



Printable Full Schedule

- schedule as of January 29 -

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8

8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting

8:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

2026 Trial Academy Training Session for Faculty

12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Board of Directors Luncheon with 2026 Trial Academy Faculty

Invitation only.

2:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Registration Desk

Have questions or need help? Visit IADC's Registration Desk during posted hours for assistance.

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

First Timers Introductions

The First Timers program is for all IADC members and their registered guest(s) who have never attended a Midyear or Annual Meeting. At this introduction, you will learn more about the IADC and the Midyear Meeting. You will also meet other First Timers and their member Hosts, as well as the Board of Directors and Past Presidents in attendance, so throughout the meeting you will see familiar faces.

Resort casual attire.

Thank you to First Timers Chairs Amy and Doug Fisher.

5:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Cheers to the Crescent City! Welcome Party



Laissez les bons temps rouler! Kick off the 2026 Midyear Meeting with a lively Welcome Party at The Ritz-Carlton, New Orleans. We're turning up the fun with live jazz, NOLA treats, and a Super Bowl LX celebration worthy of the Crescent City!

See New Orleans through the IADC lens — from bespoke experiences to classic adventures, there's something for everyone in this unforgettable city.

It's the perfect night to reconnect with friends, meet new members, and set the tone for an unforgettable week of connection and celebration!

Casual resort attire recommended. Jerseys or favorite team colors are encouraged.

10:00 p.m. – 11:30 p.m.

After Dinner Gathering

Wrap up your evening with a nightcap and camaraderie at this After Dinner Gathering held exclusively for IADC attendees at the Library Lounge.

Beer, house wine, and non-alcoholic beverages are complimentary with your meeting name badge.

Thank you to After Dinner Gatherings Chairs Tim and Lauren Brinks.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9

6:00 a.m. – 7:00 a.m.

Morning Run

Get your blood pumping, get moving, and get to know fellow attendees at this IADC morning run.

The Morning Runs are complimentary, and sign-ups are not required.

Thank you to Morning Run Chair Eric Brotten.

6:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Registration Desk

Have questions or need help? Visit IADC's Registration Desk during posted hours for assistance.

6:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.

Grab and Go CLE Breakfast

"Grab and go" breakfasts are available outside the morning meeting rooms, making it easy for attendees to have breakfast without missing a minute of the great CLE programming we have planned for you.

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Meet and Greet Breakfast

Join fellow attendees for breakfast to network, discuss ideas, or plan your day. Breakfast is available to all registered attendees. Meeting name badge required for entry.

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.



Best Practices for AI Review and Production of Voluminous ESI

SPONSORED BY RELATIVITY AND TROUTMAN PEPPER LOCKE

The program will take attendees from initial planning considerations through execution and solutioning when facing collection and production of voluminous ESI from varied data sources. The panel offers perspectives from in-house counsel, outside counsel, and database management vendors about their roles in this process. The program will cover substantive considerations for workflows streams such as custodian interviews and collections, microsoft capabilities and limitations, manual and technology assisted review, use of artificial intelligence, and anticipated areas of dispute between the respective sides of the bar. The program's objective is to bring awareness to in-house and outside counsel facing a significant internal investigation, regulator inquiry, or litigation-based eDiscovery project about the stakeholders, workflow, and technology required to conduct a defensible, efficient, and meaningful ESI based production.

Speakers: *Alison A. Grounds, Troutman eMerge, Atlanta, Georgia USA; William J. Kelly, III, Kelly Law Partners, LLC, Denver, Colorado USA; Cristin Traylor, Relativity, Richmond, Virginia USA; Ronald J. White, Illinois Farm Bureau, Bloomington, Illinois USA*

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Changing of the Guard: How Amended Rule 702 Has Impacted Real-World Litigation

Committee Sponsor: Product Liability

In December of 2023, Federal Rule of Evidence 702 saw significant amendments. The revisions included clarifications that an expert's proponent bears the burden of establishing admissibility, and that an expert's opinion must stay within what can be concluded from a reliable application of the expert's methodology. With the benefit of over two years' experience, how have courts reacted to these changes in real-world litigation, and how has the revised rule intersected with other trends in Rule 702 jurisprudence?

The panel will explore these questions, focusing on the federal courts' applications of the amended Rule and variations among the federal circuits' legal analyses and outcomes. The panel will also cover state-law trends in applying comparable rules and offer a "scorecard" assessing state adoption of key federal changes. Finally, panelists will explore how best to maximize the persuasive value of the amended rule in litigation strategy, briefing, and elsewhere.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how courts are adapting to and applying Rule 702 following the 2023 amendments.
- Learn approaches for properly framing the amended rule in briefs and oral advocacy, and best practices in rebutting attacks from the plaintiffs' bar.
- Learn state-court trends related to Rule 702 analogues at the state level.

Speakers: *David S. Gray, Venable LLP, Baltimore, Maryland USA; Michael R. Klatt, Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP, Austin, Texas USA; Lee Mickus, Evans Fears Schuttert McNulty & Mickus, Denver, Colorado USA; Daniel K. Steen, Lawyers for Civil Justice, Arlington, Virginia USA*

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.



