

Health Care Law Seminar

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

by order of presentation

Nancy Cote

*U.S. Attorney's Office-District of South Carolina
Columbia, SC
(Course Planner)*

Nancy Cote is an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of South Carolina. She graduated from Clemson University with a BA in Spanish and International Trade and earned her JD from the Charleston School of Law. She worked as an Assistant Solicitor for several years in Richland, Georgetown, and Horry Counties in South Carolina before becoming a prosecutor with the South Carolina Attorney General's Office's State Grand Jury and General Prosecution division. Nancy then transitioned to the South Carolina Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, where she served as the Deputy Director and then Director before moving to the United States Attorney's Office. With the United States Attorney's Office, she handles Affirmative Civil Enforcement cases, primarily focusing on healthcare fraud. She serves as the office's Healthcare Fraud and as Secretary of the South Carolina Bar Health Law Section.

Stephen Bittinger

*Polsinelli, PC
Mount Pleasant, SC*

Stephen Bittinger is one of the leading practitioners in the country on the law surrounding the use of statistical sampling and extrapolation and the use of artificial intelligence ("AI") software tools as evidence in health care reimbursement disputes. He focuses his practice on federal Administrative Procedure Act ("APA") litigation but often serves as subject matter counsel, or an expert witness, on statistical sampling and AI-as-evidence disputes in False Claims Act ("FCA") proceedings, health care criminal proceedings, commercial litigation with payors, and government payors fraud, waste, and abuse audits and investigations.

Stephen has represented providers, suppliers, laboratories, pharmacies, revenue cycle management companies, drug and device manufacturers and all manner of investment companies on the care delivery side within the U.S. health care system and internationally. Due to the focus of Stephen's practice, he has worked closely with numerous federal agencies throughout his career, including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services ("CMS") Center for Program Integrity ("CPI"), the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General (HHS-OIG), the Department of Veteran Affairs ("VA"), the Health Care Fraud division of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and state Attorney General ("AG") offices and Medicaid Fraud Units ("MFU") across the country.

Stephen received a B.S. in Integrated Language Arts from Kent State University, his M.A. in English Literature from John Carroll University, and his J.D. from the University of Akron School of law.

Wayne van Halem
The van Halem Group, LLC
Waterloo, IA

Wayne van Halem holds a Criminal Justice degree from the University of South Carolina. He founded The van Halem Group in 2006. The Atlanta-based firm merged with VGM Group in 2014 and Wayne currently serves as its President as they assist providers navigate complex issues related to audits, appeals, enrollment, and compliance. As a CMS contractor for 10 years, he spent a majority of that time as a fraud investigator and national Statutory Appeals Director. Wayne is also a published author and well-known lecturer. He is an Accredited Healthcare Fraud Investigator through the National Health Care Anti-fraud Association (NHCAA); a Certified Fraud Examiner through the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE), and an active member of the Health Care Compliance Association (HCCA). He has served on the faculty for each of these national organizations. He also sits on the American Association for Homecare's Regulatory Council, Medtrade's Educational Advisory Board, Medicare DME MAC Jurisdiction D Advisory Council, and Board of Directors for Friends of Disabled Adults and Children (FODAC) and the Georgia Association of Medical Equipment Suppliers (GAMES). He has also served as an expert in various criminal and civil proceedings. Since 2006, his company has saved clients over \$150 million in overpayments and denial recoveries.

Bob Coffield

*Nelson Mullins
Huntington, WV*

Bob brings more than three decades of experience to a dynamic everchanging healthcare landscape. Bob has carved a niche as an experienced healthcare and business lawyer, recognized for his handling of complex transactions, regulatory compliance, administrative litigation, and a wide spectrum of business matters.

Bob merges a deep knowledge and understanding of the technical, regulatory, and business aspects of healthcare with a practical approach to helping clients achieve results. He combines deep industry knowledge with a keen understanding of the technical and business intricacies of healthcare. This unique blend allows him to navigate and simplify the regulatory environment, delivering strategic solutions tailored to achieve his clients' goals.

He offers guidance to a diverse client base, including health systems, hospitals, physician groups, long term care facilities, rural health clinics, home health providers, health technology companies, healthcare trade organizations, and other healthcare providers. Bob's legal acuity covers the full spectrum of healthcare law, from regulatory compliance, administrative litigation, and healthcare technology to corporate governance and business transactions.

Bob's knowledge extends beyond traditional healthcare industry law. He addresses modern challenges such as health data privacy and security, integration of HIPAA and HITECH compliance, implementation of electronic health record systems, and the legal issues around the use of big data and social media in healthcare. His forward-thinking perspective also encompasses emerging issues like artificial intelligence.

