

## 2024 CONFERENCE AGENDA



### Thursday, April 11, 2024      Annual Conference CLE & Welcome Reception

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

#### **Finding Common Ground: Candid Conversations – Aftermath of Affirmative Action in 2024**

Description: In June 2023, the United States Supreme Court issued a landmark decision in *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College* holding that explicit consideration of race in the college admissions process violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the United States Constitution. More recently, in early 2024, the Supreme Court declined to take a case challenging high school admissions procedures that were designed to increase diversity but did not explicitly consider race. Nearly one year after the decision in *Students for Fair Admissions*, there is uncertainty in law offices and legal departments about how to proceed with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs and initiatives. This panel will discuss the practical ramifications of the Supreme Court's rulings on law schools/universities, law firms, and businesses as they continue to try to ensure diversity in their student bodies and work forces while complying with new legal standards governing the constitutionality of such diversity initiatives.

Participants in this program will gain a better understanding of:

- the current state of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs in the legal profession;
- what these Supreme Court decisions mean for DEI programs going forward; and
- the practical policies and best practices to continue to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in your law office and the legal profession.

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2:10 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.

### **Finding Common Ground - How A Bill Becomes a Law in A Partisan Environment**

Description: A key to the importance of the lawyer's role in shaping and affecting legislation may be found by examining the lawyer's historic impact on the laws of past generations. This panel discussion will examine the role of lawyers in drafting, shaping and interpreting laws and how lawmaking occurs in times of intense partisanship. A mixed panel of Democratic and Republican Ohio lawmakers will walk through the legislative process while discussing how they collaborated to overcome party partisanship to pass important legislation. Specific legislation that will be discussed include:

- House Bill 136, which barred the death penalty from being applied to individuals who are mentally ill. The legislation was modeled after recommendations made by the Ohio Supreme Court's Death Penalty Task Force in 2014, sponsored by panelist Rep. Bill Seitz, and was ultimately signed into law in 2021.
- The Scouts' Honor Bill (H.B. 35), sponsored by panelist Jessica Miranda and unanimously passed by the Ohio House of Representatives. This bill, signed into law in 2023, eliminated the statute of limitations for victims of childhood sexual abuse participating in a bankruptcy settlement, and thereby allowed more survivors of abuse by the Boy Scouts of America to participate in the national bankruptcy settlement and a greater opportunity to receive compensation for their harms.

3:20 p.m. – 4:20 p.m.

### **Panel No. 3: Finding Common Ground - Building a Bridge With Executive Leadership**

Description: This panel discussion will educate attendees on the role of in-house legal counsel in "bridging the gap" between complex legal requirements and executive goals. These include a variety of scenarios, including:

- Explaining complex legal compliance obligations to non-lawyers in the business setting;

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- Managing executive leadership expectations regarding the litigation process;
- Managing outside counsel while supporting outside counsel's role; and
- Navigating the "attorney-client" relationship in the in-house context.

The panelists will discuss their nuanced approaches to managing the sometimes-competing interests between the business professionals and the legal professionals. In-house counsel must navigate between outside counsel and the business decision-makers within their companies, and this panel will explore how the panelists find that common ground.

4:20 p.m. – 5:20 p.m.

### **Finding Common Ground – Increasing Access to Capital for Women**

**Description:** This panel is composed of highly experienced banking and finance attorneys and business professionals who represent government entities, banking and financial institutions, non-profit agencies, and consumers. This panel discussion will provide an overview of the legal and regulatory landscape in the consumer finance industry and the obstacles that women and people of color encounter in accessing capital for personal and business endeavors. Attendees will gain an understanding of the different laws that govern the consumer finance industry, what those laws cover, and which regulatory agencies are responsible for interpreting and enforcing them. They will also explore tools for breaking down barriers that disproportionately impact women and people of color.

5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

### **WELCOME RECEPTION**

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### **FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE CLE & AWARDS LUNCHEON**

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. **Finding Common Ground: Addressing the Immigration Crisis**

Description: The vast majority of people in this country share common ground on immigration. For example:

- 93 percent of Americans agree that welcoming people from different cultures is an important part of American life.
- Three-in-five support permanent legal status for Dreamers — people who were brought to the U.S. as children and are now contributing to our country.
- 75 percent of Americans support doing more to secure the border.

This panel will explore the legal framework of the U.S. Immigration system, how immigration impacts Ohio, and how immigration status, ethnicity and country of origin impacts the life chances and social well-being of individuals who seek to find a new home in the United States.

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. **Finding Common Ground: Alternative Dispute Resolution and the Remaining Role of the Jury Trial**

Description: This panel will discuss the backlog in the civil trial system and provide an overview of a variety of creative mechanisms available to litigants as alternatives to a civil jury trial and address the pros and cons of each. The panelists will discuss whether there are some cases for which there are potential benefits for the legal system and litigants of sometimes proceeding to a “day in court,” and some cases for which private dispute resolution would be more beneficial. The discussion will address considerations of time, cost, the nature of the case, the selection of the decision-maker and/or dispute-resolution facilitator, and other factors. Methods of dispute resolution to be included in the discussion will include private mediation, private arbitration, court-sponsored mediation programs, Ohio's private judging statute (R.C. 2701.10), bench trials, trials before a magistrate, and jury trials.

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10:40 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.

### **Finding Common Ground - Keeping Women Safe from Violence and Harassment**

Description: Between July 2021 and June 2022, approximately 30% of Ohio counties had a fatal incident of domestic violence and over 40% of domestic violence cases resulted in multiple fatalities. Numerous recent studies have found that the lockdowns related to COVID-19 likely increased the risk factors for domestic violence, namely increased financial stressors due to job loss and a lack of separation for those in risky relationships, leading the United Nations to call domestic violence the shadow pandemic.

Moreover, data gathered in the legal profession demonstrates that incidents of sexual harassment continue to plague the legal profession in surprising ways.

This session will survey a variety of initiatives to safeguard women who experience domestic violence and/or sexual harassment. Panelists will discuss:

- The growing evidence that sexual harassment remains pervasive among Ohio lawyers.
- Efforts to create safe havens to report instances of sexual harassment in the legal profession.
- Statewide legislative efforts to provide greater support and protection for survivors of domestic violence.
- Domestic violence programs available throughout Ohio that offer services such as training, rape crisis resources, legal assistance, and prevention programming.
- Legal resources for victims of domestic violence, including for example, the types of protection orders available and steps victims can take to get one; basic family law concepts when the victim and aggressor are married; child custody considerations; and housing assistance.

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11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

### **AWARDS LUNCHEON**

Keynote Speaker: Michelle Simpson Tuegel, Simpson Tuegel Law Firm