



# FDLA's 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Liability Claims Conference

June 10-12, 2026

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# CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE



## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2026

3:00-5:00	FDLA Board Meeting	Saybrook Room
5:00-6:00	Past Presidents Meeting	Saybrook Room

## THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2026

### SESSIONS

7:00-7:55	Breakfast - <i>Sponsored by Matrix Mediation</i>	Newport East
7:55-8:00	Opening Remarks	Newport West
8:00-9:00	From First Notice to Final Verdict: Leveraging Artificial Intelligence in Modern Liability Defense	Newport West
9:00-10:00	Case Law Update	Newport West
9:00-10:00	Beyond the Profile: Social Media, Preservation, and Fraud Networks	GH Salons 1-2
9:00-10:00	A Forensic Exploration of Communication, Coordination, and Collaboration Breakdowns in Construction	GH Salons 3-4
10:00-10:15	Networking Break - <i>Sponsored by Support Claims Services</i>	Newport East
10:15-11:15	Appealing Before the End: A Trial Lawyer's Guide to Appeals of Non-Final Orders under Rule 9.130	Newport West
10:15-11:15	Medical Malpractice Verdicts in Florida: The Post-Cap Landscape, Arbitration Strategies, and Defense-Side Solutions	GH Salons 1-2
10:15-11:15	Wind vs. Storm Surge Damage: Case Studies from Hurricane Helene	GH Salons 3-4
11:15-12:15	The Fruitful Impasse: Creative Ways To Mediate When One Door Closes	Newport West
11:15-12:15	Defending Traumatic Brain Injury Claims	GH Salons 1-2
11:15-12:15	Own the Nerds: Construction & Premises Liability Expert Witnesses	GH Salons 3-4
12:15-1:30	Lunch - <i>Sponsored by Root Cause Consulting</i>	Newport East
1:30-2:00	Members Business Meeting and FDLA Awards	Newport West
2:00-3:00	The Reality of VR in Litigation	Newport West
3:00-3:15	Networking Break - <i>Sponsored by Nelson</i>	Newport East
3:15-4:15	When AI Becomes the Researcher: Ethics and Risk in Modern Legal Practice	Newport West
3:15-4:15	Biomechanical Expert Admissibility in Florida and Federal Courts	GH Salons 1-2
3:15-4:15	Shifting Foundations: Trends for 2026 Florida Construction Defect Cases	GH Salons 3-4
4:15-5:15	SIU, Claims & Litigation Technology in the 21st Century	Newport West
4:15-5:15	I work at Wing Stop but Was Thinking About Getting Neurosurgery Certified: Strategies for Countering Wage Loss Claims and Work Life Expectancy in Personal Injury	GH Salons 1-2
4:15-5:15	Unfogging Your Defense of Window Claims – Window Failures Explained	GH Salons 3-4
5:30-7:00	Welcome Reception - <i>Sponsored by AccuMed</i>	Atlantic Dance Hall

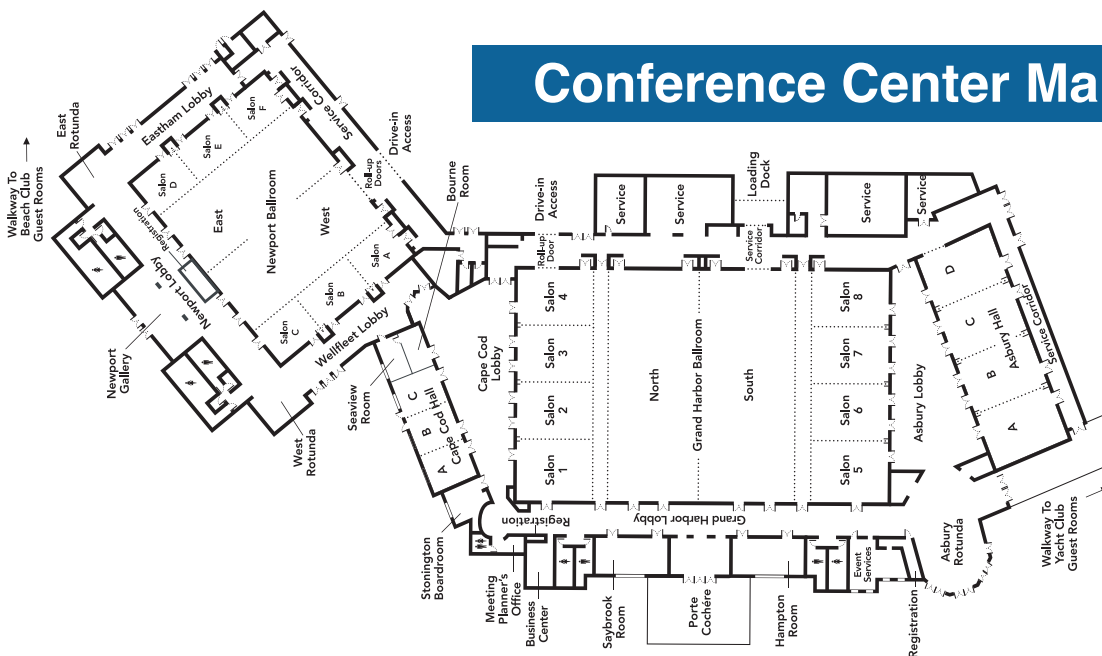
# CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE



**FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 2026**

## SESSIONS

<b>7:00-8:15</b>	<b>Breakfast and Character Meet and Greet - <i>Sponsored by LCS Record Retrieval</i></b>	<b>Newport East</b>
8:15-9:15	Disarming the Expert: Strategic Cross-Examination in Florida Civil Trials	<b>Newport West</b>
9:15-10:15	Building Your Defensive Line: Using Technology, Social Media, and Old School Surveillance to Combat Soft Fraud	<b>Newport West</b>
9:15-10:15	Complex Regional Pain Syndrome: Medical Insights Every Attorney Needs to Know	<b>GH Salons 1-2</b>
9:15-10:15	Open, Obvious, and Objectively not Dangerous: Why Uneven Floors, Parking Lots, and Walkways Cannot Form the Basis of Liability	<b>GH Salons 3-4</b>
<b>10:15-10:30</b>	<b>Networking Break - <i>Sponsored by Shadow Investigations</i></b>	<b>Newport East</b>
10:30-11:30	How to Anticipate and Counter Emerging Plaintiff's Tactics in Jury Selection	<b>Newport West</b>
10:30-11:30	Forensic Accounting in Complex Personal Injury Matters	<b>GH Salons 1-2</b>
10:30-11:30	Supporting the Next Generation: Connecting with Associates	<b>GH Salons 3-4</b>
11:30-12:30	AI Is Remaking Insurance Defense—Here's What Changes Beyond Case Work	<b>Newport West</b>
11:30-12:30	Human Factors in Liability Cases: Understanding How People Perceive, Decide, and Act in Real-World Environments	<b>GH Salons 1-2</b>
11:30-12:30	Forensic Biomechanics in Motor Vehicle Accidents	<b>GH Salons 3-4</b>
<b>12:30-1:45</b>	<b>Lunch and Sponsor Raffle - <i>Sponsored by DigiStream Investigations</i></b>	<b>Newport East</b>



# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

## THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2026

**7:00-7:55 Registration and Full Breakfast** *Newport East*  
*Sponsored by Matrix Mediation*

**7:55-8:00 Opening Remarks** *Newport West*

**8:00-9:00**

### **From First Notice to Final Verdict: Leveraging Artificial Intelligence in Modern Liability Defense**

*Newport West*

This session outlines how to use AI across the life of a claim, from first notice through trial. It covers risk assessment, evidence preservation, fraud detection, discovery management, expert strategy, damages evaluation, and ethical guardrails, with a focus on practical tools that strengthen investigations, sharpen litigation decisions, and preserve sound professional judgment.

Patrick Boland, *Managing Partner*  
Luks, Santaniello, Petrillo, Cohen & Peterfriend

Gregg Koff, *Vice President of Litigation & Claims*  
Harbor Claims, LLC

Tabitha Jackson, *Jr. Partner*  
Luks, Santaniello, Petrillo, Cohen & Peterfriend

Tanaz Salehi, *Founding Shareholder and Managing Partner*  
Salehi Boyer Lavigne Lombana, P.A.

