



**National Conference on Guardianship
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Dallas, TX
Speaker Contact Information and Biographies**

Frank R. Acuña

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Frank R. Acuña is a founding partner of ACUÑA * REGLI. He is a California State Bar certified estate planning, trust, and probate law specialist. His practice includes estate planning; inheritance litigation; business succession planning; special needs trusts; and farm, ranch, and vineyard succession planning. Mr. Acuña has taught tax seminars for the National Tax Practice Institute, the California Society of Enrolled Agents, the California Society of Tax Professionals, the National Association of Enrolled Agents, and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Mr. Acuña also is a featured speaker for the Professional Fiduciary Association of California, the National Guardianship Association, and the California Public Administrators, Public Conservators, and Public Guardians. He advises tax, fiduciary, and investment professionals throughout the State of California.

Eric Bell

Protective Services Representative, Advocacy & Protective Services, Inc. (APSI)
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Eric Bell is a Protective Services Representative with Advocacy and Protective Services, Inc. (APSI). As an APSI employee for over 9 years, Eric performs guardianship of the person duties for adults with developmental disabilities and frequently incorporates supported decision-making principles while fulfilling the duties of guardianship. He earned his B.A. in Pastoral Ministries from Mt Vernon Nazarene University.

Susan Bennett, NCG

Program Lead, Ethics in Guardianship, New Mexico Ethics in Guardianship Program
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Susan A Bennett, Program Lead, 2018 to present, for the Central New Mexico (CNM) Ingenuity, Inc., *Ethics and Fundamentals of Guardianship and Conservatorship and Advanced Topics* program is a retired guardianship social worker and health / guardianship law paralegal including experience on the University of New Mexico (UNM) Health Sciences BioMedical Ethics Committee. She was one of the first full time guardianship case managers in the state of New Mexico. Susan spent over 22 years working in guardianship with culturally diverse all-age adult populations including those with dementia, developmental disabilities, mental illness, and people with multiple deficits and disabilities.

License, certification, membership history: New Mexico State Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker; Registered Guardian, National Guardianship Association/Center for Guardianship Certification. From UNM: Paralegal Certificate; Health Sciences Biomedical Ethics Certificate; Geriatric Education Center Interdisciplinary Geriatric Certificate; School of Law Mediation Training. Susan was co-founder and first President of the New Mexico Guardianship Association (NMGA); co-author, NMGA 2007 revision of The Handbook for Guardians and Conservators. Member: Albuquerque St. Joseph Healthcare Institutional Review Board; Integrated Specialty Hospital Ethics Committee; board of NM Adelante Development Center for people with disabilities and seniors; and the task force to develop New Mexico Uniform Health Care Decisions Act.

Tracey Bowles, M.A., MFT, NCG, CPM

Washoe County Public Guardian
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Tracey Bowles was appointed Public Guardian for Washoe County effective March 11, 2019. Tracey was born and raised in Washoe County, attending the University of Nevada, Reno obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and a Master's Degree in Counseling and Educational Psychology.

Tracey began her career working with vulnerable populations in 1997, working at Washoe County's emergency shelter for abused, abandoned and neglected children, while working on her Master's degree at the University of Nevada Reno. Following graduation, Tracey pursued her licensure as a Marriage and Family therapist in both Nevada and California at a non-profit located on the shores of Lake Tahoe. After 11 years of working directly with individuals, couples, and families in therapy, Tracey returned to Washoe County to work with children and their families for Human Services Agency. After 6 years, Tracey took advantage of an opportunity to lead a dynamic team running seven different children's mental health programs in Northern Nevada for the Division of Child and Family Services. It was here that her passion for leading dynamic teams who are focused on quality care for the people they serve, blossomed.

Tracey was the recipient of the Kristine Nagy-Johnson award for Outstanding Individual Performance for dedicated efforts in the Field of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, Education, and Treatment in 2017. Tracey obtained her Certification as a National Guardian in March of 2020 and her Certified Professional Management Certification with the State of Nevada in October of 2020, where her class nominated her to speak at their graduation.

Tracey has been a frequent trainer in the areas of Trauma Informed Care, and currently teaches Cultural Awareness for The Nevada Peace Officers Standards and Training academy.

After three years as the appointed Public Guardian for her county, Tracey is enthusiastic about sharing how her dedicated team of exceptional case managers and staff meet the needs of the protected people for whom they serve, working collaboratively with community partners, while advocating for ethical guardianship practices across the state. She is pretty proud of her teams Washoe Impact Award for Integrity in 2019, there many years of winning the Silver Sleigh Award for generous giving at the holidays, and their 2020 award for Best Team Halloween Costume portraying the Guardians of the Galaxy!

Harvie Leonard (Lennie) Burke, NMG

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Lennie Burke is a National Master Guardian. He has practiced guardianship in Florida since 2003. His practice includes both Guardianship of the Person and Guardianship of the Property (aka conservatorship.)

As of July 2022, he is President of the Florida State Guardianship Association, having served in many roles including as Executive Director.

His shadow career is in mediation and peacemaking. His observation was that too often, guardianships are taken when a dispute would be better handled in mediation. He is certified by the Supreme Court of Florida for County, Family and Appellate Mediation. He is also trained in Christian Reconciliation and was accepted for candidacy as a Certified Christian Conciliator

He frequently provides accredited continuing education for guardians, mediators, attorneys and other professions.

Ronna Caras

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Ronna Caras is a seasoned Instructional Designer and Trainer currently re-developing the professional curriculum for The Center for Guardianship Excellence. She has mastered complex guardianship principles, standards and objectives to create thought-provoking useful training. Ronna has been a frequent speaker at conferences for many years always including memorable stories and useful takeaways. Ronna is currently developing a series of self-paced on-demand eLearning programs for family guardians and anyone new to guardianship responsibilities. She has embraced the principles from the National Guardianship Association and brought them to life to help build skills and deliver tools for improving our results. Programs include Guardianship Basics, Guardianship Forms, Communications Skills, Disarming + DeFusing Difficult People and Situations, Improving Relationships with Caregivers, Dealing with Boundary Issues and many more topics important to the guardianship community of professionals.

Erica C. R. Costello, JD, NCG

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Erica C. R. Costello, JD, NCG, is a Senior Attorney/Chief Counsel at the ABA Commission on Law and Aging and has worked extensively on guardianship projects and reform efforts at both the state and national level. In her current position, Erica provides substantive legal support and expertise in the areas of adult guardianship, elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation, supported decision-making, and access to courts. She is licensed to practice law in Indiana and is a nationally certified guardian.

Judge DaNeeka Varner Cotton

Associate Judge for the Seventh Judicial Circuit, Circuit Court for Prince George’s County, MO
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DaNeeka Varner Cotton earned her Juris Doctorate from the University of Maryland School of Law, Baltimore, Maryland. She completed her undergraduate studies at Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia.

