

# Workers' Compensation Law Seminar

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

*by order of presentation*

### **Amanda Mallard**

*Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte, LLC*  
*Columbia, SC*  
*(Course Planner)*

She represents businesses, insurance companies, third-party administrators and self-insured employers before the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Commission and has assisted with arguments before the South Carolina Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court of South Carolina. Amanda is a member of the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Educational Association and the South Carolina Defense Trial Attorneys Association. Greenville Business Magazine has recognized Amanda's work in the area of Workers' Compensation, naming her to the 'Legal Elite of the Upstate' list.

## **Derrick Williams**

*Williams and Roche  
Columbia, SC*

Former Commissioner Derrick L. Williams is one of the youngest-ever to be appointed to the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Commission. He was appointed in March 2007, and he served until January 31, 2013, when he decided to return to private practice. He is responsible for spear-heading the effort to make mediation of workers' compensation available for complex injury by accident cases in South Carolina.

Prior to joining the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Commission, he was an associate at a national law firm based in South Carolina. He practiced in the areas of business litigation, franchise and distribution litigation, and labor and employment.

As a founding partner with Williams & Roche, Derrick's practice is devoted to representing injured workers and serving as a mediator for all civil litigation matters. Derrick is a member of the National Academy Distinguished Neutrals.

Derrick earned a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 2002, where he was a member of the South Carolina Environmental Law Journal. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English in the Honors Program at the College of Charleston in 1999. He ran Cross Country and Track for the College of Charleston, and he was the team captain of both his senior season.

Born in Florence, South Carolina, he and his family moved later to Columbia, South Carolina, where he graduated from Dreher High School. He serves on the Board of Trustees for the College of Charleston, having been elected in April 2024, and serves on the Executive Committee. He is the Past President of the Riverbanks Zoo Society Board. He is the first black President of the College of Charleston Alumni Association and has previously served on the College of Charleston Honors College Advisory Board and the College of Charleston English Department Alumni Advisory Board. He has previously been a member in the American Bar Association, where he was involved in the T.I.P.S. Workers' Compensation Section. He is a member of the John Belton O'Neall American Inn of Court and the Stanford E. Lacy American Inn of Court. Derrick also previously served on the South Carolina Board of Law Examiners. He serves as President of the Richland County Bar Association. He also serves on the Central Carolina Community Foundation Board, where he is the Vice Chair. He was named in the 2024 Edition of the Best Lawyers rankings as "Lawyer of the Year" for his work in Claimants Workers' Compensation Law.

**Shannon Poteat**  
*Robinson Gray Stepp & Laffitte*  
*Columbia, SC*

Shannon Poteat is a seasoned workers' compensation attorney and mediator with more than 30 years of experience representing employers and carriers. A graduate of Emory University and the University of South Carolina School of Law, she has built a respected reputation for her knowledge and leadership in the field. She is a co-author of *The Law of Workers' Compensation in South Carolina*, Second through Fifth Editions—the state's most comprehensive and authoritative resource on workers' compensation law and practice.

Shannon is an active member of the South Carolina Bar and the Richland County Bar Association, and she is deeply engaged in the professional community through her involvement with the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Educational Association, the South Carolina Women Lawyers Association, and the Stanford E. Lacy Workers' Compensation Inn of Court. Her work and leadership have earned consistent recognition, including listings in *Best Lawyers* for Workers' Compensation Law – Employers since 2007, "Lawyer of the Year" in 2022, as well as honors such as *South Carolina Lawyers Weekly*'s "Influential Women in Law" and *Columbia Business Monthly*'s "Legal Elite of the Midlands."

**Jason Lockhart**  
*McAngus Goudelock & Courie, LLC*  
*Columbia, SC*

Jason Lockhart has practiced workers' compensation law for over two decades, having tried hundreds of cases on behalf of employers and carriers before the Commission. Jason strives to understand his clients' business and modifies the handling of their particular case to best achieve his clients' goals. He strives to provide his clients with an honest assessment of their exposure while simultaneously formulating a realistic and systematic plan to best defend their interests in the most cost-effective manner.

Jason has been instrumental in the creation of an evolving business model at MGC, which is designed to satisfy client needs for alternative fee arrangements and increase client value through creation of informed workers' compensation business strategies based on data-driven decisions.

Jason is a member of the Workers' Compensation Council of the South Carolina Bar and the Stanford E. Lacy Workers' Compensation American Inn of Court

Outside of work, Jason spends his time with his wife and two children, as well as watching sports, serving at his church and coaching high school lacrosse.

## **Dewana Looper**

*Atkins Law Firm  
Columbia, SC*

Dewana Looper grew up in Great Falls, South Carolina. She comes from a long line of textile workers and blue-collar workers. If you ask anyone who knew her as a child, they will tell you that as far back as they can remember, Dewana wanted to be a lawyer, and she worked hard to make that dream come true. In 2000, Dewana graduated Valedictorian from Great Falls High School. She then moved to the "big city" of Columbia and attended the University of South Carolina Honors College. A lifelong Gamecocks fan, Dewana fell in love with Columbia. She graduated magna cum laude in 2004 with an English major and took a year off working in a real estate law firm before pursuing her legal education at the University of South Carolina School of Law, where she graduated cum laude in 2008.

Dewana earned the distinction of being appointed to the Order of the Coif (an honor reserved for those graduating in the top 10% of the law school class), the Order of the Wig and Robe, and the Knox Haynsworth Scholarship (for excellence in employment and labor law). Dewana was also a member of the Real Property, Probate & Trust Journal, where she honed her legal writing skills. After law school, Dewana Looper spent roughly 9 years defending businesses and insurance companies in workers' compensation claims before joining Atkins Law Firm in the spring of 2017. Where she devotes her practice to representing injured workers.