**9:00-10:00**

### **Case Law Update**

*Newport West*

An update on recent Florida case law developments affecting civil litigation and insurance-related disputes. The program highlights significant appellate decisions from the past year, with emphasis on how courts are addressing recurring procedural and substantive issues that directly impact day-to-day litigation strategy for insurance defense lawyers. Topics include evolving standards for pleading and proof, summary judgment practice, jurisdictional challenges, preservation and waiver of defenses, stays and parallel proceedings, bad-faith and coverage disputes, and remedies and damages. The seminar also examines trends in judicial reasoning and areas where courts have clarified, limited, or expanded prior precedent. The presenters will discuss the most important decisions in first-party and third-party coverage, liability, and extra-contractual.

Mihaela Cabulea, *Partner*  
Butler Weihmuller Katz Craig LLP

Ezequiel Lugo, *Shareholder*  
Banker Lopez Gassler P.A.

### **Beyond the Profile: Social Media, Preservation, and Fraud Networks**

*GH Salons 1-2*

Social media evidence plays a critical role in modern insurance litigation, yet surface-level searches often miss key information or target the wrong individual altogether. This presentation focuses on a process-driven approach that begins with proper identification, followed by defensible preservation of digital evidence. It also introduces how advanced investigative techniques, such as NetMapping and connected claim analysis, enhance fraud detection by identifying relationships between claimants, participants, and healthcare providers. Attendees will learn how combining these methods strengthens litigation strategy in auto liability, general liability, and workers' compensation cases.

Taylor Perri President SPI Investigations

Austin Powell, *Strategic Growth Officer / Junior Partner*  
Luks, Santaniello, Petrillo, Cohen & Peterfriend

### **A Forensic Exploration of Communication, Coordination, and Collaboration Breakdowns in Construction**

*GH Salons 3-4*

Communication, coordination, and collaboration are often proclaimed as the "Three Cs to Success" for project managers and construction projects. When project managers are proficient in the Three Cs, projects are more likely to be completed on time, within budget, and with minimal to no defects. This session presents a forensic case study where breakdowns in the Three Cs ultimately resulted in multiple project delays and a myriad of construction defects. The findings from this study discuss project managements culpability for the project failures and evaluate how breakdowns in the Three Cs could have been averted to prevent early onset issues from cascading into costly delays and defects.

Cliff D. Bishop, Ph.D., P.E., S.E., *Principal Engineer*  
Exponent

Leonidas Emmenegger, Ph.D., P.E., *Senior Engineer*  
Exponent

**10:00-10:15 Networking Break** *Newport East*  
*Sponsored by Support Claims Services*

**10:15-11:15**

### **Appealing Before the End: A Trial Lawyer's Guide to Appeals of Non-Final Orders under Rule 9.130**

*Newport West*

In the middle of the fight and need to appeal a non-final order? This program provides trial lawyers the ability to easily identify what non-final orders can be immediately appealed under Florida Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.130 and how to do it. The presentation will also cover how to stay the non-final order while it is on appeal and the trickier parts of Rule 9.130.

Petra Justice, *Shareholder*  
Banker Lopez Gassler P.A.

DeeAnn McLemore, *Shareholder*  
Banker Lopez Gassler P.A.

### **Medical Malpractice Verdicts in Florida: The Post-Cap Landscape, Arbitration Strategies, and Defense-Side Solutions**

*GH Salons 1-2*

Florida medical malpractice litigation is entering a volatile era. With caps on non-economic damages gone, plaintiffs' counsel are pursuing larger verdicts through aggressive trial themes, venue selection, and procedural maneuvering. At the same time, Chapter 766 arbitration faces sustained attacks as plaintiffs develop strategies to avoid or undermine its damage limits. This seminar examines rising verdicts, uncapped damages, arbitration's protections, efforts to bypass them, and practical defense strategies to reduce exposure.

Mark Berlick, *Partner*  
Bolin Law Group

Brandon Blake, *Partner*  
Bolin Law Group

William Large, *President*  
Florida Justice Reform Institute

# THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2026

## Wind vs. Storm Surge Damage: Case Studies from Hurricane Helene

### GH Salons 3-4

This course provides an overview of the field adjuster's (or inspector's) role in recognizing wind and storm surge related damage to residential coastal buildings. A basic overview of hurricanes, wind events and how winds and waves affect properties is also presented. Multiple key facts are discussed in order to draw a clear conclusion between wind- and wave-related damage to residential coastal structures.

