

Construction Law Seminar

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

by order of presentation

Joshua D. Shaw

*Hedrick Gardner Kincheloe & Garofalo, LLP
Columbia, SC
(Course Planner)*

Josh is a litigator and certified circuit court mediator with a statewide practice, devoting the majority of his litigation practice to the construction industry. He currently serves as the Chair for the Construction Law Section of the South Carolina Bar and frequently represents contractors, developers, design professionals, and construction product manufacturers in complicated disputes and litigation. Josh has handled multiple class actions in state and federal court and has successfully defeated class certification. Josh also has extensive experience representing insurance carriers directly, both advising on coverage issues and bringing and defending coverage litigation. Outside the construction context, Josh has defended a wide variety of professional liability matters, including representing attorneys who served as class counsel in underlying class actions. He graduated magna cum laude from the University of South Carolina Honors College in 2005 and magna cum laude from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 2008.

Laura Locklair

*Boyle, Leonard, & Anderson, P.A.
Charleston, SC
(Course Planner)*

Laura Locklair represents policyholders of all stripes and in all contexts relative to risk transfer issues. The bulk of her practice includes advising owners, developers and contractors regarding coverage issues in CGL, builders risk, professional liability, and other policies of insurance in the context of construction disputes. Laura's practice extends from providing advice to insureds on risk management and transfer programming, to presenting and monitoring insurance claim presentation, to coverage litigation and declaratory judgment actions, to bad faith matters. When she is not gleefully reading policies of insurance, Laura enjoys libraries, helicopter parenting her enormous bernedoodle Margot, and spending time as much time as possible with her husband, Jason (whom she begs no one in this seminar to like more than they like Laura) and her angel daughter, Gwennie.

Christy Mahon

*Sweeny Wingate & Barrow, P.A.
Columbia, SC
(Course Planner)*

Christy Mahon is Immediate Past Chair of the South Carolina Bar Construction Law Section. She has been the past Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Section Delegate for the South Carolina Bar Construction Law Section. She has been named to the South Carolina Lawyers Weekly "Power List" for Construction Law. She is a member of the South Carolina Defense Trial Attorneys' Association, and the Defense Research Institute. Christy has been recognized as a "Super Lawyer" and a "Rising Star" by Super Lawyers® (see [Methodology](#)). She is a member of the FDCC.

Christy's practice areas include construction law, products liability, general insurance defense, premises liability, insurance coverage litigation, and appellate advocacy. Prior to joining the firm, she was a staff attorney for the Supreme Court of South Carolina. She is a summa cum laude graduate from both undergraduate and law school. She was external editor and articles editor for the Law Review, recipient of the Outstanding Scholastic Achievement Award, and recipient of the Corpus Juris Secundum Awards in Contracts, Property, Civil Procedure, and Torts.

Christy is a certified civil and family court mediator.

The Honorable Walton J. McLeod

*S.C. Circuit Court
Lexington, SC*

Judge McLeod was elected by the South Carolina General Assembly in February 2018 as a resident judge for the Eleventh Judicial Circuit. After graduating from Episcopal High School in 1997, he attended Tulane University and graduated in 2001 with a B.A. in History. He was commissioned as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy through the Tulane NROTC. During his active-duty service from 2001-2005, Judge McLeod graduated from Surface Warfare Officers School and served aboard USS THORN (DD-988) and USS MITSCHER (DDG-57).

Judge McLeod graduated from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 2008 and served as a law clerk to the Circuit Judge James R. Barber, III. After his clerkship, Judge McLeod entered private practice, focusing on civil litigation.

Judge McLeod is a member of the South Carolina Bar, Lexington County Bar, Richland County Bar and Newberry County Bar Associations. He is a graduate of the S.C. Bar Leadership Academy and served as Chair for the S.C. Bar Convention Committee from 2016-2018. Judge McLeod previously served in the S.C. Bar House of Delegates and is a 2015 graduate of Leadership Columbia and an Eagle Scout.

