

2017 Conference Speaker Bios



Matt Bracy, Esq.

Partner, Scheef & Stone, LLP

Matt Bracy is a partner in the Dallas, Texas law firm of Scheef & Stone, practicing business and commercial law. For more than 10 years he was general counsel of Settlement Capital Corporation, and prior to that was the director of Government Relations for Metropolitan Mortgage & Securities. In both of these positions he was actively involved in drafting and implementing structured settlement transfer legislation in states and in the U.S. Congress. Matt is a former Board member and president of NASP, heads the Judicial Education Program, and is a featured commentator on structured settlement issues on the Legal Broadcast Network. Matt has a BA from the University of California, Irvine, and a JD from the University of Houston.

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Honorable Mary Ann Brigantti

New York Supreme Court, Bronx County

Mary Ann Brigantti, Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York graduated from Fordham University in the Bronx New York, in 1981. She served as a legislative intern to the Assembly Majority Whip during New York State Governor Hugh Carey's tenure. As a Council on Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO) Fellow she attended Suffolk Law School in Boston, Massachusetts. She received her J.D. from Temple University School of Law in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1985, where she also studied abroad at Tel Aviv University Law School in Tel Aviv, Israel.

She served as a Senior Court Attorney to Administrative Justices for all the Civil Courts in New York City; Pro Se Attorney for New York City Housing Court; Bureau Chief and Executive

Board Member with the New York State Attorney General; and Counsel to the Borough President.

In 1997, she was elected Judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York and in 2001, was assigned to the Criminal Court of the City of New York. In 2005, she was elected as Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, where she additionally presided in the Mental Health Court.

Justice Brigantti is the 5th Vice President of the Supreme Court Justice Association of the City of New York, Inc. She served as a Board Member on the Commission on New York State Constitutional Revision, a gubernatorial appointment; as Trustee in the Interest in Lawyers Account Fund (IOLA), a gubernatorial appointment; a Panel Member on the New York State Task Force: Minority Representation on the Bench, a gubernatorial appointment; as Commissioner to the Equal Employment Practices Commission and to the New York City Districting Commission, both mayoral appointments; and served as Board Member of New York City Health and Hospital Corporation, a mayoral appointment. After obtaining her Masters in Theology, she became a Chaplain and member of the New York State Chaplain Task Force. She also volunteers with the American Red Cross as an instructor for disaster management to pre deployed volunteers. Justice Brigantti has received numerous awards, proclamations and citations for her community service.

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Bronx County

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Bernadette Catalana, Esq.

Bernadette Catalana is of counsel to Lavin, O’Neil, Cedrone and DiSipio, working from both the Rochester and New York City offices. She represents factoring companies purchasing structured settlements and has filed more than 1000 petitions under the New York Structured Settlement Protection Act. Ms. Catalana also has a substantial defense background, with an emphasis on toxic exposure cases. For one of her Fortune 100 clients, she serves as National Coordinating Counsel -- devising strategy, managing and training local counsel, and coordinating the defense and resolution of numerous cases each year. She is also an experienced negotiator, representing multiple clients as settlement counsel.

Ms. Catalana is an active mentor, working with many young lawyers to develop their skills and, ultimately, their careers. Her love of mentoring has inspired her *Mentoring Moment* posts on LinkedIn, each addressing a specific nuance of practicing law. She has co-authored a CLE

program, *Candid Talk - Women at the Bar*, designed to support and encourage women to opt-in to the practice of law.

Ms. Catalana received her Bachelor of Science in business administration from Binghamton University. She earned her juris doctor, cum laude, at the University at Buffalo Law School, State University of New York. She was a member of the Buffalo Law Review and authored “The Battle for Baby Jessica: a Conflict of Best Interests” (43 Buff. L. Rev. 583), which has been cited by numerous legal writings, including a brief filed with the US Supreme Court.

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Doyle Chisholm

Consultant

Doyle has over a dozen years' experience as in-house counsel in the payment purchasing industry, most recently as the Associate General Counsel at Seneca One Finance, Inc., based in Bethesda, Maryland. His experience has brought him into contact with virtually all of the internal and external counsel working for and with annuity companies. Doyle currently serves as a consultant to multiple companies within the industry. He provides consulting services in the areas of corporate legal support, policies and procedures, corporate best practices and transactional support. After conducting a thorough review of the legal and operational areas, Doyle advises his clients on improvements focused on increased compliance and efficiency. Doyle is a past chair of NASP's Conference Committee. He is a graduate of the College of Charleston and the Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law. He is admitted to the Virginia and District of Columbia bars.

Attorney at Law

Washington, DC



Samuel W. Cortes

Partner, Fox Rothschild LLP

Sam litigates commercial, construction, and insurance disputes in state and federal courts in Pennsylvania. He has also successfully represented clients in arbitration and mediation proceedings.

Sam also assists financial services companies in obtaining required court approvals of annuity assignments, having obtained approvals for numerous assignments of lottery prizes and structured settlement proceeds throughout Pennsylvania. He also works with counsel within the firm to obtain these same approvals throughout the country.

Sam also handles construction litigation matters on behalf of public and private owners, developers, contractors, subcontractors, manufacturers, and lenders. Sam has successfully defended builders and developers, and pursued claims on behalf of homeowners in construction defect cases.