Beyond the healthcare industry, Bob lends his legal experience to small business clients, advising on corporate, transactional, regulatory, and real estate matters. His experience in the oil and gas industry on behalf of landowners and mineral owners, where he has negotiated surface agreements and paid-up mineral leases, showcases his versatility and ability to provide comprehensive legal services across different industry sectors.

Bob is not just a lawyer but a strategic partner to his clients, committed to understanding and addressing the multifaceted legal and business challenges they face. With Bob, clients are equipped with the insight and expertise needed to navigate the complexities of the health care industry and beyond.

J. Keane Mossman

*MUSC Health
Charleston, SC*

No Bio Submitted

Pamela Coyle Brecht

*Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP
Philadelphia, PA*

PAMELA COYLE BRECHT is a partner at Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP. Ms. Brecht serves as Chair of the firm's national Qui Tam/False Claims Act Practice Group. She is also experienced in white-collar criminal litigation, internal investigations, and complex health care litigation.

Ms. Brecht has litigated many of the most complex False Claims Act cases filed in the United States. Her cases have included alleged fraud by a large multi-state Medicaid managed care contractor, FCA violations by three of the largest hospital corporations in the country, and dissecting complex financial relationships among healthcare providers including Stark and Anti-Kickback issues. She has also litigated cases involving hospital fraud, emergency room fraud, medical device allegations, Medicare Part C and Part D fraud, government contractor fraud, laboratory fraud, as well as all types of pharmaceutical fraud. One of the whistleblower matters that Ms. Brecht has worked on was recognized in 2018 by The National Law Journal as one of the "Top 100 Verdicts." The matter, *Lutz v Health Diagnostics Laboratory*, ranked as #39 on the list of highest verdicts throughout the nation for that year and came in at #2 for the highest verdicts coming out of Pennsylvania. In addition, Ms. Brecht has served as an expert witness related to alleged conduct involving potential exposure to government enforcement actions.

Ms. Brecht has been involved in the recovery of over \$406.5 million for state and federal taxpayers and has litigated numerous high profile Qui Tam cases including:

- United States of America et al v. BlueWave Healthcare Consultants Inc. resulting in a \$114 million recovery
- United States ex rel. Mason, Folstad, and MEMA v. HMA, et. al. resulting in a \$74.5 million recovery and confidential settlement of Relators' claims, believed to be the largest resolution of private claims stemming from retaliation
- United States ex rel. Miller & Metts v. HMA, et. al. resulting in a \$55 million recovery
- United States, et al. ex rel. Lutz, et al. v. Health Diagnostic Laboratory, Inc., et al. resulting in a \$47 million recovery from Health Diagnostic Laboratory and a \$1.5 million recovery from Singulex, Inc.
- United States ex rel. Cho v. Surgery Partners Inc., et al. resulting in a \$41 million recovery
- United States ex rel. Mason, Folstad, and MEMA v. EMCARE, et. al. resulting in a \$30 million recovery
- United States ex rel. Baker v. Physician Partners of Am LLC resulting in a \$24.5 million recovery
- United States ex rel. Lutz et al. v. Laboratory Corporation of America Holdings resulting in a \$19 million recovery

Ms. Brecht received her Juris Doctorate from Temple University School of Law where she served on Temple Law

Review. She also graduated on the Dean's List and received honors for Distinguished Class Performance. Prior to Temple University School of Law, Ms. Brecht graduated cum laude from

Villanova University, where she was a competitive Rower on The Women's Crew Team. Ms. Brecht has also served as a Hearing Committee Member for the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

Ms. Brecht has amassed many legal honors over the course of her 30-year career. Martindale-Hubbell® recognizes Ms. Brecht as an AV® Preeminent™ rated attorney, the highest such rating available to any individual lawyer in both legal ability and ethical standards. Ms. Brecht has been recognized by the 2024 and 2025 *Chambers USA* Guide in the area of False Claims Act: Plaintiff in USA-Nationwide. Ms. Brecht can also be found in the 2025 and 2026 editions of *The Best Lawyers in America*® for her work in Qui Tam Law and Health Care Law. In 2019, the Philadelphia Business Journal selected Ms. Brecht in their "Best of the Bar" Awards for her distinguished legal performance in the field of "White-Collar Defense Litigation."

Ms. Brecht is a member of the Philadelphia Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association Qui Tam Section, the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the Brehon Law Society, and the Justinian Law Society. She also serves on the Advisory Board for the Federal Bar Association's Qui Tam Section.