The Pros of Pro Bono: How to Make Pro Bono Legal Services Work For Your Firm or Practice

Committee Co-Sponsors: In-House and Law Firm Management, Social Justice Pro Bono

Many of us entered the legal profession driven by a desire to help others. Pro bono legal work provides an accessible pathway for individual lawyers and firms to make an impact. Beyond the altruistic benefits, there is also a compelling business case for engaging in pro bono activities. Whether you are a lawyer interested in contributing to pro bono efforts or a law firm manager looking to foster a culture of pro bono within your firm, this program is for you.

Prepare to be inspired by our panel of lawyers who practice across various jurisdictions and types of organizations, and who share a deep commitment to pro bono work. They will offer practical advice on integrating pro bono work into your practice, explaining their motivations, and highlighting the benefits they and their firms have reaped. The panel will also discuss how law firm management can cultivate and sustain a successful pro bono program.

Learn about:

- The case for pro bono work
- Strategies for enabling and supporting pro bono participation within firms and organizations
- Techniques for identifying and securing pro bono opportunities
- Using pro bono opportunities to engage and retain junior lawyers

**Applying for Ethics CLE Credit*

Speakers: Sarah J. Armstrong, Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP, Toronto, Ontario Canada; Brian Cuevas, U-Haul International, Phoenix, Arizona USA; Tiffany Graves, Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP, Jackson, Mississippi USA; Katherine Lawler, Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP, Baltimore, Maryland USA

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Foundation President's Circle Breakfast

Invitation only. Foundation President's Circle donors (those who donated \$1,000 or more to the IADC Foundation in 2025) and Life Fellows will receive an emailed invitation prior to the meeting with a request to RSVP.

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Morning Walk

Get your blood pumping, get moving, and get to know fellow attendees at this IADC morning walk. *The Morning Walks are complimentary, and sign-ups are not required.*

Thank you to Morning Walk Chair Carolyn Riggs.

8:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Networking Coffee Break

Connect with fellow members to build relationships and pursue strategic opportunities for your practice or law firm at these Networking Coffee Breaks each morning.

8:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.



Opening Session

We encourage you to attend this general session where IADC President Dominic Campodonico will give a State of the Association address and valuable meeting highlights and information will be shared.

The Opening Session is not available for CLE credit.

9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Foundation Forum: Law, Ethics, and the Courtroom Battle Against Misinformation: A Cinematic CLE Experience Featuring Neil deGrasse Tyson & Scott Hamilton Kennedy

In an era where misinformation spreads faster than truth, the courtroom has become one of the last lines of defense for facts, ethics, and justice. But how can the Defense Bar rise to meet this challenge—ethically, effectively, and persuasively?

Join Academy Award–nominated filmmaker Scott Hamilton Kennedy and renowned astrophysicist and science educator Neil deGrasse Tyson for a cinematic exploration of how misinformation takes hold, why people believe it, and what it takes to counter it with integrity and clarity.

The IADC Foundation Board President and trial attorney, Michael A. Airdo, will highlight how misinformation erodes the rule of law, undermines public trust, and threatens the integrity of legal proceedings. Through compelling film excerpts and real-world examples, this presentation invites legal advocates to discover for themselves how masterful storytelling in the courtroom can pierce through distortion, re-center the truth, and reshape the narrative while there is still time to do so.

Whether you're a trial lawyer, in-house counsel, insurance representative, or policy advocate, this unique CLE experience will leave you informed, inspired, and equipped to meet one of the defining challenges of our time—with clarity, integrity, and purpose.

The Foundation Forum is courtesy of The Foundation of the IADC (www.iadcfoundation.org) and presented by Black Valley Films (www.blackvalleyfilms.com).

Speakers: Michael A. Airdo, Airdo Werwas, LLC, Chicago, Illinois USA; Scott Hamilton Kennedy; Neil deGrasse Tyson

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Community Service Activity

Please join us for our IADC Community Service Activity!

We will be assembling welcome and outreach kits for [Covenant House](http://CovenantHouse.org), a care center for youth ages 16-22. Beyond shelter, the high-quality programs - including life skills training, education and employment counseling, services for pregnant and parenting youth, services for survivors of human trafficking, and transitional living apartments - are designed to prepare youth for the great purpose of their lives. Please join us and assemble a kit or two. It only takes a couple of minutes but provides a wonderful opportunity to visit with IADC friends while doing some good for the local community during the Midyear Meeting! Thanks in advance for everyone's support.

Thank you to Community Service Activity Chair Carolyn Husmann.

11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.



AI at the Edge: The Rise of Autonomous Agents, Copyright Challenges, and Global Regulation

Committee Co-Sponsors: Business Litigation, Intellectual Property

As generative AI systems become increasingly powerful, questions around the legal and ethical use of data for training these systems have reached a boiling point. This session will explore the intersections of copyright, fair use, data scraping, and AI development. Key stakeholders will debate: Who owns the data AI is trained on? Can public data be scraped and reused for commercial AI purposes? Where do copyright and licensing frameworks fit in a machine learning world?