Dr. Manuel A. Matus, PhD, PE, *Civil & Structural Engineer*  
DDA Forensics

Asika K. Patel, *Partner*  
Quintairos, Prieto, Wood & Boyer P.A.

Dr. Krishna Sai Vutukuru, PhD, PE, DFE *Civil & Structural Engineer*  
DDA Forensics

## 11:15-12:15

## The Fruitful Impasse: Creative Ways To Mediate When One Door Closes

### Newport West

This session shows defense counsel and claims professionals how to move a case toward resolution even after mediation stalls. It covers practical tools such as mediator's proposals, proposals for settlement, partial settlements, updated mediation rules, and strategic information management to narrow issues, reset expectations, and create paths to settlement when traditional negotiations break down.

Jamie Combee Novaes, *Partner*  
Butler Weihmuller Katz Craig LLP

Athina Lehovitis, *Associate*  
Galloway Johnson Tompkins Burr & Smith

Sarah Zabe, *President*  
MAZE Resolutions, PA

## Defending Traumatic Brain Injury Claims

### GH Salons 1-2

Since Florida's tort reform, traumatic brain injury claims have surged, and plaintiffs' counsel are refining how they build and present these cases through trial. This course helps defense lawyers understand that playbook, from discovery and deposition strategy to jury selection, experts, demonstratives, medical exams, and tactics used to drive larger verdicts in claimed TBI cases.

Daniel Martinez, *Partner*  
Segundo Law Group

Emily Silver, *Partner*  
Segundo Law Group

Jennifer Worden, *Partner*  
Segundo Law Group

## Own the Nerds: Construction & Premises Liability Expert Witnesses

### GH Salons 3-4

Whether they're working for you or against you, expert witnesses can further your understanding of a construction case. This course reviews best practices to value- add your time spent with experts whether it's in

depositions, report review, or onsite inspection. We'll discuss working with Architects and Engineers, Construction Cost Estimators, General and Building Contractors, as well as Premises Liability experts.

Tyler Cooney, *Associate*  
Moore Ingram Johnson & Steele Whether

Andrew Schrader, *Principal Structural Engineer*  
Recon Response Engineering

12:15-1:30 Lunch Newport East  
*Sponsored by Root Cause Consulting*

1:30-2:00 Members Business Meeting Newport West  
& FDLA Awards

2:00-3:00

## The Reality of VR in Litigation

### Newport West

Virtual reality has long been associated with entertainment, but advances in hardware and growing acceptance of technology in the courtroom have made VR a practical litigation tool. As 3D graphics have become standard analytical and demonstrative tools, VR represents the next evolution, adding an immersive, real-time dimension to proven workflows.

Frank Ramos, *Partner*  
Goldberg Segalla

John Swanson, *Discipline Lead Imaging Sciences*  
SEA, Ltd.

3:00-3:15 Networking Break Newport East  
*Sponsored by Nelson*

3:15-4:15

## When AI Becomes the Researcher: Ethics and Risk in Modern Legal Practice

### Newport West

As AI becomes embedded in legal research and discovery, ethical responsibility remains with the legal professional. This session explores ethical duties, risk exposure, and best practices for using AI-assisted research tools in a defensible, compliant manner within claims and litigation contexts.

Andy Bolin, *Partner*  
Bolin Law Group

Nathan Svec, *CEO*  
Paralegal Genius

## Biomechanical Expert Admissibility in Florida and Federal Courts

### GH Salons 1-2

This presentation will discuss biomechanical expert admissibility both in Federal and Florida State Courts, with a focus on a recent decision in *Clark v. Hahn* out of Florida's Fifth District Court of Appeals.

Miguel Acosta, *Executive Office for Immigration Review*  
Department of Justice

Stephanie Pasquesi, PhD, PE, *Managing Engineer*  
Explico

## Shifting Foundations: Trends for 2026 Florida Construction Defect Cases

### GH Salons 3-4

This presentation will allow practitioners to understand the current landscape of construction defect litigation from both a legal and expert perspective. This course will provide insurance defense professionals with the tools to navigate this evolving area of litigation and defend litigation with a cutting edge understanding of the recent trends.