Ms. Brecht frequently speaks, writes, and lectures nationally on False Claims Act and health care fraud issues. She served as an Adjunct Professor of Law at Hamline University School of Law in Minnesota and as a lecturer at Seton Hall University School of Law where she has taught a course in health care fraud. She is also an active member of her local church, she has supported parent organizations for the benefit of the United States Naval Academy and the United States Military Academy (including the Mule Riders program), from which two of her sons graduated, and she has also been a loyal supporter of Temple Men's Crew.

Jake Shields

*Gibson Dunn
Washington, D.C.*

Jake M. Shields is a partner in the Washington, D.C. office and a member of the firm's False Claims Act and White-Collar Defense and Investigations Practice Groups.

An expert in the False Claims Act (FCA), Jake was a Senior Trial Counsel at the Fraud Section of the Civil Division of the U.S. Department of Justice where, over an eight-year career spanning administrations of both major political parties, he investigated and litigated FCA cases on behalf of the federal government. During his time at DOJ, Jake was involved in dozens of FCA matters that collectively resulted in the recovery of hundreds of millions of dollars to the federal government, including respectively the single largest civil and FCA recoveries in the history of two separate federal jurisdictions (Houston and Nashville).

Both in and out of government, Jake has extensive experience handling matters involving allegations of healthcare, financial, customs, and procurement fraud, as well as violations of the Anti-Kickback Statute (AKS), Stark Law, Tariff Act, Payroll Protection Program, and restrictions on the off-label marketing of prescription drugs. Jake also has experience defending government contractors in DEI investigations under the FCA.

In addition to his investigations work, Jake has served as lead counsel in multiple FCA litigations, including a major AKS case that resolved a number of novel legal issues regarding the scope of discovery of the government in FCA cases.

Jake is an expert in federal cybersecurity enforcement against government contractors having served as lead counsel in the first FCA litigation that the United States ever filed against a contractor for alleged cybersecurity violations pursuant to DOJ's Civil Cyber-Fraud Initiative, as well as several other cybersecurity matters both on behalf of the federal government and in response to DOJ

investigations of government contractors.

Jake is also experienced in FCA enforcement against private equity and other investment firms, having worked on these matters in the government and on behalf of private equity firms and their portfolio companies.

With a truly national practice, Jake has worked on FCA cases with more than two dozen U.S. Attorney's Offices, including those in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Chicago, Brooklyn, Newark, Baltimore, Miami, Tampa, Houston, Dallas, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Cincinnati, Atlanta, Nashville, Charlotte, New Orleans, Columbia, Savannah, Seattle, Sacramento, Las Vegas, Wilmington, and Washington D.C.

Jake has also worked with government agencies on FCA cases, including the Offices of Inspector General (OIG) and Offices of General Counsel (OGC) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and its sub-agencies the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and Food & Drug Administration (FDA), Department of Defense (DoD) and its service branches (Army, Navy, & Air Force) and sub-agency the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its sub-agencies Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Commerce, Department of Treasury, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and Small Business Administration (SBA).

In addition to his work at DOJ's Civil Frauds Section, Jake spent a year on detail to DOJ's Antitrust Division where he served as a member of the litigation team in the Google search antitrust enforcement action.

Prior to joining the Justice Department, Jake spent twelve years in private practice at two prominent international law firms in New York and Washington D.C. where his practice focused on complex civil and financial litigation at the trial and appellate levels. During this period, Jake litigated cases in both federal and state courts across the country, and argued appeals in the Second and Eighth Circuits, as well as state appellate courts in New York and Maryland.

Jake received his J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law in 2003, where he served on the editorial board of the Virginia Law Review. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1999 with an A.B. in Government. Following law school, Jake clerked for the Honorable Emilio M. Garza on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Brook Andrew

Nelson Mullins

Columbia, SC

Brook is a partner at Nelson Mullins in Columbia with extensive experience in fraud investigations and government enforcement actions at both federal and state levels. He joined the firm after serving as the Acting United States Attorney for the District of South Carolina, where he was responsible for overseeing all federal law enforcement actions in the state. In this role, Brook led a staff of approximately 140 criminal prosecutors, civil litigators, and support personnel across offices in Columbia, Charleston, Greenville, and Florence.