**Applying for Technology CLE Credit*

Speakers: *Eric Brotten, AccentCare, South Edina, Minnesota USA; Joséane Chrétien, McMillan LLP, Montreal, Quebec Canada; Megan Ma, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California USA; George R. Wray, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP, Toronto, Ontario Canada*

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Living and Thriving in Law

Committee Sponsor: Alternative Dispute Resolution

The crushing demands of the legal profession often result in significant mental health and substance abuse problems for many lawyers. In an effort to combat this disturbing trend and destigmatize mental health and substance abuse issues, the American Bar Association launched the Well-Being Pledge Campaign in 2017. The Pledge is revolutionary in its disregard of the old stereotypical concept of measuring success solely by the number of billable hours, clients and legal victories. The focus instead is on developing and implementing necessary programs to prioritize the mental health and well-being of employees in law firms and legal organizations. While over 200 law firms and legal organizations are signatories to the Pledge, and report improvements in lawyer satisfaction and productivity, there is still much more work to be done. A 2023 ALM and Law.com Compass Mental Health Survey of the legal profession found increasing numbers of lawyers dealing with stress, anxiety and depression. This program will address evidence-based strategies individuals and employers can utilize to avoid burn-out, reduce stress, improve productivity, and ultimately result in improved mental and physical health.

**Applying for Mental Health/Substance Abuse CLE Credit*

Speakers: *Sherylle Francis, Universal Property and Casualty Ins. Co., Fort Lauderdale, Florida USA; Mark Goldstein, Reed Smith LLP, New York, New York USA; Marcia Narine Weldon, University of Miami and Illuminating Wisdom, Miami, Florida USA*

1:45 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Bike the Big Easy Tour (\$)

Discover New Orleans up close with a NOLA bike tour, offering easy exploration of the city. Ride through the French Quarter, Garden District, and Esplanade Avenue lined with majestic oak trees. Explore the Marigny’s hidden gem restaurants, bars, and jazz clubs, plus visit one of our famous above-ground cemeteries. The passionate guides will share the city’s rich history and culture, ensuring memorable experiences filled with stories and lasting memories.



The registration fee is \$170 USD per person and includes a guided bike tour, photo stops, and bottled water.

Important Details: Attendees should wear comfortable clothing. Helmets are provided and mandatory.

1:45 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Hidden Gems of the Garden District Tour (\$)

Embark on a guided driving tour through the prestigious Garden District of New Orleans, renowned for its diverse architectural styles and lush gardens. Established in 1832, it stands as a testament to the city's rich history post-Louisiana Purchase. Delight in the picturesque scenery of live oak-lined streets and explore various architectural wonders like Greek Revival, Italianate, and Gothic homes. The tour features a visit to the historic Longue Vue Gardens, a magnificent display of Italianate architecture adorned with period furnishings and charming gardens.

The registration fee is \$140 USD per person and includes round-trip transportation and bottled water.

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Speed-Networking for IADC Members

SPONSORED BY THE ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION COMMITTEE AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING COMMITTEE

Networking can be one of the most powerful and productive activities an individual can do to enhance both their professional and personal relationships. And speed-networking, taking its cue from speed-dating, has emerged as a popular variation on the traditional business networking event. Structured and fast-paced, speed-networking allows participants to interact with others in a series of brief one-on-one exchanges in a round robin type format.

IADC members: This event is back by popular demand so expand your IADC network and relationships and be sure to register for this event.

Speed-Networking for IADC Members is complimentary and open to IADC members ONLY, but registration is required to participate.

Thank you to Speed-Networking Chairs Amy Stewart and Ed Stewart.

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

First/Second Timers, Current/Past Board Members, and Sponsors Reception

Invited guests will receive an emailed invitation prior to the meeting with a request to RSVP.

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Member Mix and Mingle (\$)

Meet up with friends and fellow attendees at Davenport Lounge before going out for the evening at this cash bar reception.

Thank you to Mix and Mingles Chairs Jay and Natasha Mattappally.



6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Restaurant R'evolution Experience (\$)

****PLEASE NOTE: This is an evening dinner with limited space.***

Located in the heart of the French Quarter, Restaurant R'evolution is a favorite for locals and visitors alike, featuring award-winning cuisine and a dining experience that's beyond compare. The restaurant offers modern, imaginative reinterpretations of classic Cajun and Creole cuisine. Join this exclusive dinner in Restaurant R'evolution's Wine Room and enjoy an evening with delicious dishes, singular service, and a one-of-a-kind experience.

The registration fee is \$189 USD per person and includes a three-course dinner and beverages.

Important Details: The price is set and does not vary based on alcoholic or non-alcoholic drink selections.

6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

International Reception and Dinner (\$)

Invited guests will receive an emailed invitation prior to the meeting with a request to register.

8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

French Quarter Ghost Tour (\$)

****PLEASE NOTE: This is an evening tour.***

Spectres of New Orleans' long and storied past are believed to dwell in the French Quarter. Learn the history of America's most haunted city with our French Quarter Ghost Tour. Walk the haunted streets of the French Quarter as the guide tells tales of Voodoo, vampires, true crime, and the ghosts they created for an eerily fun adventure.

The registration fee is \$165 USD per person and includes a 2-hour guided tour.

Important Details: Attendees should wear comfortable shoes for this walking tour.

10:00 p.m. – 11:30 p.m.

After Dinner Gathering

Wrap up your evening with a nightcap and camaraderie at this After Dinner Gathering held exclusively for IADC attendees at the Library Lounge.

Beer, house wine, and non-alcoholic beverages are complimentary with your meeting name badge.

Thank you to After Dinner Gatherings Chairs Tim and Lauren Brinks.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

6:00 a.m. – 7:00 a.m.