Ian Ronderos, *Senior Partner*  
Walton Lantaff Schroeder & Carson

Jessica Serota, *Senior Consultant/Engineer Manager*  
FCG Associates

4:15-5:15

## SIU, Claims & Litigation Technology in the 21st Century

### Newport West

This course provides insurance and legal professionals with a comprehensive overview of modern court reporting and litigation video technologies that support SIU investigations, claims handling, and litigation strategy. Participants will gain valuable insight into how video technology and litigation intelligence tools can enhance credibility assessment, strengthen fraud detection, and improve early case evaluation. The program highlights practical applications that facilitate earlier settlement discussions, reduce overall litigation costs and trial volume, and enhance collaboration and operational efficiency. Attendees will also learn how integrated collaboration technologies can centralize case resources, streamline communication, and ensure all stakeholders remain informed, aligned, and positioned to make timely, strategic decisions throughout the claim's lifecycle.

Raymond J. Carabotta, Jr. *Co-Owner & Executive VP*  
Universal Court Reporting

Jarred Dichek, *Equity Partner*  
Kubicki Draper

Tim O'Neil, *National Director of Client Relationships*  
Universal Court Reporting

Carlos Torres, *SIU Manager*  
Loyalty Underwriters

## I work at Wing Stop but Was Thinking About Getting Neurosurgery Certified: Strategies for Countering Wage Loss Claims and Work Life Expectancy in Personal Injury

### GH Salons 1-2

This session examines how to assess and challenge wage loss claims that often accompany large life care plans. It focuses on five core issues: actual work disruption, earning capacity, occupational change, future earnings growth and discount rates, and work life expectancy and productivity, giving defense counsel and adjusters a practical framework to evaluate claimed economic losses.

Francesca Naumann, *Associate*  
Thompson Miller

Chandra Miller, *Partner*  
Thompson Miller

Cara Scheibling, MBA, *President & Principal*  
Avalon Health Economics

John E. Schneider, Ph.D., *CEO & Principal*  
Avalon Health Economics

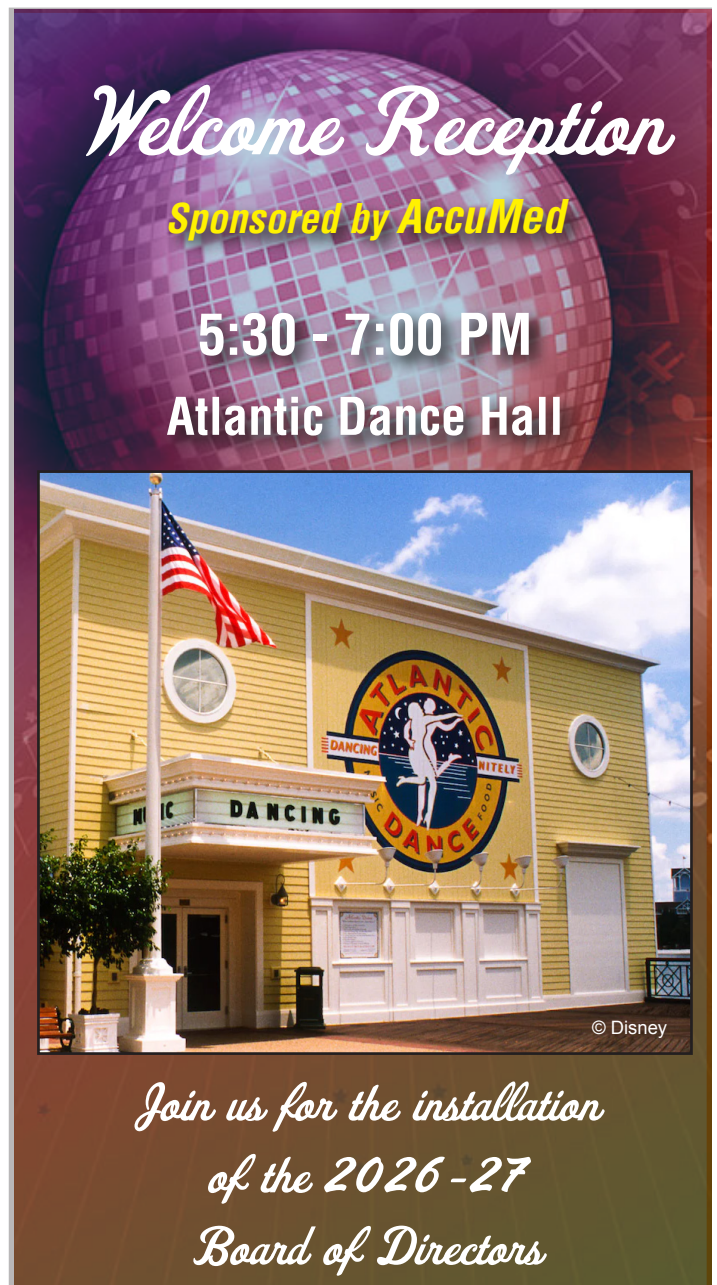
## Unfogging Your Defense of Window Claims – Window Failures Explained