Judge Cotton was admitted to the Maryland Bar in 1992. She was appointed to the District Court in 2006 by Governor Robert Ehrlich, Jr. In 2011, Judge Cotton was appointed to the Circuit Court of Prince Georges County by Governor Martin O’Malley and subsequently elected to a 15-year term.

Judge Cotton is currently the Judge in charge of Trust/Adult Guardianship/Guardian of the Property Cases. Judge Cotton serves as the liaison to the Administrative judge on all issues related to Family Division matters. Judge Cotton serves as a faculty member at the Maryland Judicial College on issues of guardianship and family law. Judge Cotton was recently honored as one of the Top 100 Women in Maryland. She has also been recognized as one of five outstanding women in Maryland by the Office of Lieutenant Governor.

Judge Cotton is a former Domestic Relations Magistrate for Prince George's County, Maryland. As a Magistrate, she presided over cases involving divorce, custody, visitation, alimony, child support, and other family related issues. She held that position from 1998 until her judicial appointment.

Judge Cotton is a member of the Prince George's County Bar Association, Maryland State Bar Association, J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association, Women's Bar Association, National Bar Association, National Association of Women Judges, National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges and Maryland Circuit Court Judges Association. Judge Cotton is also a member of the Guardianship and Vulnerable Adult Workgroup for the Maryland Judiciary. Judge Cotton serves on the Board of Directors for Bishop McNamara High School. Judge Cotton is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Jill Couch

Regional Program Director, Advocacy & Protective Services, Inc. (APSI)
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Jill Couch is a Regional Program Director at Advocacy and Protective Services, Inc. (APSI) with over 20 years of experience performing and coordinating guardianship services. She supports her staff and clients in identifying opportunities to incorporate supported decision-making principles into guardianship services. She earned her B.A. in Psychology from Ohio Northern University.

Daniel Cutter, CRPC®

Senior Vice President, Senior Financial Advisor, Merrill – The Special Needs Team
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Daniel Cutter is a Senior Vice President and Senior Financial Advisor with the Special Needs Team at Merrill. Dan provides tailored advice and guidance to enhance the long-term financial well-being of special-needs, disabled and elderly individuals. Dan began his wealth management career in 1999. He is the recipient of the prestigious David Brady award, bestowed upon the Merrill employee who goes beyond expectations in his dedication to clients. He earned his M.B.A. with a concentration in Finance from the University of San Francisco and holds the Chartered Retirement Planning CounselorSM designation awarded by the College for Financial Planning.

Kent Davis, MPH, NCG

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Mr. Davis is a National Certified Guardian and President of the Board of Trustees of Volunteer Guardianship One on One, Inc., in Flemington, New Jersey. Beginning in 2008, Mr. Davis served as a volunteer guardian to two incapacitated adults. Since 2015, Mr. Davis has been a Trustee with the organization, committed to expanding the concept of community guardianship throughout New Jersey. Mr. Davis has a BS and MPH from Rutgers University, and works at Mathematica Policy Research in Princeton, New Jersey as a public health IT solutions architect, designing Medicaid and Medicare

reporting and data analysis solutions for state and federal clients. Additional information:
<https://www.mathematica.org/staff/kent-davis> and www.volunteerguardianship.org

Karen Digh Allen, Esq., NCG

Public Administrator, Callaway County, Missouri
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Karen, an Army “Brat” proud to now call Missouri home, has served as Callaway County Public Administrator for over 25 years after working for various Missouri state agencies as legal counsel dealing with nursing home licensure, social services, and corrections. The Callaway County Public Administrator Office serves 130 clients who live in a 20 county area. Having earned her National Certified Guardian status in 2005, Karen was the recipient of the National Certified Guardian Excellence Award in 2016 and the Fred Kretz Cornerstone Award in 2021.

Karen is a member of Missouri's Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders (Mo-Wings) and the Missouri Supported Decision Making Consortium. She served 2 terms as a Regional Vice President for the Missouri Association of Public Administrators (MAPA) and is active with MAPA's Legislative and Procedures/Resource Manual Committees. Karen is a Missouri Association of Counties (MAC) Board Director where she serves on the MAC Policing, Justice & Mental Health Steering Committee. The National Association of Counties (NACo) President appointed Karen to serve as a Vice Chair for the Justice & Public Safety Subcommittee on Courts and Corrections, and as a member of the Veterans and Military Services Committee, the Credentials Committee, and the Rural Action Caucus Steering Committee.

As a member of both the MAPA Legislative Committee and Mo-Wings, Karen was honored to participate in the creation and passage in 2018 of a significant update to Missouri guardianship law. The same year, Karen was part of the “venue team” that included the Jackson County Public Administrator and Professor David English of the University of Missouri Law School. The “team” successfully drafted a guardianship venue statute that unanimously passed through both Missouri Legislative Chambers in 2019. This statute clarifies Missouri guardianship venue law and works toward all individuals having a guardian significantly connected to their place of domicile.

Karen lives in Callaway County, Missouri with her husband, Eugene, a retired CPA who is a brain injury survivor. She serves her community as a member of the Callaway County Salvation Army Board and the Central Missouri Community Action Board.

Jennifer Donovan, JD

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Jennifer Donovan is the Public Guardian for the State of Iowa and oversees Iowa's Office of Public Guardian. She received her law degree from the University of Iowa College of Law. Prior to joining the Office of Public Guardian in 2018, she practiced law for eleven years as a Staff Attorney at Iowa Legal Aid. She is a member of the Guardianship Association of Iowa Network (GAIN), the National Guardianship Association, the Iowa State Bar Association, and the American Bar Association.

Erin Droll, BA, NCG

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Erin has a Bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies: Aging Studies from the University of Iowa and has done Master's level course work at Iowa State in Family Financial Planning and Gerontology. Erin's past work experience includes the Elder Abuse Intervention Program, and 7 years as a corneal recovery technician with the Iowa Lions Eye Bank. Erin formerly volunteered her time with the Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP), and is well versed in Medicare, Medicaid, and long-term care insurance. Her 18 years of experience includes working with health care delivery systems, subsidized housing, and nursing homes. She founded Corridor Care Management in 2013. In 2017, after being awarded the contract to be the Local Office of the Iowa Public Guardian, Erin changed her private pay business name to Heartland Fiduciary Services. Her companies provide all aspects of substitute decision making for adults.