Morning Run

Get your blood pumping, get moving, and get to know fellow attendees at this IADC morning run.

The Morning Runs are complimentary, and sign-ups are not required.

Thank you to Morning Run Chair Eric Brotten.



6:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Registration Desk

Have questions or need help? Visit IADC's Registration Desk during posted hours for assistance.

6:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.

Grab and Go CLE Breakfast

"Grab and go" breakfasts are available outside the morning meeting rooms, making it easy for attendees to have breakfast without missing a minute of the great CLE programming we have planned for you.

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Meet and Greet Breakfast

Join fellow attendees for breakfast to network, discuss ideas, or plan your day. Breakfast is available to all registered attendees. Meeting name badge required for entry.

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Corporate Counsel Huddle

All corporate counsels are invited to an opportunity to gather and connect on thoughts, ideas, issues and perspective impacting the in-house practice and in-house participation in IADC. This **in-house counsel only** informal breakfast conversation will be led by IADC corporate counsel leaders and will be sure to bring value to the Midyear Meeting experience.

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Class Action Rebuttal Across Borders: A Multidisciplinary Defense Perspective

Committee Co-Sponsors: Class Actions and Multi-Party Litigation, Product Liability

This interdisciplinary panel brings together a seasoned class action attorney, an economic consultant, and a leading academic to explore rebuttal analysis in class certification and damages phases. Drawing on experience from U.S. and international class action cases, the discussion will examine how defense teams can effectively challenge class certification and damages methodologies through rigorous legal argument, economic analysis, and empirical critique.

Panelists will share insights from recent case law, cross-border real-world litigation experience, and scholarly research to illuminate how rebuttal strategies shape outcomes in complex class actions.

Speakers: *Ceren Canal Aruoba, BRG, Washington, District of Columbia USA; James A. King, Porter Wright Morris & LLP, Columbus, Ohio USA; Peter J. Pliszka, Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP, Toronto, Ontario Canada; Kristina Shampanier, BRG, Los Angeles, California USA*

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Emerging Risks and the Pollution Exclusion: An Insider's Practical Guide

Committee Co-Sponsors: Environmental and Energy Law, Insurance and Reinsurance, Insurance Executives, Toxic and Hazardous Substances Litigation



Insurers are facing an explosion of new and emerging environmental risks, including climate change, PFAS, AFFF, greenhouse gases, toxic emissions, and many others. How CGL and other policies may be required to respond to these risks is of critical concern to insurance professionals. While a myriad of forms of "pollution exclusions" have been a standard feature of CGL policies for decades, both policyholders and insurers are grappling with how these exclusions apply to emerging risks that were never envisioned when many of these policies were issued.

This evolving landscape has resulted in a recent wave of coverage litigation, including high-profile cases that are currently before the courts in many states. This panel will explore recent developments and offer a practical guide, strategies, and best practices for defense counsel and insurers to navigate the coverage wars that are raging.

Speakers: John T. Harding, Clyde & Co US LLP, Boston, Massachusetts USA; Mackie LeFevre-Snee, RiverStone International Insurance, Inc., Chicago, Illinois USA; Frederick C. Schaefer, Nationwide Indemnity, Wausau, Wisconsin USA

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

The Evolving Landscape of Standing Before the U.S. Supreme Court

Committee Co-Sponsors: Appellate Practice, Business Litigation

Understanding who gets to bring a case before the nation's highest court—and who doesn't—has never been more critical for litigators, corporate counsel, and trade associations. This dynamic program unpacks the Supreme Court's modern approach to standing, from *Spokeo* and *TransUnion* to *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine* and *Murthy v. Missouri*. Leading practitioners will explore how these rulings reshape individuals', trade associations', and states' ability to press claims in federal court. Attendees will gain practical insights for crafting stronger pleadings, defending against speculative claims, and anticipating how the Court's tightening view of "injury" will impact future litigation, regulatory actions, and policy disputes across industries.

Speakers: Sylvie Gallage-Alwis, Signature Litigation AARPI, Paris, France; Jeffrey A. Holmstrand, Grove, Holmstrand & Delk, PLLC, Wheeling, West Virginia USA; Laura J. O'Rourke, Toyota Motor North America, Inc. Plano, Texas USA; Richik Sarkar, Dinsmore & Shohl, Cleveland, Ohio USA

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Morning Walk

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Thank you to Morning Walk Chair Carolyn Riggs.

7:45 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

Past Presidents Council Breakfast Meeting

Invitation only.

8:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Networking Coffee Break



Connect with fellow members to build relationships and pursue strategic opportunities for your practice or law firm at these Networking Coffee Breaks each morning.

8:15 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.

Wait, Wait . . . Don't Tell Me About IP!

Committee Co-Sponsors: Business Litigation, Intellectual Property

Borrowing its energy and style of questions from the hit radio show *Wait, Wait... Don't Tell Me!*, this interactive CLE program puts a Mardi Gras spin on intellectual property law. Using multiple question styles, similar to those heard on the radio show, our panel of three adventurous attorneys — guided by a lively host — will tackle challenges that touch on music, art, branding, and daily life. Audience members won't just watch — they'll join in, answer questions, and even win Mardi Gras-themed prizes (no parade throws required). Behind the fun, participants will gain a deeper understanding of how copyright, licensing, trademarks, and other IP issues shape both the legal world and the culture around us. Whether you're an IP novice or a seasoned litigator, this program promises laughter, learning, and maybe even a little lagniappe.