Sam also handles contract drafting and negotiation, and provides counseling to clients regarding risk identification, mitigation, and avoidance.

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Jack Kelly, Esq.

John A. (Jack) Kelly is a partner in the McPherson Group LLP. He has extensive legislative and public policy experience in structured finance and tax-related issues. He was the federal lobbyist for the legislative clarification of tax issues related to the transfer of structured settlements. In addition to federal advocacy, he coordinates the McPherson Group's state and local practice. A political aide to Presidents Reagan and George H.W. Bush, he previously served as a legislative assistant to Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D-NY) and held staff positions in both the New York and federal courts. For 28 years until his retirement, Kelly served in active and reserve components

of the United States Army, including command of a Special Forces unit. His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit. He presently serves as chairman of the US Advisory Committee on National Cemeteries and Memorials.

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Blaine Kimrey, Esq.

Blaine C. Kimrey is a Shareholder in the Litigation practice in Vedder Price’s Chicago office, Chair of the firm’s Media & Entertainment Litigation group and a member of the firm’s Privacy, CyberSecurity & Media group.

Clients regularly hire Mr. Kimrey to defend putative consumer class actions on a nationwide basis. He is often retained on multiple cases simultaneously by clients or at the suggestion of insurance carriers because no client of Mr. Kimrey’s has ever suffered a final decision of class certification or an adverse final judgment –and Mr. Kimrey has never exhausted a limit on an insurance policy that paid defense or indemnity related to an underlying case.

Mr. Kimrey prides himself on having resolved every putative class action he has ever been involved in, easily more than 100, short of an adverse final judgment (whether that be by achieving outright victory or cost-efficient resolution).

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Patricia LaBorde

Senior Vice President, Stone Street Capital, LLC
President, NASP

Patricia LaBorde is the senior vice president and Structured Settlement Division counsel at Stone Street Capital, LLC based in Bethesda, Maryland. Since joining Stone Street in 2003, Patricia has overseen all legal, regulatory and transactional issues for its Structured Settlement Division. LaBorde has served as NASP's Legal Committee chair and Conference Planning chair and chair of the Community Relations Committee. Previously, LaBorde was a business and litigation attorney with a McLean, Virginia law firm, handling structured settlement transactions. She has a BA from the University of Delaware and a JD from The George Washington University.

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W Mason

Partner, Fox Rothschild LLP

W is an accomplished business litigator who represents both plaintiffs and defendants in state and federal courts in shareholder disputes, contract disputes, banking litigation, fraud claims, Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) claims and other commercial disputes. Additionally, W has experience with representing business clients in relation to defamation claims and violations of the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act.

Prior to joining Fox, W was an associate at a Florida full-service law firm where he counseled a wide range of clients in commercial, construction and maritime related matters. During law school, he served as managing editor of the *Tulane Journal of International and Comparative Law*.

W is dedicated to bar association service and was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the North County Section of the Palm Beach County Bar Association. W is an active member of the Board of Trustees of the Craig S. Barnard American Inn of Court where he is presently serving as the programming chair. Additionally, he is a member of the Federal Bar Association, Associated Builders and Contractors and the Young Professionals of the Palm Beaches, Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches.

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Earl Nesbitt, Esq.

*Partner, Nesbitt, Vassar & McCown, LLP
NASP Executive Director and General Counsel*

NASP Executive Director and General Counsel Earl Nesbitt is a partner with Nesbitt, Vassar, and McCown, LLP. He specializes in commercial and business litigation, and represents many structured settlement purchasing companies. He formerly was general counsel for the Settlement Capital Corporation and a partner in Jackson Walker, LLP in Dallas, Texas. Nesbitt takes a central role in NASP's lobbying efforts, notably in the enactment of federal legislation governing the secondary market (26 U.S.C. § 5891). He is a graduate of Texas Tech University School of Law and the University of Texas at Austin.

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Honorable David Rodriguez

Judge David J. Rodriguez was elected to the bench of Bexar County Court at No. No. 3, in November of 2002, and has since been re-elected to three (3) additional terms. Although a court of general jurisdiction, his court focuses on all civil matters based in contract, consumer, tort, creditor's rights, employment and other areas of the law.

Prior to winning his first election, Judge Rodriguez was a trial lawyer who tried many cases on both sides of the docket. He is a frequent speaker in the State Bar of Texas Continuing Legal Education Programs in the areas of creditor's rights and personal injury law. He has served on several State Bar committees, including the Standing Committee on Administration on Rules of

Evidence, The Committee on Pattern Jury Charges and the Budget Committee of the 4th Administration Region.

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Kevin Szczepanski

Kevin is a trial and appellate lawyer who practices in the areas of insurance coverage, business litigation, and cyber risk. Kevin has extensive experience litigating directors and officers (D&O), errors and omissions (E&O), and property and casualty (P&C) coverage under both primary and excess policies. He has served as both lead settlement and trial counsel in highly sensitive business disputes, and he advises clients on regulatory matters, insurance policy drafting, and underwriting issues.

In the field of cyber risks, Kevin represents businesses facing first- and third-party losses due to data breaches, service interruptions, theft, and other cyber threats. He also counsels clients on coverage for cyber risks and represents them in liability and coverage disputes.

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