Steven D. Fields, JD

Court Administrator / Senior Attorney, Tarrant County Probate Court Two
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Steven D. Fields has been the Court Administrator/Senior Attorney for Tarrant County Probate Court No. Two, Fort Worth, TX, since 1999. He has been an adjunct professor at Texas A&M School of Law since 2010, teaching Guardianship and Estate Administration classes. He is the past president of the National Guardianship Association (2008); past president of the Texas Guardianship Association (2004-2005); and was the first Texas HHSC Guardianship Director (1998-1999). He served as Court Investigator for the Tarrant County Probate Courts (1993-1998) specializing in the filing of guardianship applications for indigent incapacitated individuals. He has been a licensed attorney since 1987 with a JD degree from the University of Oklahoma, and he specialized in guardianship, estate planning and probate law for various Texas law firms for 6 years. He has a BA degree in English from Oklahoma Christian University. He is married, has a 20-year-old daughter, and likes to buy and sell musical recordings.

Terry W. Hammond, JD, NCG

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Terry W. Hammond, J.D., is the Executive Director of the Texas Guardianship Association, and is the Guardianship and Probate Attorney for the Brazos County Courts at Law in Bryan, Texas. Mr. Hammond is a past president of the Texas Guardianship Association and the National Guardianship Association, and was Executive Director of NGA from 2006-2010. Mr. Hammond is a private consultant on guardianship and Adult Protective Services proceedings and appeals, and has been an expert witness in contested guardianship litigation cases. Mr. Hammond earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Education and his Master of Arts Degree in History from Texas A&M University, and his Juris Doctorate from the Texas Tech University School of Law. Mr. Hammond represented family and professional guardians during his 26-year law practice before joining the Brazos County Courts at Law. Mr. Hammond has been a proponent of guardianship reform in Texas as well as in the United States.

Laurie A. Hedrich, Esq.

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Laurie A. Hedrich is a shareholder with Hedrich Law, P.A., in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Her law practice concentrates on estate planning, probate, post mortem and trust administration, guardianships and conservatorships, elder law and general business planning. She was admitted to the California Bar in 1984 and to the New Mexico Bar in 1996. Additionally, Laurie is the President of the New Mexico Guardianship Association, has served on the board of the Elder Law Section of the State Bar of New Mexico and in 2021 was elected as an ACTEC fellow. When not working, Laurie can usually be found knitting, scuba diving, fly fishing or watching a baseball game.

Kristen Henry

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Kristen Henry is the Executive Director of Advocacy and Protective Services, Inc. (APSI), which provides guardianship and other protective services to over 3,000 adults with developmental disabilities in Ohio. She is an attorney with experience advocating for individuals with disabilities on issues related to guardianship, Medicaid, and civil rights. She earned her B.A. from The Ohio State University and her J.D. from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law.

Dion Hobbs

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Dion works with clients throughout Texas, providing tailored advice and guidance to enhance the long-term financial well-being of special-needs, disabled and elderly individuals. He is particularly skilled in working with clients' external trust and legal advisors to design customized programs squarely focused on the well-being of the client. His areas of focus include Special Needs Trusts, Guardians, Trust administration, and the Uniform Prudent Investor Act. He began his career in 1999 and earned his B.S. in Business Administration and Minor in Economics from Atlantic Union College.

Amanda Huffman

Morgan County Public Administrator

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Amanda Huffman is currently serving as the Past President for the Association of Public Administrators, an organization made up of Public Administrators from each county in the state of Missouri. Being involved in several committees within this organization, she was instrumental in participating in creating a standards of practice/procedure manual. Amanda is no stranger to providing resources to individuals, having spent 12 years as an eligibility specialist with the Family Support Division; helping individuals apply and receive state benefits. She also currently serves as the board president for a local nursing home and on the sheltered workshop board of directors. This has been the perfect foundation for her being a public guardian for the vulnerable citizens of her county.

Sally Balch Hurme, JD

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Sally Hurme is an elder law attorney who retired from AARP after 23 years. While at AARP she worked on a wide variety of issues including advance care planning, surrogate decision making, consumer fraud, elder abuse, and financial security.

As chair of the National Guardianship Network she led the planning for the 2011 Third National Guardianship Summit. Hurme was the convener of the 3rd World Congress on Guardianship held in Washington, DC in 2014. She was an advisor to the Uniform Law Commission in the drafting of the uniform guardianship jurisdiction act and Uniform Guardianship, Conservatorship, and Other Protective Arrangements Act. Hurme also was a member of the U.S. State Department delegation that drafted the Hague International Convention on the Protection of Adults. She was honored by the National College of Probate Judges with the Treat Award for excellence in probate law.

Ms. Hurme is the author of the award-winning *ABA/AARP Checklist series: Checklist for My Family, Checklist for Family Caregivers, Checklist for Family Survivors, and Get the Most Out of Retirement*. Each is a practical guide to the legal matters encountered by individuals in retirement, their caregivers, and their families after death.

She received her law degree *cum laude* from the Washington College of Law at American University, Washington, DC and her bachelor's degree from Newcomb College, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA. Hurme has served multiple terms on the boards of the National Guardianship Association and the Center for Guardianship Certification. She's a member of the Virginia Bar Association, American Bar Association, and the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys.

LaVonne Jarrett, BS, MSM, NCG

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LaVonne is the Director of the Franciscan Health-Volunteer Advocates for Seniors and Incapacitated Adults Program aka VASIA. She has been with the program for 16 years, starting as the coordinator, then to Manager and now Director. Her predecessor, Vanessa Nathan, was the Co-Foundress and 1st Executive Lead of the development, implementation and expansion of the program. Vanessa, who trained and mentored LaVonne, passed away in 2017 leaving the mantle for LaVonne to take the program to the next level.

VASIA is a Franciscan mission and volunteer-based program that provides guardianship services to at-risk adults throughout Northwest Indiana. The program is considered the best practice model of a non-for-profit, volunteer based, guardianship program in Lake County. VASIA has received numerous awards and recognitions from Area One on Aging, Retirement Research Foundation, Lake County Bar Association, Legacy Foundation and the National Hospital Charitable Award program. Since the inception of the program, VASIA has served over 600 adults and trained over 500 community volunteers. The VASIA program and many contributors have been instrumental in the establishment of Indiana Code 25-3-8.5 that we currently acknowledge today.

LaVonne has a bachelor's degree in Continuing Education with a Sociology concentration and a Master of Science with a concentration in Healthcare Administration. LaVonne has a passion for advocacy which is why she became a National Certified Guardian several years ago. LaVonne has been able to expand program services to the community and increase revenue by entering into several agreements with non-Franciscan hospitals and Adult Protective Services. VASIA has successfully hosted, pre-pandemic, an annual showcase fundraiser that highlighted local talent and brought resources and community awareness to the program. Volunteer opportunities have expanded to include professionals in capacity assessments, site visits and social skill enhancement for the clients served.