Speakers: *Maureen Mahoney, Hackensack Meridian Health, Edison, New Jersey USA; Jay Mattappally, Irwin Fritchier Urquhart Moore & Daniels, LLC, New Orleans, Louisiana USA; Mark Melasky, Intellectual Property Consulting, LLC, New Orleans, Louisiana USA; Stephen J. Zralek, Spencer Fane LLP, Nashville, Tennessee USA*

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

International Sanctions, Export Controls, Tariffs: The Risks of Running Business on a Global Scale

Committee Sponsor: International

Sanctions take various forms: list-based sanctions (physical and legal persons expressly targeted), trade sanctions (embargos), and financial sanctions (asset freezes, exclusion from the SWIFT banking system). The United States and the European Union also differ in their use of sanctions. In addition to exploring these nuances, this panel will explore how companies, banks and financial institutions deal with sanctions, and will show how international sanctions can become the subject of the arbitrations and explain how advocates can get paid by their clients, obtain evidence, bring in witnesses from countries subject to sanctions, and enforce arbitral awards.

Speakers: *Damien Devot, Meyer Fabre Avocats, Paris, France; Jennifer Gellie, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, Washington, District of Columbia USA; Gabriel Sidere, Florida Wellness Company, Bucharest, Romania; Samantha Welch, BRG, New York, New York USA*

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Understanding the End Game – A Guide to Understanding the Bad Faith Set Up and Its Impact on Social Inflation

Committee Co-Sponsors: Insurance and Reinsurance, Trial Techniques and Tactics

The recent \$50 million verdict against Starbucks has brought back the thoughts and discussions of the McDonalds coffee case. Nuclear or aberrational verdicts make headlines, but we as defense



counsel know that they are not the norm. But these are the results that plaintiff's counsel is looking for and they are training their colleagues how to get these results across the country. They have books, podcasts, and seminars dedicated to specific techniques for *voir dire*, the presentation or evidence and argument that is meant to inflame juries, but many times not by the old Reptile tactics, but instead focusing on the human emotions and damages their client is claiming. The defense bar needs to catch up. This panel will explore the tactics of some of the best of the plaintiff's bar and provide concrete strategies on how we can present a better case for our clients at trial.

Speakers: David A. Billions, Federal Express Corporation, Memphis, Tennessee USA; William A. Bulfer, Teague Campbell Dennis & Gorham, LLP, Asheville, North Carolina USA; W.M. Bains Fleming, III, MMPO Defense, Birmingham, Alabama USA; Angela R. Guitar, AXA XL, New York, New York USA

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Bubbles and Beignets (\$)

***PLEASE NOTE: This is a morning activity for significant others/guests.**

Join host Matthew Stitham in the Presidential Suite for *Bubbles and Beignets*! This is a great opportunity for plus 1's to gather in the morning hours while members attend the fantastic CLE programming we have planned.

This event is open to plus 1 registered attendees. The registration fee is \$15 USD per person and includes "bubbles" (including non-alcoholic), other beverages, and beignets.

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Rethinking Arbitration: Are You Better Off in Court?

Committee Co-Sponsors: Alternative Dispute Resolution, International, International Arbitration, Trial Techniques and Tactics

Arbitration provides the ability to preserve confidentiality of the proceedings, reduced discovery requirements, no or limited depositions, written testimony, and sophisticated finders of fact. Courts work under well-established rules of procedure, have known judges, the possibility of dispositive motions, and provide appellate remedies. Arbitrations, however, often are not faster or less expensive than litigation; arbitrators may be less inclined to grant dispositive motions, may have financial incentives to placate both sides, and there is generally no appeal. In the context of international disputes, the considerations become more complicated. In cross-border matters, differing Civil Law and Common Law traditions shape how evidence is presented, the balance between written and oral advocacy, and what ultimately persuades the tribunal. Bridging these styles can be as critical as the choice between arbitration and litigation. This panel includes an in-house counsel steeped in healthcare industry arbitrations, a Singaporean arbitrator, and a top litigator in Brazil, with a moderator who serves as general counsel for a partnership between an American automotive manufacturer and a South Korean EV technology firm. These speakers will provide a global perspective about the pros and cons of arbitration versus litigation.



Speakers: Antonio Barbuto Neto, Advocacia Adriano Dib, Sao Paulo, Brazil; Kristen Harris, BlueOval SK, LLC, Stanton, Tennessee USA; Leanne Matchen, UnitedHealthcare, Minnetonka, Minnesota USA; J. Mitchell Smith, Germer PLLC, Houston, Texas USA

12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Book Review: *With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa* By E.B. Sledge

Prior to World War II, Eugene B. Sledge was an Alabama boy steeped in American history and a romanticized view of military service. When the United States entered the war, Eugene felt the call to join the fight, like his older brother Edward, an officer in the Army who would later fight at Normandy (Omaha Beach) and through Europe until V-E Day. Eugene did not want to “miss the war,” so he left Georgia Tech, enlisted in the Marine Corps, and later joined the famous 1st Marine Division—Company K, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines. Eugene described his first battle, Peleliu, as “a nightmare of flashes, explosions, and snapping bullets.” His romanticized view of war extinguished by the reality of its horrors. Sledge explained, “Time had no meaning, life had no meaning” in the “abyss of Peleliu.” By the time the young Sledge, barely of college age, hit the “meat grinder” of Okinawa he was a combat vet in a unit that suffered overwhelming casualties. Of Okinawa, Sledge recounted, “Men struggled and fought and bled in an environment so degrading I believed we had been flung into hell’s own cesspool.” Based on notes Sledge secretly kept in a copy of the New Testament, [*With the Old Breed*](#) captures with utter simplicity and searing honesty the experience of a marine in the fierce Pacific Theater. Here is what saved, threatened, and changed his life. Here, too, is the story of how he learned to hate and kill—and came to love—his fellow man.

