



CORPORATE COUNSEL TRAINING ACADEMY

April 15, 2026 | Chicago, IL USA
Four Seasons Hotel Chicago

An Essential Primer for Corporate Counsel



Wednesday, April 15, 2026
Four Seasons Hotel Chicago
Chicago, Illinois USA

The IADC Corporate Counsel Training Academy is a half-day, complimentary primer for those who have been in-house counsel for less than 5 years. The program has an intimate classroom setting with a maximum registration of 25 attendees. It will take place the day before the IADC Corporate Counsel College, and Training Academy attendees are invited to stay and attend the Corporate Counsel College. There are no fees for the Training Academy attendees to attend the Academy and the Corporate Counsel College, but registration is required, and space is limited. Your complimentary registration also includes IADC's Chicago Regional Meeting Cocktail Reception on Wednesday, April 15.

SCHEDULE

11:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

REGISTRATION

*Boxed lunches will be available during this time.

12:15 p.m. - 12:25 p.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Zane C. Riester, IADC CCTA Program Chair, Johnson & Johnson, New Brunswick, NJ USA

J. Dominic Campodonico, IADC President, Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP, San Francisco, CA USA

12:25 p.m. - 1:25 p.m.

Intro to the In-House World

This panel provides candid, experience-based insights from seasoned in-house lawyers reflecting on what they wish they had known before making the transition from law firms. Topics include shifting from private practice to managing risk/litigations in a business setting, navigating corporate culture, working effectively with outside counsel, and avoiding the common pitfalls new in-house counsel face. Attendees will leave with actionable guidance, strategic frameworks, and a realistic understanding of the skills and mindset needed to thrive in an in-house role.

Moderator: **Betsy Farrington**, Goldman Ismail Tomaselli Brennan & Baum LLP, Chicago, IL USA

Presenters: **Kenneth Dzikowski**, Teva Pharmaceuticals, Parsippany, NJ USA; **Kelly Lankford**, AbbVie, New York, NY USA; **Kari Rhode**, Medtronic Inc., Keller, TX USA; **Megan Toth**, Rivian, Chicago, IL USA

1:25 p.m. - 1:40 p.m.

NETWORKING BREAK

1:40 p.m. - 2:40 p.m.

Strategic Relationships for New Corporate Counsel: Best Practices for Collaborating Internally, Across Industries, and Against Coordinated Plaintiffs

This panel explores how new corporate counsel can develop the strategic relationships essential for navigating today's complex environment. Panelists will discuss practical approaches to collaborating across business functions, building trust and credibility internally, engaging effectively with external organizations, and forming cross-company connections that strengthen readiness for emerging risks. The session also provides a candid look at the highly coordinated and cooperative nature of the plaintiffs' bar, outlining what in-house lawyers must understand to anticipate their tactics and respond effectively.

Moderator: **Zane C. Riester**, Johnson & Johnson, New Brunswick, NJ USA

Presenters: **Lisa M. Floro**, Coloplast Corp., Minneapolis, MN USA; **James F. Murdica**, Barnes & Thornburg LLP, Chicago, IL USA; **Ethan York**, Stryker, Chicago, IL USA

2:40 p.m. - 2:55 p.m.

NETWORKING BREAK

2:55 p.m. - 3:55 p.m.

Do's and Don'ts for In-House and Outside Counsel

What makes the partnership between in-house and outside counsel most effective? This program offers practical guidance on how legal teams of all shapes and sizes can work together with greater efficiency, collaboration, and trust. Panelists will discuss best practices and common pitfalls from both sides of the relationship, focusing on topics such as: understanding business objectives, calibrating risk tolerance, tailoring communication styles, managing expectations, and fostering proactive collaboration. Attendees will gain insight into what in-house teams need most from their external partners, and what outside counsel look for in successful client relationships, so that they can strengthen these critical connections and deliver meaningful, business-aligned results.

Moderator: **Diana Gerstel**, *Tucker Ellis LLP, Morristown, NJ USA*

Presenters: **Tiffany Andras**, *Kimberly-Clark, Chicago, IL USA*; **Christopher Gardino**, *CNH, Chicago, IL USA*; **Robin Linley**, *Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP, Toronto, ON Canada*

3:55 p.m. - 4:05 p.m.