During his distinguished career as a federal prosecutor, Brook investigated and prosecuted a wide variety of cases, including healthcare fraud, securities fraud, money laundering, national security matters, public corruption, defense procurement fraud, and other federal offenses. His experience encompasses fraud by corporate entities and senior executives, False Claims Act violations, financial crimes, cybercrime, and complex white-collar matters. Brook has handled and supervised numerous corporate criminal resolutions, significant civil settlements, jury trials, and appeals before the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Prior to his appointment as Acting U.S. Attorney, Brook served as First Assistant U.S. Attorney and Deputy Criminal Chief with oversight of the White Collar and General Crimes Section, where he supervised the office's most complex and highest-profile investigations and prosecutions.

Before his federal service, Brook practiced at a major law firm where he represented State Attorneys General as outside counsel in complex multistate litigation, playing an active role in some of the nation's largest consumer protection cases.

Brook has served as an Adjunct Professor at the University of South Carolina School of Law since 2018, where he trains students in the art of courtroom advocacy and serves as the school's Appellate Advocacy instructor. Brook's career began with his selection into the Department of Justice's prestigious Attorney General's Honors Program, and he practiced law in Washington, D.C. and Charlotte, N.C., before returning to his home state of South Carolina in 2016.

Before starting his litigation career, Brook was a judicial clerk for Judge Margaret Seymour of the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina and Chief Justice Jean Toal of the South Carolina Supreme Court. Brook is a graduate of the University of South Carolina School of Law (J.D.), George Washington University (M.A.), and Davidson College (B.A.).

Stephanie Opet

*South Carolina Attorney General's Office
Columbia, SC*

Stephanie Opet serves as Director of the South Carolina Vulnerable Adult and Medicaid Provider Fraud Unit (VAMPF), the state's designated Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU). In this role, she leads a multidisciplinary team of attorneys, investigators, and auditors in pursuing civil and criminal actions involving Medicaid provider fraud as well as the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of Medicaid beneficiaries and vulnerable adults in long-term care facilities.

Since assuming leadership of the MFCU, Stephanie has overseen its growth from 17 to 24 employees. The unit collaborates closely with numerous state and federal partners, including the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General, and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Carolina.

Before joining the South Carolina Attorney General's Office in 2018, Stephanie served as Assistant General Counsel at the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, where she advised and represented the Division of Program Integrity, among other divisions.

Stephanie earned her bachelor's degree from Wofford College and her Juris Doctor with honors from the University of Georgia School of Law. She lives in Columbia, South Carolina, with her husband and sons.

Kevin Horton

*Burr & Forman
Daniel Island, SC*

Kevin is a member of Burr & Forman's Health Care Practice Group who focuses on advising and defending medical professionals and institutions. Kevin has handled disputes across a range of subject-matter areas, with an emphasis on health care and commercial litigation. Leveraging his litigation experience, Kevin provides practical, defense-minded guidance to hospitals, skilled nursing and assisted living facilities, physicians and their practices, and other health care professionals, including dentists, nurses, and home health care providers. Kevin advises health care providers on facility and professional licensure, Medicare and Medicaid enrollment, health care fraud and abuse investigations, HIPAA and other privacy requirements, and payor claims, disputes, and audits in both litigation and transactional settings. He works effectively with local, state, and federal regulators and his clients range from rural home health agencies to South Carolina's largest health systems.

Raised in Birmingham, Alabama, Kevin attended the University of Alabama, where he obtained both his bachelor's and master's degrees in history. He had the privilege of teaching history to undergraduates there, an experience that continues to shape his work as a student of the law and advocate. Kevin earned his law degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law. While in law school, he served as a South Carolina Bar Public Interest Law Fellow and as a student law clerk at the South Carolina Supreme Court, gaining firsthand insight into the operation of South Carolina's judicial system.

Tina Cundari

Smith Robinson

Columbia, SC

Tina Cundari is a member of Smith Robinson in Columbia, where she represents individuals and businesses in a wide range of litigation and enforcement matters. Her practice focuses on complex commercial litigation, white collar defense, and appellate advocacy.

Tina began her legal career as a law clerk to the Honorable Jean Hoefer Toal, former Chief Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court. Tina spent thirteen years in private practice before joining the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Carolina in 2018 as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Civil Division. Within eight months of joining the office, she was named Chief of the Civil Division.

Tina is a past chair of the South Carolina Bar's Trial and Appellate Advocacy section and a recipient of the Bar's Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year award. She has taught legal writing at the University of South Carolina School of Law and has actively participated in the school's mentoring programs.

Born in Chicago, Illinois, Tina grew up in Ladson, South Carolina, where she attended public schools. Tina is a 1996 graduate of the College of Charleston and a 2003 graduate of the University of North Carolina School of Law. She is married to Cory Manning, an Iowa native and also a lawyer.