“Eugene Sledge became more than a legend with his memoir, *With the Old Breed*. He became a chronicler, a historian, a storyteller who turns the extremes of the war in the Pacific—the terror, the camaraderie, the banal and the extraordinary—into terms we mortals can grasp.” -Tom Hanks

Thank you to Book Review Chairs Ed and Aubree Sledge for leading us on a book review that is very personal for them and their family. With its incredible World War II Museum, New Orleans is the perfect backdrop to discuss this moving, and difficult, war account.

The Book Review is complimentary for registered attendees, and sign-ups are not required.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

National WWII Museum

Continue your afternoon with other Book Review attendees and register for the National WWII Museum tour on the 2026 Midyear Meeting registration site.

You need to add this separate museum visit to your meeting registration if you would like to attend. Space is limited.

12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Journeying Through New Orleans: The Streetcar Serenade to the Columns Hotel and Lunch (\$)

Jump on the St. Charles Avenue Streetcar and let our experienced guide take the group on a tour of one of New Orleans’ most exclusive neighborhoods, the Garden District. Enjoy lunch with other



attendees at Red Fish Grill, then take a streetcar to the Columns Hotel to enjoy a beverage together before touring the lush gardens and architecture of this exclusive and historic neighborhood.

The registration fee is \$170 USD per person and includes lunch, a streetcar ride, a professional guided tour, a stop at the Columns Hotel, and transportation.

Important Details: Attendees should wear comfortable shoes for the walking portion of this tour within the Garden District.

1:45 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

WWII Museum

Register to visit the world-class [National WWII Museum](#) following the Book Review. Book Review Chairs Ed and Aubree Sledge will highlight exhibits that relate directly to the book selection and their personal family connection. Attendees will then be able to explore museum at your own pace.

The registration fee for the museum outing is \$50 USD per person and includes one-way transportation and entrance into the museum. Return transportation is the attendee's responsibility.

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

International Committee Business Meeting

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Foundation President's Circle Reception

Invitation only. Foundation President's Circle donors (those who donated \$1,000 or more to the IADC Foundation in 2025) and Life Fellows will receive an emailed invitation prior to the meeting with a request to RSVP.

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Member Mix and Mingle (\$)

Meet up with friends and fellow attendees at Davenport Lounge before going out for the evening at this cash bar reception.

Thank you to Mix and Mingles Chairs Jay and Natasha Mattappally.

5:45 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Preservation Hall (\$)

****PLEASE NOTE: This is an evening activity with limited space.***

Situated in the heart of the French Quarter on St. Peter Street, [Preservation Hall](#) presents intimate, acoustic New Orleans jazz concerts more than 360 nights a year, featuring ensembles from a current collective of 50+ local master practitioners. On any given night, audiences bear joyful witness to the evolution of this venerable and living tradition. Seeing a show at Preservation Hall is a must-see New Orleans treat!

The registration fee is \$50 USD per person and includes a 45-minute show at Preservation Hall.



6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Dine-Around (\$)

***PLEASE NOTE: This is an evening activity.**

The IADC invites attendees to dine together at some of New Orleans' best restaurants. A list of participating restaurants and sign-up sheets will be available onsite in the IADC Registration Desk area. Spots will be filled on a first come, first served basis. All costs associated with dinner, as well as transportation to/from the restaurants, will be the attendee's responsibility.

6:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.

Past Presidents Reception and Dinner

Invited guests will receive an emailed invitation prior to the meeting with a request to RSVP.

10:00 p.m. – 11:30 p.m.

After Dinner Gathering

Wrap up your evening with a nightcap and camaraderie at this After Dinner Gathering held exclusively for IADC attendees at the Library Lounge. Beer, house wine, and non-alcoholic beverages are complimentary with your meeting name badge.

Thank you to After Dinner Gatherings Chairs Tim and Lauren Brinks.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

6:00 a.m. – 7:00 a.m.

Morning Run

Get your blood pumping, get moving, and get to know fellow attendees at this IADC morning run. *The Morning Runs are complimentary, and sign-ups are not required.*
Thank you to Morning Run Chair Eric Brotten.

6:45 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Registration Desk

Have questions or need help? Visit IADC's Registration Desk during posted hours for assistance.

6:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.

Grab and Go CLE Breakfast

"Grab and go" breakfasts are available outside the morning meeting rooms, making it easy for attendees to have breakfast without missing a minute of the great CLE programming we have planned for you.

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Meet and Greet Breakfast

Join fellow attendees for breakfast to network, discuss ideas, or plan your day. Breakfast is available to all registered attendees. Meeting name badge required for entry.