Her previous work experience consists of 13 years of coordinating services for persons with intellectual disabilities. She developed and managed a Senior Retirement Activity program for persons with disabilities that expanded throughout 4 cities in Northwest Indiana that is still functioning today. She also coordinated and managed the services for several hundred adults with intellectual needs for the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities throughout 7 counties for the State of Indiana.

She was a recipient of the “Women of Excellence Award” for her community service for the City of Gary. She was given the “Hero for Elderly Adults” award from the Northwest Indiana Community Action Corporation and she was nominated for the prestigious 2020 Influential Women of Northwest Indiana Awards Up and Coming in Healthcare. She is a Gospel recording artist with annual recognition by Indiana State Representative, Vernon Smith. Her single release “FOREVER” has been featured on ALL Electronic Media (iTUNES, Googleplay, YouTube, CD Baby)

Married for 26 years with three daughters, she is always looking to touch the lives of others through music and advocacy within her community. This is God’s ministry in her!

Jeremy Lau, CFA®, CFP®

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Jeremy L. Lau serves as President and Chief Investment Officer. He teaches the Investment Management course for California State University, Fullerton’s Trustee Certification Program and frequently speaks on fiduciary investing to attorneys and fiduciaries across various associations. Before joining Prudent Investors, he worked as an Executive Director in investment banking in Tokyo and Hong Kong for Deutsche Bank AG and UBS AG in structured credit and convertible bonds. He graduated in accounting (with Honors distinction) from Brigham Young University and has earned the right to use the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA®) and Certified Financial Planner (CFP®) designations.

Darryl J. Lynch, AIF®

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Darryl Lynch is a Managing Director – Investments with Oppenheimer & Co. Inc. and specializes in working with Guardians, Conservators, and Trustees. He has over 30 years of experience in the financial industry. Darryl recognizes the unique financial needs of Guardian, Conservator, and Trustee clients and uses a disciplined long-term approach to support them in investing and protecting their assets. Darryl earned his MBA from Duke University, has been a member of the National Guardianship Association since 2001, and is a member of the Executive Council, a prestigious award to top Financial Advisors.

He is a respected speaker on subjects related to guardianships, conservatorships, and trusts. In the last two years, Darryl has delivered presentations and accredited continuing education for the National Guardianship Association, Stetson Law’s National Conference on Special Needs Planning and Special Needs Trusts, and the National College of Probate Judges. Topics have included Fiduciary Ethics, SNT and ABLE accounts, Sound and Prudent Investment Strategies, Limiting Liability for Guardians, and Changes to the Guardianship Code.

Judge Milton Mack (Ret)

State Court Administrator Emeritus, Michigan Supreme Court
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Judge Mack currently serves as State Court Administrator Emeritus for the Michigan Supreme Court. He served as State Court Administrator from 2015 to 2020, and previously served as a judge for the Wayne County Probate Court from 1990 to 2015 and as Chief Judge from 1998 to 2015.

He is a graduate of Eastern Michigan University and the Wayne State University Law School. He also attended the Harvard University/Kennedy School of Government, Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government as a Taubman Fellow.

Judge Mack currently serves as Chair of Governor Whitmer's Mental Health Diversion Council. In 2004, he served on Governor Granholm's Michigan Mental Health Commission. He also served on the Michigan Supreme Court's Guardianship Task Force.

Judge Mack is the author of COSCA's 2016-2017 Policy Paper: Decriminalization of Mental Illness: Fixing a Broken System. He also wrote "Involuntary Treatment for the 21st Century" published in the Quinipiac Probate Law Journal in 2008.

In 2017, he was named Judge of the Year by the Michigan Guardianship Association and Advocate of the Year by NAMI Michigan. That year he also received the Snyder-Kok Award from the Mental Health Association in Michigan. In 2010 he received the William W. Treat Award for Excellence from the National College of Probate Judges. He received the Tom Bradley Leadership Award from the National Association of Regional Councils in 1999.

Gregory W. MacKenzie, Esq.

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Gregory W. MacKenzie is an attorney who has been practicing law in Albuquerque, NM since 1993. He is AV Rated by Martindale-Hubbell and was elected as a fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel in 2010. He is an active member of the Fiduciary Litigation Committee of that College. Greg currently serves on the Board of Directors for the NGA, is the Chair of the New Mexico Membership Committee for ACTEC and is very active in the NM state bar on many levels in his field of practice. He is an adjunct law professor at the University of New Mexico law school where he teaches trust and estate litigation.

For over twenty years, Greg has been engaged full-time in litigating guardianships, conservatorships, trusts and estates. He regularly represents individual and professional guardians and conservators, petitioners and persons interested in the affairs of vulnerable adults. He regularly provides litigation, consultation and risk management services to guardians, conservators and fiduciaries serving in difficult situations. Many of the cases Greg has handled in this area have been intensely litigated and have been filed in an effort to combat elder exploitation.

Greg is an active member of the New Mexico Guardianship Association and is a past two-term president. Greg has participated in the drafting of the Uniform Guardianship Conservatorship and other Protective Arrangements Act of 2017 as a drafting committee observer and for years has presented to many professional conferences on issues affecting guardianships and conservatorships.

Greg is passionate about the positive development of law and policy in the guardianship field. Greg believes in the strength of the National Guardianship Association to serve as a resource for its members, the public and policy makers and is excited over the prospect of contributing to the profession in a meaningful way as an NGA board member.

Jamie Majerus, CPA, CIA, CFE

Branch Audit Manager, Minnesota Judicial Branch
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Jamie Majerus is the Minnesota Judicial Branch Audit Manager and WINGS MN Co-Coordinator. Jamie has worked for the Minnesota Judicial Branch since November 2011. Jamie has over 15 years of state service as an auditor. In her role, Jamie oversees and manages the Internal Audit and the Conservator Account Auditing/Review Program divisions. The Internal Audit division is responsible for the examination and evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the organization's governance, risk management, policies and procedures and internal processes. The Conservator Account Auditing Program (CAAP) and Conservator Account Review Program (CARP) operate statewide to audit and review conservator accounts, to provide information and recommendations to the district courts and to conservators. The mission of CAAP/CARP is to safeguard the assets of protected persons through the oversight of conservators by conducting professional compliance audits and reviews. Jamie is a graduate of Winona State University, where she received her bachelor's degree in accounting. Jamie also holds the following professional licenses: Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) and Certified Internal Auditor (CIA).

Kathleen McCloskey, MA, LPM

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Kate McCloskey is the Guardianship Compliance Manager with the Nevada Supreme Court. Previously, Kate worked as the Director of Quality Assurance for Developmental Services at the Nevada Aging and Developmental Services Division. Kate has 20 years of experience developing comprehensive compliance systems in both the fields of intellectual disability and aging service systems in the states of Maine and Nevada. She received her bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Massachusetts, Lowell and her master's degree in sociology from the University of Nevada, Reno.