NETWORKING BREAK

4:05 p.m. - 4:50 p.m.

Fireside Chat with James Hemmings and Hope Katz

Moderator: **Allison Ng**, *Greenberg Traurig, LLP, Atlanta, GA USA*

Presenters: **James Hemmings**, *General Counsel, Diversified Botanics, Chicago, IL USA*; **Hope Katz**, *General Counsel, Huron Consulting Group Inc., Chicago, IL USA*

4:50 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

PROGRAM WRAP-UP

Zane C. Riester, *IADC CCTA Program Chair, Johnson & Johnson, New Brunswick, NJ USA*

5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

COCKTAIL RECEPTION (CHICAGO REGIONAL MEETING)

REGISTRATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

REGISTRATION

To register for the Corporate Counsel Training Academy, you must do so online by visiting:

www.iadclaw.org/events/2026-corporate-counsel-training-academy/

The Academy will take place the day before the IADC Corporate Counsel College, and Training Academy attendees are invited to stay and attend the Corporate Counsel College. There are no fees for Training Academy attendees to attend the Academy and the Corporate Counsel College, but registration for both events is required.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

For information on hotel accommodations, please refer to the “General Information” pages of the [2026 Corporate Counsel College brochure](#). Once registered for the Training Academy, a link will be generated by the IADC along with your registration confirmation that will allow you to secure your hotel room at the Four Seasons Hotel Chicago.

CLE CREDIT

Approximately 3.0 hours of general CLE credit in 60-minute states and 3.6 hours of general CLE credit in 50-minute states will be requested for accreditation from all mandatory continuing legal education jurisdictions.

CLIMATE AND DRESS

When packing for your trip, please note that average temperatures in Chicago this time of year range from a high of 60 degrees Fahrenheit to a low of 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Business casual attire (slacks, button down/blouse/sweater, skirt) is recommended for the meeting.

SPECIAL NEEDS

If you have any special needs during the meeting or have any other questions about the Corporate Counsel Training Academy, please contact Melisa Maisel Vanis, Director of Meetings and Professional Development, at mmaisel@iadclaw.org.

DATA PRIVACY AND COLLECTION

Data is collected on attendees through registration for the purposes of executing the meeting and communicating with attendees about the meeting. Meeting sponsors have access to the registration list provided to all attendees. If any attendee has questions on data use and privacy, please contact Mary Beth Kurzak, Executive Director and CEO, at mkurzak@iadclaw.org.

PHOTO POLICY

Photos are taken onsite at the meeting by staff and hired photographers and those photos of meeting attendees may be used in association marketing. If you wish to not be included in photos that are used in association marketing, please contact Ashley Hatfield, Director of Communications, at ahatfield@iadclaw.org.

THANK YOU TO THE CORPORATE COUNSEL TRAINING ACADEMY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Zane C. Riester, Program Chair, *Johnson & Johnson, New Brunswick, NJ USA*
J. Dominic Campodonico, IADC President, *Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP, San Francisco, CA USA*
Mark D. Hansen, IADC President-Elect, *GROWMARK, Inc., Bloomington, IL USA*
Kirstin Abel, IADC Vice President of Corporate, *Daimler Trucks North America, LLC, Portland, OR USA*
Tiffany Andras, *Kimberly-Clark, Chicago, IL USA*
Nicole M. Brunson, *Domtar, Huntersville, NC USA*
Kenneth Dzikowski, *Teva Pharmaceuticals, Parsippany, NJ USA*
Betsy Farrington, *Goldman Ismail Tomaselli Brennan & Baum LLP, Chicago, IL USA*
Lisa M. Floro, *Coloplast Corp., Minneapolis, MN USA*
Diana Gerstel, *Tucker Ellis LLP, Morristown, NJ USA*
Eileen M. Hunter, *Boston Scientific, St. Paul, MN USA*
Robin Linley, *Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP, Toronto, ON Canada*
Allison Ng, *Greenberg Traurig, LLP, Atlanta, GA USA*
Jean Patterson, *Becton Dickinson and Company, Scotch Plains, NJ USA*
Ethan York, *Stryker, Chicago, IL USA*