

# Senior Lawyers Division Seminar

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

*by order of presentation*

### **Neal Dickert**

*Dickert Mediation, LLC*

*Augusta, GA*

*(Course Planner)*

Undergraduate degree in Economics from Wofford College; J.D. (1974) and MBA (1969) from University of South Carolina: Notes staff of South Carolina Law Review and Order of Wig and Robe. Admitted to practice before all State and Federal Courts in Georgia and South Carolina. Former Superior Court Judge for the Augusta Judicial District in Georgia from 1997 through 2007. Selected to Best Lawyers in America in area of Mediation and listed as Super Lawyer. Former member of the Board of Governors for the State Bar of Georgia and former Chair of the Institute for Continuing Judicial Education for State of Georgia. Presently President Elect of Senior Lawyers Division for the South Carolina Bar. Certified mediator in Georgia and South Carolina; Author of the “Georgia Handbook of Foundations and Objections” published by Thomson Reuters annually since 2003.

### **Bill Davies**

*Edisto, SC*

#### Education:

The Citadel — 1964; The University of South Carolina School of Law — 1967

#### Work History:

U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps - 1967 to 1972

Nelson Mullins Riley and Scarborough Law Firm — 1972 to 2009

#### History related activities:

South Carolina American Revolution Sestercentennial Commission — a state legislative commission commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution — Vice-Chairman 2019 - present

South Carolina Historical Society — Chairman, Board of Managers 2023-2025

The Liberty Trail - Senior Advisor in planning the initiative to recognize and preserve sites of the American Revolution in South Carolina

South Carolina Archives and History Foundation — Member of the Board, Past President

Santa Elena Foundation — Member of the Board; Santa Elena Advisory Board of the Coastal Discovery Museum — Member of the Board.

Citadel History Committee — Member; Citadel Alumni Association Museum Committee — Member of the Board; The Citadel Museum and Archives Restoration Committee — Past Member of the Board

The Friends of Honey Hill Battlefield — Member of the Board  
Palmetto State Military History Foundation (The "Friends" Group for the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum) — Member of the Board;  
Past President  
Friends of the Charleston National Parks — Member, Board of Advisors; past  
Board Member, Ft Sumter-Ft Moultrie Trust (prior name)  
Edisto Island Historic Preservation Society — past Member of the Board

Member of the South Carolina Battleground Preservation Trust, the Sons of the American Revolution [recognized for over 60 years of membership], the Old Edgefield District Genealogical Society, the American Battlefield Trust, the American Friends of Lafayette, the Blue and Gray Educational Society, the Military Order of the Stars and Bars, the Morris Center for Lowcountry Heritage, the SC Military History Club, the Anglo Zulu War Historical Society, the Historical Societies for Beaufort, Colleton, Edgefield, Greenwood, and Kershaw Counties among others

Personal History:

Mr. Davies was born and had his basic education in Greenwood, South Carolina, while spending all his summers at Edisto Beach, South Carolina. He has been happily married to the former Mahalie King Brown of Anderson, South Carolina since 1966.

They have three children and nine grandchildren.

**Tara Simkins**

*Soul and Shine Labs  
Augusta, GA*

Tara Rice Simkins, J.D., is a lawyer-turned–Master Certified Life and Money Coach, author, and founder of Soul Shine Labs. With over 30 years of combined experience in the legal profession, coaching, and advocacy, Tara brings a rare blend of professional insight, emotional intelligence expertise, and lived experience to her work on lawyer wellbeing and boundaries as a core competency.

Tara began her legal career after graduating from the University of Georgia School of Law in 1992. She practiced law in Atlanta (Nelson Mullins) and Augusta (Hull Barrett, P.C.), navigating the demands, pressures, and expectations that shape the modern legal landscape. She excelled in her career, but like many attorneys, she carried internalized beliefs about productivity, perfectionism, and availability—beliefs that later contributed to profound burnout.

In 2009, Tara’s world changed when her middle son, Brennan, was diagnosed with leukemia. For years she lived on the front lines of one of the most challenging—and ultimately successful—childhood cancer journeys. She co-founded the Press On Fund for childhood cancer research with her husband and two other couples and became a widely respected advocate for families navigating pediatric cancer.

After Brennan returned home from 3 years of treatment at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, Tara attempted to return to her legal practice; however, she began experiencing severe panic attacks and ultimately stepped aside from the practice of law. What followed was a decade-long deep dive into trauma, overwhelm, scarcity psychology, emotional regulation, and the nervous system—alongside her training as a certified life coach through The Life Coach School and a Master Coach with Meadow DeVor.