Judge McLeod has been admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of South Carolina, U.S. District Court of South Carolina, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

Henry “Hank” P. Wall

Bruner Powell

Columbia, SC

Hank Wall attended Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Virginia, and graduated from Washington and Lee University in 1981. He graduated from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1984 and began working initially the Attorney Honors Program in the Office of Chief Counsel, United States Army Corps of Engineers in Washington, D.C.

Hank Wall was later assigned to the 101st Airborne Division Staff Judge Advocate's office, and he was appointed as a Special Assistant United States Attorney for the Districts of Kentucky and Tennessee. He focused on federal procurement, administrative law, and construction litigation in the Army until 1987 where he resigned his commission as Captain and entered private practice.

Mr. Wall is a member of the American Bar Association, Public Contract Law Section and the Forum on the Construction Industry; American Arbitration Association Panel of Construction and Commercial Arbitrators; South Carolina Bar, Construction Law Section, and the Richland County Bar Association. In addition, Hank is a Pro Bono Volunteer and Trial Counsel for the United States District Court and frequently teaches and lectures to Various Bar Associations and Sections, Construction Trade and Professional organizations, among Non-profits and Christian organizations.

Hank Wall has been admitted to the South Carolina Bar, District of South Carolina, Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, Court of Federal Claims, and Federal Circuit Court of Appeals.

Elizabeth Wieters

Hall Booth Smith, P.C.

Charleston, SC

Elizabeth Wieters is a Partner in our Charleston, South Carolina office. She focuses her practice on insurance coverage and construction litigation. Elizabeth represents insurance carriers as their coverage counsel under various lines of insurance. She handles complex matters that implicate coverage defenses. She also represents insurer clients in declaratory judgment actions in state and federal court and defends insurance carriers in coverage litigation. Elizabeth represents general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, owners, sureties, and design professionals in the context of construction litigation. She has been involved in all phases of resolving construction conflicts, from pre-suit payment dispute workouts to multiparty, complex construction defect litigation.

Elizabeth has been practicing law in the Lowcountry over a decade. Prior to joining HBS, she served as law clerk to the Honorable Steven H. John in the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit of South Carolina and as an intern to the Honorable David C. Norton in United States District Court for the District of South Carolina.

Originally from Greenville, SC, Elizabeth attended The University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, where she earned a B.A. in Political Science. She received her J.D. from the Charleston School of Law in 2009. While in law school, she served as the Articles Editor for Federal Courts Law Review and as the Development Editor for MALABU, the Maritime Law Bulletin.

Jennifer Syssa

*Builders Mutual
Summerville, SC*

Jennifer Syssa is an insurance professional and licensed attorney with over 20 years of experience handling complex, high-stakes construction defect litigation across the country. Jennifer began her career practicing law in Connecticut, advocating for clients in personal injury and workers' compensation cases. Her transition into insurance claims brought legal insight and an analytical approach to resolving challenging disputes.

In her role as a Senior Litigation Specialist at Builders Mutual Insurance Company, she collaborates closely with defense and coverage counsel on litigation strategy and resolution efforts for construction defect and coverage disputes throughout South Carolina.

She earned her Juris Doctor from Quinnipiac University School of Law and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Central Connecticut State University. Jennifer is admitted to the Connecticut Bar, is a licensed claims adjuster in multiple states, and holds the Senior Claim Law Associate (SCLA) and Construction Risk and Insurance Specialist (CRIS) designations.

Bryan Kelley

*Elmore, Goldsmith, Kelley, & deHoll, P.A.
Greenville, SC*

Bryan represents a wide range of general contractors, subcontractors, developers, and surety companies in North and South Carolina. He primarily practices in the areas of construction law and surety claims and disputes. Bryan assists clients in the areas of contract drafting and negotiation, claim avoidance, mechanic's liens, bond claims, payment claims, scheduling and delay issues, change order disputes, and procurement matters. He has served as Chairman of the Bar's Construction Law Section and is a co-author of the Section's Construction Law Deskbook. He has lectured on a variety of construction topics for legal and industry groups including Carolinas Associated General Contractors, and regularly presents the construction law update at the annual meeting of the construction section of the South Carolina Bar.