Joyce McHugh, CM, CCM, BSW, MSW

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Joyce McHugh is a social worker, legal guardian and Certified Care Manager working in the Boulder, Colorado area. She started with Advocate Care Services ten years ago, and is now a co-owner of the agency. She is passionate about advocating for and working with protected populations. Joyce is currently working to improve the awareness of the role of guardian with the State of Colorado, local facilities, hospitals and medical providers. In addition to working full-time she is currently a Master's candidate and is working on a book about legal guardianships.

Dr. Mary L. Milano

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Dr. Mary Milano is the Executive Director of the Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission, a position she has held for 15 years. In that position she has expanded services into areas that include special education, community education and legislative advocacy.

Her background prior to government service includes significant experience in the private practice of law in the international corporate arena, as well as engagement in the not-for-profit sector as an executive in the World Hunger Program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and in academic life with fifteen years of service as a professor of Christian Social Ethics in a graduate theological program.

She holds degrees in theology, ministry and law at the post graduate and doctoral levels and has held fellowships in both theology and international law and human rights from institutions including Northwestern University, McCormick Theological Seminary, The Danforth Foundation, Universite Libre de Bruxelles and Istituto Superiore di Scienze Criminali in Siracusa, Italy. She is an active author and speaker in areas of continuing legal education and in addition to bar leadership positions most recently led the development of the racial inequality initiative of the Illinois State Bar Association. Dr. Milano is also a priest of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago and pastors a tri denominational congregation formed around hunger/justice engagement.

In her spare time she is committed to the human rights of all of us who have differences, and when possible, tilts at windmills.

Elizabeth A. Moran, JD

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Elizabeth A. Moran is a Senior Attorney/Chief Counsel at the ABA Commission on Law and Aging where she provides substantive support and expertise to the Commission specifically in the areas of guardianship, supported decision-making, capacity issues, elder abuse, and others as needed.

In addition to a number of years in private practice, Elizabeth brings substantial experience in disability rights across the lifespan, including her most recent work as Deputy Director of the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council, Chair of the Missouri State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Directing Attorney for Midwest Advocacy for Disability Rights, Policy Coordinator for the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities, and more than ten years serving as an adjunct professor at UMKC School of Law where she co-instructs *Leadership in Disability Studies: A Multi-disciplinary Approach*. In addition, she has been a member of Missouri WINGS, serving on its Legislative Drafting Committee since 2011.

Elizabeth is a strong supporter of supported decision-making, community inclusion, and an enthusiast of creative problem solving, particularly regarding marginalized populations as they navigate legal systems and options for quality of life supports. She is most passionate about providing resources, support, and advocacy on behalf of aging individuals, adults with disabilities, and their families as they seek information and understanding of the options and alternatives available to them as they pursue the most appropriate means of the long-term and decision-making supports necessary for individuals to live a truly integrated life...the good life.

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Bridget represents clients in the areas of Guardianships and Conservatorships, Probate, Estate Planning, Special Needs and Medicaid Planning, Elder law, and Family law with a focus on working with Spanish-speaking clients. In addition, Bridget has a strong trial background after spending many years prosecuting domestic violence, child abuse, and human trafficking cases for the District Attorney's and Attorney General's Offices. Bridget has also worked on consumer protection issues and taught Financial Literacy classes to help community members learn about debt, investing, and

credit. Due to her unique combination of practice areas, Bridget has developed a specialty in cases involving both guardianship and divorce, or death during divorce cases. She often presents on and writes about those topics.

Julia R. Nack, M.Ed., NMG Emeritus

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Julia Nack is certified as a National Master Guardian Emeritus by the Center for Guardianship Certification. With over 40 years in the field of Adult Guardianship, she has extensive experience in leading local, state and national groups in the effort to establish national standards of best practice for guardians.

Her work in guardianship includes 11 years as program director for a statewide guardianship nonprofit in Ohio, 4 years as Adult Guardianship Court Investigator in one of Ohio's largest counties, and 24 years as the director of the Volunteer Guardian Program at the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging in Columbus. She is a consultant in her field. For 8 years she was on the board of the National Guardianship Association, serving as its President in 2011. She is currently a director on the Center for Guardianship Certification's board, and a member of the group revising the "NGA Standards of Practice."

Married to Gary for 43 years, she has one daughter, Tiffany, who lives in Philadelphia.

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Benjamin Orzeske is Chief Counsel at the Uniform Law Commission, a non-profit law reform organization comprised of volunteer attorney/commissioners appointed by the states and supported by the staff at its Chicago headquarters. He supervises a staff of legislative attorneys who work to enact uniform laws in all fifty United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Ben personally provides legislative support for uniform laws in the areas of real property, trusts and estates, investment management, and elder law. He also serves as the ULC's internal Legal Counsel.

Ben is a member of the American Bar Association Section of Real Property, Trust and Estate Law where he serves as Chair of the Legal Education and Uniform Laws Group, and also a member of the ABA Business Law Section. He is a former Chair of the Chicago Bar Association's Legislative Committee, and a member of the Illinois State Bar Association. He also serves as the ULC's staff liaison to the Joint Editorial Boards for Uniform Real Property Acts and Uniform Trust and Estate Acts.

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Anthony Palmieri is the Deputy Inspector General & Chief Guardianship Investigator in the Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller for Palm Beach County's Division of Inspector General. He is a highly credentialed and professionally

certified; he graduated from the University of Florida with a Bachelors and Barry University School of Law with a Juris Doctorate.

Anthony is a nationally recognized expert on investigating Silver Collar Crimes occurring in guardianships; he has been quoted by the New York Times, the Daily Mail, Wall Street Journal, BuzzFeed, the American Bar Association Bar Journal, and People.com. His expertise and contributions to the field were acknowledged in Netflix “Dirty Money” and as a Barry University Distinguished Alumni Award recipient. He was a voting delegate at the 4th National Guardianship Summit and the President of the National Guardianship Association. Currently, Anthony serves as the Vice Chair of Guardianship Improvement Task Force.

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Peter Palumbo joined Oppenheimer & Co. Inc. in 2007. He is a member of the National Guardianship Association (NGA) and has attained the Accredited Investment Fiduciary (AIF)® designation from the Center for Fiduciary Studies. Building relationships based on integrity and trust is important to him. As part of The Palumbo Group at Oppenheimer, he provides customized financial strategies to clients seeking professional wealth management and estate planning for wealth transfer between generations.

He is a frequent speaker on issues around financial planning, wealth management for guardianships and trusts, and inter-generational wealth transfer. In addition to the National Guardianship Association, he has presented for the National College of Probate Judges, the Missouri Bar Association, and the Missouri chapter of the National Association of Elder Law Attorneys, amongst others.