Through this work, Tara discovered there was nothing “wrong” with her. What was wrong was a profession that was keeping up so fast with the pace of technology that it missed the need to teach her how to protect her emotional bandwidth, regulate her nervous system, or set boundaries that honored her humanity. She learned that her panic attacks were not personal failure—they were the natural consequence of a high-stakes profession that prizes endurance over wellbeing and rewards overfunctioning until the system collapses.

Today, Tara teaches what she wishes every lawyer knew 20 years ago: **A lawyer without boundaries is a burned-out lawyer—and a burned-out lawyer is a broke lawyer.**

Her work integrates evidence-based research on burnout, scarcity, trauma, technology overuse, and emotional intelligence. She draws from her own lived experience in the legal field, her years of navigating medical crises, and her decade plus of coaching high-achieving women, lawyers, and leaders to build lives that support both purpose and wellbeing.

Tara has presented multiple CLEs for the State Bar of Georgia, including How to Set and Honor Boundaries: A Path to Wellness, Mindset Hack: Upgrading from Scarcity to Abundance, Financial Hacks: Creating and Living in Abundance, and Emotionally Intelligent Lawyers Make Better Decisions and More Money. She is also the author of Boundaries: The Secret to Being a Lawyer Who Lives Well, published in the Georgia Bar Journal. Her teachings are known for being accessible, grounded, deeply compassionate, and refreshingly honest.

Tara’s mission is simple: **to help the legal profession stop losing good lawyers to burnout, overwhelm, and self-abandonment.** Through her classes, workshops, and Soul Shine Labs membership, she equips lawyers with the emotional tools, practical skills, and boundary frameworks they were never taught in law school—so they can practice with clarity, confidence, and sustainability.

She lives in North Augusta, South Carolina with her husband, Turner, and their three sons—Nat, Brennan, and Christopher—who continue to inspire her work on resilience, gratitude, and what it truly means to live well.

### **The Honorable Shane Massey**

*Massey and Massey, LLC  
Edgefield, SC*

**No Bio Submitted.**

### **The Honorable Costa Pleicones, S.C. Supreme Court, Retired**

*Haynesworth, Sinkler, Boyd  
Columbia, SC*

Costa Pleicones grew up in Columbia, South Carolina, where he attended the city's public schools. He graduated from Wofford College in 1965, and from the USC Joseph Rice School of Law in 1968. From 1968 through 1973, he served in the US Army JAG Corps. Returning to Columbia in 1973, he began his civilian legal career as a public defender. followed by eighteen years of private practice and public service. In 1991, he was elected to the bench as a state circuit court judge, serving until March 2000, when he was elected to the State Supreme Court. He ended his career as Chief Justice in 2016, upon reaching mandatory retirement age. In 2018, he joined Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd in Columbia, where his practice focuses on appellate matters and mediation.

## **The Honorable James Lockemy**

*S.C. Court of Appeals, Retired  
Dillon, SC*

Retired Chief Judge of the South Carolina Court of Appeals. 18 years as a Circuit Judge  
30 years United States Army and South Carolina National Guard Retiring as a Colonel  
Member of South Bar Foundation Board, Committee on Memory Hold the Door, Member of Board  
Senior Lawyers Division SC Bar Chair, Judicial Division American Bar Association

## **The Honorable Lisa Kinon**

*S.C. Family Court  
Myrtle Beach, SC*

Judge Lisa Kinon received two undergraduate degrees in business from the University of South Carolina in 1980. She received her J.D. in 1985 from the University of South Carolina School of Law. During law school she was awarded the American Jurisprudence Award in Evidence.

She joined the firm of Hearn, Brittain and Martin, PA and concentrated her practice in the area of trial litigation primarily in family law. She was elected to the position of Family Court Judge for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit in May of 1995.

Judge Kinon has been a member of the South Carolina Bar Association, Horry County Bar Association, and the American Bar Association. She has also served as a member of the South Carolina Bar House of Delegates, the South Carolina Board of Governors, and was a member of the Supreme Court Commission on Grievances and Discipline.

She received the University of South Carolina School of Law "Compleat Lawyer" award - silver award in 1994. She received the South Carolina Bar Pro Bono service award in 1992. She was certified as a Family Court Mediator in 1994.

Judge Kinon is the Chair of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Commission for the South Carolina Supreme Court. In October 2013 she retired from the Family Court bench and now devotes her time to private family court mediation.