from Florida A&M University. She enjoys spending time with family, her Pearls and Diamonds Book Club, travel and personal shopping for those who are not enthusiastic about shopping.

DAN ZUNIGA (Committee Chair) concentrates his practice in the areas of personal injury, wrongful death, traumatic brain injuries, vehicular accidents, pedestrian accidents, medical malpractice, and products liability. He has tried to verdict and negotiated hundreds of settlements on behalf of clients in cases involving death and serious injuries. Dan has successfully handled cases against every major insurance company and major manufacturers of a variety of consumer products including SUVs, automobiles, tires, and household appliances among others. Upon his graduation from Hofstra School of Law in New York, Dan worked as a Certified Legal Intern at the Miami-Dade State Attorney’s office before taking a position with a civil defense firm, where he represented corporate entities. He later joined the venerable plaintiff’s personal injury law firm of Lytal, Reiter, Clark, Fountain & Williams, LLP, where he honed his skills representing injured parties all over the State of Florida. He joined Zele Huber Trial Attorneys, P.A. in 2012. Dan proudly serves the legal community as a Past President of the Palm Beach County Hispanic Bar Association and has been appointed Chairperson for the Voluntary Bar Liaison Committee of The Florida Bar Association. He also sits on the Board of Directors for the Young Lawyers Section of the Palm Beach County Bar Association, the North County Section of the Palm Beach County Bar Association, and the Palm Beach Chapter of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers. As recognition for his hard work, Dan has been recognized as a Florida Super Lawyer; Legal Elite Up & Comer; and a Top 40 under 40 by the National Trial Lawyers Association. He was selected as one of 59 attorneys to participate in The Florida Bar’s Leadership Academy inaugural class, 2013-14.
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