Teresa Parks, MSW, NCG

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Teresa Parks, MSW, NCG is the Deputy Director of the Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission as well as Director of the Commission’s Human Rights Authority. Parks holds a Master’s Degree in Social Work from the University of Illinois in Champaign/Urbana and is National Certified Guardian through the Center for Guardianship Certification. Parks is also a graduate of Illinois’ Partners in Policy Making Program and the Institute of Special Education Advocacy through William and Mary Law School. Prior to working for the Commission, Parks was a nursing home ombudsman and program director for a community mental health agency. Currently, Parks serves on the board and education committee of the Illinois Guardianship Association, is an appointed member of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities and is a trustee for the Center for Guardianship Certification. She has also served on various local and regional disability-related boards and committees. Parks is the parent of two adult children, including a son with disabilities.

Evelyn J. Patsos, Esq.

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Evelyn Patsos currently serves as Deputy Legal Counsel in the Administrative Office of the Massachusetts Probate and Family Court. Previously, she was with the Worcester Probate and Family Court as a Deputy Assistant Register/MUPC Magistrate and in private practice. For the last 13 years, her work has focused on the implementation and management of the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code (MUPC) and the Massachusetts Uniform Trust Code (MUTC). In 2014, she was the first recipient of the Greater Boston Fiduciary American Inn of Court Award of Excellence. In 2017, Evelyn assisted in the creation of the Fiduciary Litigation Session (FLS) in the Probate and Family Court and now manages the day-to-day operations of two specialized probate sessions as well as its two clerks and research attorney.

Evelyn is the co-editor of the *MCLE Massachusetts Probate Manual* and is a contributing author of several chapters. She is also a contributing author of *MCLE's Guardianship and Conservatorship Practice Under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code*. Evelyn is the editor and a contributing author of the *MUPC Estate Administration Procedural Guide*, published by the Administrative Office of the Probate and Family Court. She is a frequent speaker at seminars on both estate administration and guardianship/conservatorship law.

Evelyn currently serves as co-chair of the Probate and Family Court Bench/Bar Committee on Rules and the Probate and Family Court Guardianship Committee. In 2018, Evelyn was appointed by the Justices of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court to the Board of Directors of the Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee (MHLAC) and in the summer of 2019, Evelyn was appointed to serve on the Supreme Judicial Court's Working Group on Substance Use and Mental Health and thereafter established the Probate and Family Court Committee on Substance Use and Mental Health.

Evelyn currently serves as the President of the Massachusetts Family and Probate American Inn of Court. She also serves as a member of the Probate Section Council and the Family Law Section Council of the Massachusetts Bar Association and the Boston Bar Association Trusts and Estates Section and Family Law Section.

Most recently, Evelyn was named legal advisor to the Board of Directors of Public Guardian Services, to assist in the implementation of a first ever public guardianship pilot project in Massachusetts. In 2021, she was the recipient of MCLE's Scholar Award and the National Association of Elder Law Attorneys, Massachusetts Chapter, Arthur Stavitsky Award for her work in securing a \$1 Million-dollar federal grant to create the first ever Office of Adult Guardianship and Conservatorship Oversight within the Administrative Office of the Probate and Family Court. Evelyn serves as Project Director for this grant.

Jeffrey Petty

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Jeff Petty is a statewide Probate Analyst with the Juvenile & Family Court Programs Division in the Oregon Judicial Department. He began working for OJD in 2013 as the Clackamas County probate auditor and later managed the two largest probate departments in the state where he implemented various estate and protective proceeding program improvements and oversight projects while participating in statewide legislative committees and presenting at probate and elder law CLEs.

Rebecca M. Pryor, MSM, NCG

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Rebecca M. Pryor, MSM, NCG (Becky) has worked as a nonprofit chief executive, state and federal lobbyist, and a community advocate and volunteer in the areas of child abuse legal advocacy and adult guardianship for the past 52 years. She was the founder of Indiana Advocates for Children, Inc. and spearheaded the development of the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Programs in Indiana. For the past 20 years, she has been a leader in the establishment of the Indiana Supreme Court – Adult Guardianship Office and the development of the statewide Volunteer Advocates for Seniors and Incapacitated Adults (VASIA) Programs. She is also the volunteer staff for the WINGS Indiana Adult Guardianship Services State Task Force.

Becky is the President of Creative Approaches LTD, an adult guardianship and case management services firm that specializes in adult guardianship and divorce child custody cases involving family conflict. She has received numerous awards and honors including the prestigious State of Indiana’s Sagamore of the Wabash Award, the Indiana State Commission for Women’s Torchbearer for Women Award, and the 2021 National Guardianship Association Member of the Year Award. She holds a Masters Degree in Business Management and is a National Certified Guardian, Certified Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), a Certified Volunteer Advocate for Seniors and Incapacitated Adults (VASIA) and a Certified Family Law Mediator.

Becky resides in Indianapolis with her husband of 52 years (Tom) and their two Scottish Terriers. She is also the proud grandmother of three awesome young granddaughters residing in New Jersey.

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Doug joined Merrill Lynch in 2017 as a Financial Advisor. He is part of The Special Needs Team and serves as FADP Coordinator and Sales Manager for the Georgetown, TX complex. Prior to joining Merrill Lynch, Doug has worked in different capacities in banking & finance since 2006. He enjoys working with businesses which led him to get his Certified Exit Planning Advisor designation. Doug earned a bachelor’s degree in Economics and a minor in Government from the University of Texas at Austin.

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Diane Robinson, Ph.D, is a Principal Court Research Associate in the Research Division. Since joining the NCSC in 2019, her project work has focused on guardianships and conservatorships, with projects including the Conservatorship Accountability Project, the Guardianship Judicial Response Protocol, Rapid Response Financial Monitoring, and Elder Justice Innovation Grants. She also works in data governance, including data collection, data quality, use of data, and data sharing. She earned her Ph.D. at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, her M.S. in Education at Indiana University and her B.A. at Texas A&M University. She was previously the Director of Research and Justice Statistics for the Arkansas court system and was also the state director for the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program in Arkansas.

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Megan Rusciano is Managing Attorney of the Developmental Disabilities, Health Care, and Victims of Crime Act Team at Disability Rights Maryland (DRM), Maryland’s federally-designated Protection & Advocacy Agency for people with disabilities. She founded and chairs Maryland’s Cross-Disability Supported Decision-Making Coalition. Rusciano is a consultant on the Judiciary’s Guardianship and Vulnerable Adult Workgroup, Judiciary Faculty for training Court-Appointed Attorneys in guardianship proceedings, and was selected to participate in a group tasked with updating Maryland rule of professional conduct for attorneys representing clients with diminished capacity. She has published on a myriad of disability rights topics including supported decision-making, the right to counsel in restoration of rights cases, income inequality, the use of solitary confinement in prisons, and equal access to information and technology.