### GH Salons 3-4

This course is designed for insurance adjusters, attorneys, and building professionals engaged in first-party property insurance defense. Participants will gain a practical understanding of window and sliding glass door performance, construction, and common failure mechanisms. Through technical explanations and case-based examples, attendees will learn how to differentiate age-related, installation, and manufacturing issues from legitimate storm-related damage. The course will cover key window terminology, glazing technologies, sealant systems, and recognizable signs of component failure, concluding with field application tips and expert insights.

David Grindley, PE, MCE, *Principal Engineer, Partner*  
Grindley Williams Engineering

Jonathan Williams, PE, *Principal Engineer, Partner*  
Grindley Williams Engineering



Join us for the installation  
of the 2026-27  
Board of Directors

**7:00-8:15 Breakfast and Character Meet and Greet**

**Newport East**

*Sponsored by LCS Record Retrieval*

**8:15-9:15**

## **Disarming the Expert: Strategic Cross-Examination in Florida Civil Trials**

### ***Newport West***

This presentation provides a practical framework for preparing and executing effective cross-examination of adverse expert witnesses in Florida civil trials. Attendees will learn techniques to expose bias, challenge methodology, and undermine credibility without alienating the jury.

Yasir Billoo, *Managing Partner*  
International Law Partners

**9:15-10:15**

## **Building Your Defensive Line: Using Technology, Social Media, and Old School Surveillance to Combat Soft Fraud**

### ***Newport West***

These case studies demonstrate how modern claim defense is no longer limited to depositions, CMEs, and paper discovery. When properly coordinated, social media intelligence and targeted surveillance become force multipliers that can reshape valuation, settlement posture, and trial outcomes. What matters most is not just finding activity, but finding contradictions that undermine credibility.

David Tanner, *President*  
Your Special Investigation Unit

## **Complex Regional Pain Syndrome: Medical Insights Every Attorney Needs to Know**

### ***GH Salons 1-2***

This presentation provides attorneys with a clear, medically grounded understanding of Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS). It explains how CRPS develops, how it is diagnosed, and why early recognition matters. Participants will learn key clinical features, relevant diagnostic tools, and practical insights for evaluating CRPS in personal injury and disability cases.

Jonathan Kamerlink, *MD Expert*  
JRK Consulting LLC

## **Open, Obvious, and Objectively not Dangerous: Why Uneven Floors, Parking Lots, and Walkways Cannot Form the Basis of Liability**

### ***GH Salons 3-4***

This presentation will provide effective practice tips on why uneven floor levels, whether found in a sunken foyer at home, steps, or a mis-leveled concrete seam, cannot form the basis for a property owner's liability. This presentation considers the legal doctrines and defenses available to private and public property owners alike.

Lourdes Espino Wydler, *Managing Partner*  
Wydler Law

Alandra Tejedor, *Associate*  
Wydler Law

**10:15-10:30 Networking Break**

***Newport East***

*Sponsored by Shadow Investigations*

**10:30-11:30**

## **How to Anticipate and Counter Emerging Plaintiff's Tactics in Jury Selection**

### ***Newport West***

Drawing on his experience as a former plaintiff's attorney for more than 8 years, the presenter will discuss developing trends and techniques used in voir dire from the plaintiff's side including Nick Rowley's "Brutal Honesty" approach focused on building meaningful connections with the venire during jury selection as well as Keith Mitnik's "pie judging contest" framework for developing cause-challenges. Drawing on recent defense-side trial experience, he will present relevant Florida case law and arguments for countering the growing trend by plaintiffs to over-simplify the standard for cause-challenges and offer suggestions for adopting and employing some of the most effective techniques being used against the defense today.