7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Defending Non-Profit and Religious Institutions Against Childhood Sexual Abuse Claims: When Bad Things Happen at Good Places

Committee Sponsor: Class Actions and Multi-Party Litigation

Program attendees will hear first-hand accounts of the peculiar challenges presented in defending non-profit organizations, schools, and religious institutions in searing claims of childhood sexual abuse and molestation.

This presentation involves discussion about defense strategies, relevant areas for expert witness consultation, discovery tactics in cold cases, and claim evaluation and valuation.

Speakers: *Michael O'Brien, Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott LLC, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania USA; Timothy Pinos, Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP, Toronto, Ontario Canada; Mark L. Reardon, Eckert Seamans, LLC, Wilmington, Delaware USA; Sara M. Turner, Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, Birmingham, Alabama USA*

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Preparing for Environmental Damage Claims After a Disaster

Committee Co-Sponsors: Construction Law and Litigation, Environmental and Energy Law, Insurance and Reinsurance

While events like fires, floods, and landslides are natural phenomena, past land management practices have resulted in excess fuel loading, loss and fragmentation of aquatic habitats, and the introduction of invasive species, all of which can influence the risk and severity of these phenomena. Because of this, the assessment of environmental damages following events like these is complex and site-specific, yet frequently conflated with damages to human infrastructure (including buildings, roads, bridges, and dams). In some cases, government agencies tasked with assessing environmental damages on state and federal lands have implemented simplified assessment methods to fast-track and streamline analyses. Understanding and responding to these damage claims requires knowledge of these methods together with the site- and resource-specific characteristics that may alter applicability of the streamlined approach. Moreover, understanding the environmental characteristics that can influence the severity of damages can allow for proactive consideration of environmental risk, an important consideration for insurers and risk managers.

Speakers: *Catherine Leatherwood, Rogers Townsend, LLC, Columbia, South Carolina USA; Katherine Palmquist, Exponent, Bellevue, Washington USA; Roy Prather, Beveridge & Diamond PC, Baltimore, Maryland USA*

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Voir Dire to Verdict: The DEI Edge in Trial Practice

Committee Co-Sponsors: Business Litigation, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, Trial Techniques and Tactics



This program will explore how DEI awareness enhances trial advocacy, from jury selection to client engagement, and from team dynamics to courtroom communication. Through real-world examples, ethical analysis, and curated film/TV clips, attendees will learn how to integrate DEI principles into their litigation practice to improve outcomes and uphold the highest standards of professionalism.

**Applying for Diversity/Elimination of Bias CLE Credit*

Speakers: Yasir Billoo, International Law Partners LLP, Hollywood, Florida USA; Stacy L. Douglas, Everett Dorey LLP, Los Angeles, California USA; Zandra E. Foley, Thompson, Coe, Cousins & Irons, LLP, Houston, Texas USA; Johner T. Wilson, III, Epstein Becker & Green, P.C., Chicago, Illinois USA

7:15 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

Foundation Board Meeting and Breakfast

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Morning Walk

Get your blood pumping, get moving, and get to know fellow attendees at this IADC morning walk. *The Morning Walks are complimentary, and sign-ups are not required.*

Thank you to Morning Walk Chair Carolyn Riggs.

8:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Networking Coffee Break

Connect with fellow members to build relationships and pursue strategic opportunities for your practice or law firm at these Networking Coffee Breaks each morning.

8:15 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.

Courting Climate Change: The Race to Sue Everyone, Everywhere All at Once

Committee Co-Sponsors: Appellate Practice, International

Litigation attempting to assign rights and responsibilities for climate change has increasingly generated high-profile, high-stakes litigation around the world. Climate change is a by-product of modern life and has been caused by enumerable sources globally for nearly 200 years, meaning that the potential for litigation is endless. Already, activists are suing governments; governments and activists are suing companies in various industries; and some governments are suing other governments—both within the U.S. and internationally. Further, some of these lawsuits seek to directly regulate climate-related activities, whereas others seek money for climate adaption to increase the cost of using carbon and to penalize discourse over climate change. The judicial reception has been mixed, with some courts allowing climate suits to proceed and others saying that these cases raise public policy, not liability, matters.

This session will take stock of where the various permutations of climate litigation stand, analyze the trends for success and failure, and discuss what it means for you and your clients in the energy, transportation, agriculture, and other targeted industries.



Speakers: Patrice Balhoff Childress, ExxonMobil, Houston, Texas USA; Phil Goldberg, Shook, Hardy & Bacon, LLP, Washington, District of Columbia USA; Deputy Assistant Attorney General Adam R.F. Gustafson, Environment and Natural Resources Division, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia USA; Linda Kelly, National Association of Manufacturers, Washington, District of Columbia USA; Michael R. Williams, West Virginia Solicitor General, Charleston, West Virginia USA

9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Vieux Carre Voyage: Jackson Square and Beyond (\$)

***PLEASE NOTE: This is a morning activity for significant others/guests.**

Experience the allure of the French Quarter with a knowledgeable guide leading the way. Marvel at the timeless beauty of eighteenth and nineteenth-century French and Spanish architecture, the iconic wrought iron fences of Jackson Square, and the vibrant atmosphere of renowned restaurants and shops. This tour features admission to the majestic Cabildo, once New Orleans City Hall, offering insights into the city's rich heritage and architectural legacy.