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Ira Salzman is the former Chair of the Elder Law Committee of the New York County Lawyers’ Association. He is currently a member of the Executive Committee of the Elder Law Section of the New York State Bar Association and a past co-chair of its Guardianship, Medicaid, and Legislation Committees.

Ira is a Fellow of the Brookdale Center on Aging. He has written articles for the quarterly journal of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, the *Elder Law News* (a publication of Little, Brown & Company), and for the *Elder Law Attorney* (published by the Elder Law Section of the New York State Bar Association). He is the co-author of the Guardianship Section of the New York Lawyer’s Form Book (published by the New York State Bar Association). He is the author of the chapter on the responsibilities of the attorney for an alleged incapacitated person in *Guardianship Practice In New York* (published by the New York State Bar Association).

Deena Schwartz, Esq.

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Deena Schwartz joined Project Guardianship as the Director of New York State Guardianship Initiatives in May of 2022. Deena develops partnerships and projects to improve access to good guardianship, develop pilot projects for alternatives to guardianship, reform current systems, and educate the public.

Deena has a near-decade of Article 81 Guardianship expertise and has focused her career on issues affecting older adults. She has developed guardianship curricula for lay and judicial audiences, and presented workshops locally, state-wide, and nationally, focusing on person-centered services, decision-making autonomy, access to justice, and equity in multidisciplinary approaches to care.

As an attorney within the Office of Legal Affairs of the NYC Department of Social Services, she brought Article 81 guardianship petitions on behalf of the Commissioner of Social Services for Adult Protective Services clients. She was also on a team that determined whether clients met the Article 81 guardianship standard and what less restrictive alternatives could be considered to prevent unnecessary guardianship.

Most recently, Deena led a diverse group of stakeholders—including government agencies, community organizations, guardians, doctors, social workers, and lawyers—in responding to complex elder abuse cases as an elder abuse

Multidisciplinary Team Coordinator at the NYC Elder Abuse Center at Weill Cornell Medicine. She also oversaw the Center's civil legal consultations.

Deena holds a Juris Doctor from Fordham Law School and a Bachelor of Science in Anthropology from Tulane University.

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Mr. Shanahan is a founding Partner of the firm, Shanahan & Voight, in Flemington, New Jersey. Mr. Shanahan's practice focuses on estate planning (wills & trusts), probate, elder law, guardianships, powers of attorney, living wills, Medicaid applications, Medicaid appeals, and business. Mr. Shanahan is the current Board Attorney and an adviser to Volunteer Guardianship One on One, and a past Board President of Volunteer Guardianship One on One. Mr. Shanahan is also a trustee with the New Jersey Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and a former member of the Hunterdon Medical Center Ethics Committee. Additional information: <https://legalcounselnj.com/svteam/robert-j-shanahan-jr/>

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Paul Stengle is a Nationally Certified Guardian and a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. He also is a qualified Family Court Mediator. Paul Stengle has worked for over 50 years and seeing that individuals with intellectual disabilities are given the opportunity to be fully included. He presently serves on the Employment First Council for the State of Pennsylvania, and the Rolling Hills Advisory Council, The Arc Alliance Board, and National Guardianship Association Board. He has served on dozens of boards of directors over his career. He continues to advocate for the released restrictive and most inclusive options for people that we serve.

Susan Stuart, BUS, CMC, NMG

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Susan Stuart, BUS, CMC, NMG, has over twenty-five years in the field of guardianship. She is a member of the National Guardianship Association and has been a Nationally Certified Master Guardian since 2008. Susan was a co-founder and past Board Member of the New Mexico Guardianship Association (NMGA) and remains a member of NMGA.

Susan holds a bachelor's degree with a concentration in Gerontology. She is a Nationally Certified Long Term Care Manager; an Aging Life Care Professional™ and is a member of the Aging Life Care Association. Through the National Council on Aging and the American Society on Aging, Susan was an exam writer for a national care management certification program through the National Academy of Certified Care Managers. She has over thirty years of experience in gerontology, developmental disabilities and mental health. She is a trained mediator through The UNM Law School and is a nationally certified legacy facilitator. She has served as a consultant with the Native American community, serving tribal elders and expanding tribal services. She has served on a number of ethics committees and has experience as a family caregiver.

In 2001 Susan founded Decisions in Care, LLC, which provides consultation, care management, healthcare power of attorney, guardianship, court visitor services, and facilitated family meetings.

Susan is an instructor through the Central New Mexico Community College Ingenuity Program, teaching the fundamentals and ethics of guardianship.

Nisa C. Subasinghe, Esq.

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Nisa C. Subasinghe, Esq., is the Domestic & Guardianship Program Manager at Maryland's Administrative Office of the Courts. Her work focuses on issues affecting children and families who come through the court system. She staffs Maryland Judicial Council's Domestic Law Committee and several of its workgroups, including its Guardianship & Vulnerable Adults Workgroup. She serves as a subject matter expert and provides training and technical assistance to judges, magistrates, court staff, attorneys, and others who handle domestic and guardianship matters. She also has lead staff responsibility for the Maryland Judiciary's guardianship reform efforts and is the program director for Maryland's Elder Justice Innovations grant-funded project, *Diverting the Healthcare-to-Guardianship Pipeline: A Person-Centered Approach*.

Judge Brenda Hull Thompson

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Brenda Hull Thompson is the Presiding Judge of The Probate Court of Dallas County, Texas, a/k/a, Probate Court Number One. She was elected in 2010 as the first African American statutory judge in the State of Texas. She serves as the Presiding Judge for all of the Dallas County Probate Courts and the Local Administrative Judge for Probate Courts.

Judge Thompson is the immediate past President of the National College of Probate Judges and she has been an author and editor on nine editions of O'Connor's Texas Estates Code. Recently, she has edited the Probate and Guardianship Section of the Texas Bench Book for Judges. Judge Thompson received her J.D. degree from Georgetown University Law School, Washington, D.C., her M.A. degree from Boston University, and her B.S. degree from the University of Maryland. She has served as an adjunct professor at Texas Wesleyan Law School, which is now Texas A & M Law School. Before moving to Texas, she was a senior attorney in the Office of General Counsel for the Federal Trade Commission in Washington, D.C.

She serves on the board of directors of the Rotary Club of Dallas and has served on the board of directors of the Rotary Club of Dallas Foundation. She is a member of the Texas Bar Foundation and licensed to practice in Texas state courts, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania (inactive) and the District of Columbia Court of Appeals (inactive). She has made numerous presentations to local bar associations sections, state bar sponsored advanced continuing education programs and community groups. Judge Thompson has received numerous awards for pro bono and public service work. She is the recipient of the Judge Merrill Hartman Judiciary Award for pro bono service presented by the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program.