John Rogers, *Attorney*  
Ferrainolo Allen

## **Forensic Accounting in Complex Personal Injury Matters**

### ***GH Salons 1-2***

This presentation provides a concise, real-world look at how forensic accountants support complex personal injury and economic damages cases, starting with what to expect from effective expert witnesses and their role alongside counsel. It then uses brief, targeted case studies to show how financial inconsistencies, flawed methodologies, improper assumptions, and misunderstandings of tax and reporting can undermine wage loss, business interruption, wrongful death, and valuation claims. The focus throughout is on practical analysis, common sense application of financial data, and delivering defensible opinions.

Thomas Garland, *CPA Partner*  
Citrin Cooperman

Lauren Pulver, *CPA Manager*  
Citrin Cooperman

## **Supporting the Next Generation: Connecting with Associates**

### ***GH Salons 3-4***

This panel-style presentation will explore communication best practices from the perspectives of a senior partner and newer associate. The discussion will focus on the communication styles of different generations and effective strategies to avoid communication breakdowns. Topics to be discussed include the hiring process, perceptions of defense work among newer lawyers, work-life balance issues after hiring, and mentoring.

Erica R. Cagan, *Associate*  
Marshall Dennehey

James P. Hanratty, *Office Managing Attorney/Shareholder*  
Marshall Dennehey

11:30-12:30

## AI Is Remaking Insurance Defense—Here's What Changes Beyond Case Work

### *Newport West*

You've heard about AI for case analysis. Now let's talk about what really matters: how AI transforms your firm's economics, your talent strategy, and your competitive position. We'll explore the ripple effects—why alternative fee arrangements suddenly make sense, how AI changes what clients value (and pay for), why your staffing pyramid is about to flip, and how to market capabilities without giving away your edge. This isn't futurism. These changes are happening now. Firms that understand the full scope of AI's impact will thrive. Those who see it as just another tech tool won't.

Andrew Anderson, *Co-Founder*  
OraClaim

Mark Tepper, *Co-Founder*  
OraClaim

## Human Factors in Liability Cases: Understanding How People Perceive, Decide, and Act in Real-World Environments

### *GH Salons 1-2*

This talk explores how human factors analysis clarifies perception, attention, expectations, and decision-making in premises liability incidents, with supporting examples from product use and motor vehicle events. The talk will explain how environmental conditions and human behavior interact and how these principles strengthen causation analysis, risk evaluation, and case strategy.

Michelle Feduccia, PE *Regional Lead*  
J.S. Held

Dr. Phillip Jasper, *Human Factors Psychologist*  
J.S. Held

Cody McNair, *Senior Project Manager and Accredited Traffic Accident Reconstructionist*  
J.S. Held

## Forensic Biomechanics in Motor Vehicle Accidents

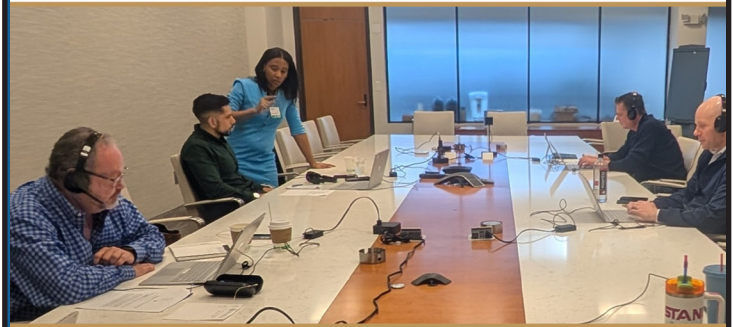
### *GH Salons 3-4*

This presentation provides attorneys an overview of the forensic biomechanics process of investigating motor vehicle accidents to make a determination on injury causation. Case studies involving common low speed accident scenarios – rear end accidents and sideswipe accidents – will be presented.

Hunter Witt, *Accident Reconstructionist/Biomechanist*  
Aperture



## Pro Bono Opportunity- Mobile Helpline



June 11, 2026  
8AM - 4 PM  
**Seaview Room**

Onsite Training and Support Provided

- Answer a call
- Provide legal advice
- Empower a client

*Change a life*

12:30-1:45 **Lunch and Sponsor Raffle** *Newport East*  
*Sponsored by Digistream Investigations*