This event is open to plus 1 registered attendees. The registration fee is \$50 USD per person and includes a professional tour guide and admittance into The Cabildo.

Important Details: Attendees should wear comfortable shoes for this walking tour.

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Pursuit of Inclusivity and Belonging in an Evolving DEI Landscape

Committee Sponsor: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

In today's courtroom, understanding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is not just a moral imperative—it's a strategic advantage. This session will explore how DEI awareness enhances trial advocacy, from jury selection to client engagement and from team dynamics to courtroom communication. Through real-world examples, ethical analysis, and curated film/TV clips, attendees will learn how to integrate DEI principles into their litigation practice to improve outcomes and uphold the highest standards of professionalism.

**Applying for Diversity/Elimination of Bias CLE Credit*

Speakers: Atoyia Harris, Proskauer Rose, New Orleans, Louisiana USA; Kenneth Sharperson, Armstrong Teasdale, Morris Township, New Jersey USA; Yuri Sugano, Nishimura & Asahi, Tokyo, Japan

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Making Things Happen: How Executive Orders Impact the Practice of Law and the Representation of Clients at Home and Abroad

Committee Co-Sponsors: Amicus Curiae, Appellate Practice

US administrations have relied upon Executive Orders (EOs) to articulate its enforcement priorities and implement specific policies. This program will cover the use of EOs throughout US history; the strategies available to companies, law firms, and institutions in responding to EOs that affect their business and very viability; ethical and other issues arising from settlements to avoid or respond to



EOs; the impact of EOs on business and perceptions abroad; and the challenges associated with counselling clients in the current environment.

Learning Objectives:

- Gain familiarity with EOs in US history and as used by recent and current administrations
- Understand why EOs are chosen in lieu of enacting legislation or administrative rulemaking
- Appreciate vulnerabilities created by EOs as reflected in current litigation challenging EOs
- Become informed about ethical (legal and personal) issues inherent in the above.

Speakers: *Farnaz F. Thompson, McGuireWoods LLP, Washington, District of Columbia USA; Tara Ward, McDermott Will & Schulte, Washington, District of Columbia USA; Jack L. White, McGuireWoods LLP, Tysons Corner, Virginia USA*

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

CPR Class

Being prepared with CPR knowledge can make a difference in emergency situations and performing CPR can increase the chances of survival from cardiac events. Join other attendees for this important class that includes hands-on CPR practice, AED overview, and Q&A.

This event is complimentary, but registration is required to participate.

Important Details: While attendees will learn basic CPR skills, this is not an official certification class.

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

CLE Committee Meeting and Luncheon

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

The Empowerment Collaborative Activity - He Said/She Said: How Gender Stereotypes Impact Verbal Communications and Ways to Achieve More Equitable Dialogue in the Legal Profession (\$)

We will use a modern lens to explore the old adage, *it isn't always what you say but how you say it*— acknowledging that *how* something is said (and heard) is largely influenced by the speaker's gender. How can we close the "gender gap" when it comes to the currency of our profession, i.e., talking and listening?

*The purpose of The Empowerment Collaborative (TEC) is to provide specialized support through the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee to enhance the development of skills, professionalism, and camaraderie of IADC's women members in order to further facilitate their continued personal and professional success. TEC events are open to everyone.

The registration fee is \$25 USD per person and includes snacks and refreshments.

Thank you to The Empowerment Collaborative Chairs Bernadette Catalana and Evelyn Davis.

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Flavors of the French Quarter Tour (\$)

Whether visiting for Mardi Gras or any other occasion, there's no denying that New Orleans is the #1 food destination in the USA. On this 3-hour walking food tour, treat your taste buds at some of



the most famous and most visited eateries in the French Quarter while learning about the history and culture of New Orleans! Come hungry!

The registration fee is \$200 USD per person and includes a professional guided tour and six food tastings.

Important Details: Attendees should wear comfortable shoes for this walking tour.

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

St. Louis No. 3 Cemetery Tour (\$)

St. Louis Cemetery No. 3 runs parallel to Bayou St. John and covers the width of property included within the 1708 French land concessions, the earliest European land grants in what would later become the city of New Orleans. The history of the establishment of St. Louis Cemetery No. 3 spanned a 6-year period in the mid-19th century with construction finally occurring in 1854. Explore the graves, tombs, and history of the cemetery with an experienced guide.

The registration fee is \$85 USD per person and includes round-trip transportation and a professional tour guide.

Important Details: Attendees should wear comfortable shoes for the walking portion of this tour within the cemetery.

4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

2026 Convention Committee and Committee Chairs Reception and Monster Mash Membership Dash Committee Winners Reception

Invitation only.

6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Last Call on Canal Closing Party

We're taking the Closing Party down Canal Street!

Step right into the heart of Mardi Gras magic as we celebrate an extraordinary meeting together. Enjoy a front-row seat to the parades from our private viewing party—complete with great food, good friends, and the true spirit of New Orleans on full display. Take in the festivities your way: mingle in the comfort of our indoor lounge, catch every moment from the street level grandstand, or take in the view from our very own private balcony! This is one unforgettable night you won't want to miss!

🎭 Beads, beats, and a big goodbye to NOLA!

Casual or Mardi Gras-inspired—think purple, green, and gold!—attire is suggested. Comfortable shoes are encouraged for the 10-minute walk to the venue.