Janet M. Thompson

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Janet M. Thompson is a member of the Boone County, Missouri, Commission, where, in her third term, she serves as the District II Commissioner. Prior to her election, she was a Public Defender in the Missouri State Public Defender System, primarily representing those individuals facing a capital sentence. In 2015, she sponsored a resolution by the Boone County Commission to join the Stepping Up Initiative and since then, has been an active leader and participant in efforts to reduce the incidence of involvement of individuals with behavioral health issues in the criminal justice system. She is the chair of the Missouri Association of Counties' (MAC) Steering Committee on Policing, Justice & Mental Health, and Vice Chair of the National Association of Counties' (NACo) Justice & Public Safety Committee. She was a member of NACo's Task Force on the Federal Medicaid Exclusion Policy, is the NACo liaison to the National Judicial Task Force to Examine State Courts' Response to Mental Illness, and is also an arbitrator for FINRA. She received a J.D. and an LLM in Alternative Dispute Resolution from the University of Missouri's School of Law.

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Joanne Tompkins is a Research Associate at The Center for Guardianship Excellence, a nonprofit organization which seeks to make guardianship more accessible and effective through research and training. Her education and experience have focused on extracting meaningful information from large amounts of data in order to identify and solve problems and improve performance and decision-making. Prior to joining The Center, she worked as a Healthcare Statistician Consultant analyzing data to identify trends that could improve hospital operations, conducted quantitative and qualitative research on various social issues, and taught college courses on aging, health, and research methods. Joanne has given conference presentations on end-of-life care and education challenges at the Society for the Study of Social Problems and Eastern Sociological Society's annual meetings.

DeAnza Valencia, MS, JD

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DeAnza Valencia is a Senior Legislative Representative on the Family and Caregiving team at AARP. In her role, DeAnza assists all 53 AARP state offices on their advocacy efforts combatting elder abuse and financial exploitation and improving guardianship, conservatorship and power of attorney laws.

DeAnza is a licensed New Mexico attorney, specializing in elder law, with over 25 years of experience in federal and state government affairs. DeAnza previously served more than six years as Associate State Director of Advocacy for the AARP New Mexico office and was appointed by the New Mexico Supreme Court to serve as an inaugural member of WINGS (Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders.)

DeAnza is the past president of the New Mexico State Bar Association's Elder Law Section and Committee on Women and the Legal Profession. She holds two undergraduate degrees from New Mexico State University, a master's degree from the School of Justice & Social Inquiry at Arizona State University and is a graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law.

Lara VandenBergh, LCSW

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Lara VandenBergh is a licensed clinical social worker employed at the Department of Veterans Affairs. As the only 'guardianship social worker' across the country's VA system, Lara has worked to build a program that tackles the multifaceted challenges of guardianship. She currently serves as the Eastern Colorado VA's subject matter expert and continues to address barriers associated with creating this program. Lara sits on a variety of committees, including the Dementia Steering Committee, Elder Abuse task force and is the chair of her department's Employee Engagement group. She is also an adjunct professor at the Graduate School of Social Services at the University of Denver teaching policy courses.

When not working, Lara enjoys spending time with her husband, her 1-year-old daughter and her toddler-like dog. Originally from NJ, Lara loves the beach, New York City, pizza (insert other region-specific delights here) and her family/friends back East.

April Vlaanderen, MA, NCG

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April has bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of South Dakota. Her educational and work history is diverse but has been focused on helping people. This experience has translated well to guardianship case management, where April strives to help her clients live their best lives with as much independence as possible. April has extensive history working with adults with disabilities in residential and vocational settings. She is knowledgeable about Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security rules. April joined Corridor Care Management in 2016. In 2017, the company was awarded a contract to serve as Iowa's Local Office of the Public Guardian.

Egan Walker

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Judge Walker was appointed by Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval to serve as the presiding judge in Department 2 of the Second Judicial District Court of the State of Nevada on March 10, 2011. He was then appointed by Governor Sandoval on December 22, 2017 to Dept. 7 to fill a vacancy left by the untimely death of Chief Judge Flanagan. He ran un-opposed for retention of that position in 2018 and again in 2020.

Judge Walker has had the unique privilege of working "both sides of the court" in the Family Division and the General Jurisdiction Division in Washoe County. Across divisions he has been responsible for adult and minor guardianships, child dependency, child delinquency, Project ONE, child support, specialty drug courts, divorce and custody, and adult criminal and civil caseloads.

Judge Walker is a Co-Chair of the Nevada Juvenile Justice Oversight Commission; a member of the Nevada Children's Commission, and a Co-Chair of the Nevada Guardianship Commission. Judge Walker is a frequent lecturer on judicial issues and education at the state and national level.

Lisa Wawrzonek, MS

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Lisa Wawrzonek, MS is a has worked in adult guardianship and conservatorship for over 22 years, first as a Court Visitor and currently as the Statewide Guardianship Compliance Officer with the Alaska Court System. She also administers the Court Visitor program for the Court. Lisa facilitates the WINGS committee; a guardianship improvement committee and is the administrator for ASAGA, a guardianship assistance program. She is also on a number of national committees and groups regarding guardianship. Lisa's past experience includes 15 years of experience in the field of Alzheimer's and related dementia and has a Masters of Gerontology. When not working, Lisa enjoys cooking, boating and travel.

Erica Wood

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Erica F. Wood served as assistant director of the American Bar Association Commission on Law and Aging, and was associated with the Commission from 1980 to 2020 when she retired. She continues to work in the law and aging field, especially adult guardianship.

At the ABA she worked primarily on issues concerning adult guardianship, health and financial decision-making, legal services delivery, dispute resolution, health and long-term care, and access to court. She has participated in national studies on public guardianship and guardianship monitoring; played a role in convening national consensus conferences on guardianship; and directed a project on Working Interdisciplinary Networks of Guardianship Stakeholders (WINGS). Prior to 1980, she served as staff attorney at Legal Research and Services for the Elderly, National Council of Senior Citizens.

Ms. Wood received her B.A. from the University of Michigan and her J.D. from the George Washington University. In 2013 she received the Isabella Horton Grant Guardianship Award from the National College of Probate Judges. In 2016, she was appointed by the Virginia Governor to the Commonwealth Council on Aging, where she serves as Legislative Chair. She is a former member of the Arlington Commission on Aging; a current member of the Virginia Center on Aging Board, the Virginia Public Guardianship and Conservatorship Advisory Board, and the Virginia Supreme Court WINGS.

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Josh Young is the Director of Operations for the Ohio Network for Innovation (ONI), where he specializes in helping people learn about and practice supported decision-making. He has worked in the field of I/DD for 20 years in a variety of roles. He earned his B.A. in Sociology from Kent State University.