Dewana is currently serving as the President for the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Educational Association. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends.

## **Daniel Hayes**

*Hayes Firm, PLLC  
Asheville, NC*

**Daniel W. Hayes** is founder of Hayes Firm, PLLC, a law firm located in Asheville, North Carolina, focused on Medicare settlement consultation. Daniel works with clients to develop strategies to address and resolve Medicare Secondary Payer issues in liability and workers' compensation settlements. The firm's services include preparing Medicare Set-Asides (MSAs) and Medicare Secondary Payer legal opinion letters. Daniel is a graduate of the University of South Carolina Honors College and the USC School of Law. His professional designations include Medicare Set-Aside Certified Consultant (MSACC) and Certified Medicare Secondary Payer Professional (CMSP). In 2015, the South Carolina Bar published his book MEDICARE ISSUES IN LIABILITY AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION SETTLEMENTS. In 2018, Daniel was inducted as a Fellow into the College of Workers' Compensation Lawyers. In 2024, he was named the Best Lawyers® Lawyer of the Year in Asheville, North Carolina, for Workers' Compensation Law - Employers.

## **Kristian Cross**

*Morgan & Morgan  
Columbia, SC*

Kristian Cross is a Columbia, South Carolina native from the suburb of Irmo. She graduated cum laude with departmental honors from Clemson University Honors College in 2004. She earned her Juris Doctor Degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 2007.

Ms. Cross practices in the area of workers' compensation. She joined Morgan & Morgan following nearly 15 years of practice as an insurance defense attorney. While defending corporations and insurance companies, she gained valuable insight and experience, which she now uses to fight for her clients who have been injured.

Ms. Cross is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. She also serves the community through her membership in the Columbia (SC) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, which is a not-for-profit service-oriented organization of women linked in service and friendship to promote and engage in educational, civic and intercultural activities in order to enrich the lives of members and the larger community. She currently serves as the Immediate Past Chair of the South Carolina Bar's Worker's Compensation Section. She has also served the South Carolina Bar and the State for four years as a member of the South Carolina Judicial Merit Selection Commission, which is the panel responsible for evaluating the qualifications and fitness of candidates for all judicial positions on the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Circuit Court, and other state courts that are filled by election of the South Carolina General Assembly.

## **Commissioner T. Scott Beck**

*S.C. Workers' Compensation Commission  
Columbia, SC*

Commissioner Beck was appointed to the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Commission on June 30, 2008, by Governor Mark Sanford. In 2010, he was elected by the Commission as Interim Chairman and subsequently nominated by Governor Nikki Haley for reappointment in 2012, 2014, and 2016 as Chairman. In 2018, 2020, 2022, and 2024, he was re-appointed as Chairman by Governor Henry McMaster. He graduated with a BS Degree from Penn State University in 1981 and from the University of South Carolina School Of Law in 1999. Prior to joining the Commission, he served in various positions in law enforcement from 1979-1996 and most recently as an Assistant Attorney General from 2000-2008 prosecuting healthcare fraud cases. Commissioner Beck served as a City Councilman in North Augusta, South Carolina from 1993-1996, and was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives, serving from 1996-2000. Commissioner Beck currently serves as President of the National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary and Past-President of the Southern Association of Workers' Compensation Administrators. He was inducted as a Fellow by the College of Workers' Compensation Lawyer (CWCL) in 2024 and is also a master member in the Stan Lacy Inn of Court.

**Allison Sullivan**  
*Bluestein, Thompson, Sullivan, LLC*  
*Columbia, SC*

Allison Sullivan is a partner at Bluestein Attorneys, where her practice is concentrated in the areas of workers' compensation, civil tort litigation, and alternative dispute resolution. She earned her B.A. in Political Science from Furman University in 2001 and her J.D. from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 2005.

Allison has been a featured speaker at seminars for a number of organizations including the South Carolina Bar, South Carolina Association for Justice, South Carolina Injured Workers' Advocates, and the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Education Association. She is also a contributing author to the *Law School for Non-Lawyers*, *The Briefcase Lawyer: Essential Information for Every Practitioner*, and *The Law of Workers Compensation in South Carolina*, all publications of the South Carolina Bar.

**Allison Nussbaum**  
*McAngus, Goudelock & Courie, LLC*  
*Mount Pleasant, SC*

Allison Nussbaum has exclusively practiced workers' compensation defense since 2005. As an attorney in MGC's Charleston office, she represents employers, self-insureds and insurance carriers in state courts and before the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Commission. Allison is an active member of national, state and local professional organizations devoted to workers' compensation issues. She also regularly lectures before various organizations on issues related to workers' compensation. Allison is a former law clerk to the Honorable Diane S. Goodstein, Judge of the First Judicial Circuit of South Carolina. Currently, Allison serves as the Workers' Compensation Group Leader for MGC's South Carolina offices. Allison has the distinction of being named an AV Preeminent® attorney by Martindale-Hubbell®.

**EDUCATION:** University of South Carolina School of Law (JD), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (BS with distinction).

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:** Alliance of Women in Workers' Compensation, Charleston County Bar Association, Defense Research Institute (Workers' Compensation Committee), South Carolina Bar Association (Workers' Compensation Section), South Carolina Defense Trial Attorneys' Association, South Carolina Workers' Compensation Educational Association (Educational Conference Committee)

**BAR ADMISSIONS:** South Carolina (2004)