



**FRIDAY-SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20-21, 2015**  
**Melia Paradisus Palma Real, Punta Cana,**  
**Dominican Republic**

**Friday, November 20, 2015**

**7:15 – 8:15 Registration**

**8:15 – 8:30 Welcome remarks**

**Jacqueline L. Watson, Chapter Chair**

**8:30 – 9:20 *!Hey Amigo, Bienvenidos a Hispaniola! By the Way How Did You Get Your Green Card?: Snags in Naturalization Cases and How to Deal With Them (0.25 ethics)***

**Bruce A. Coane, *Coane and Associates, PLLC, Houston, TX and Miami Beach, FL***

Bruce Coane received a Bachelor of Arts Degree with Honors from Penn State University in 1979. He received a Juris Doctor Degree in Law from the University of Houston in 1981, and is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. He is licensed by the Supreme Court of Texas and has been admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court, the United State Court of Appeals in Chicago, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Atlanta and San Francisco. He is also admitted to practice by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida and by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas. Professional Memberships & Affiliations: Past-President of the American Immigration Lawyers Association-Texas, New Mexico & Oklahoma Chapter (1997-98); Founder and Past president of the National Employment Lawyers Association-Houston Chapter; American Immigration Lawyers Association; Houston Bar Association; State Bar of Texas; Vice President of the Miami Beach Bar Association (2014-15); Bar Association of the Fifth Federal Circuit. Mr. Coane's

trial experience includes jury trials in both state and federal court. He has handled various types of administrative appeals and has also represented clients before the United States Supreme Court and the Supreme Court of Texas. Many of his cases have been published in legal reference books and discussed in legal and professional journals. Additionally, he has been a speaker at continuing education seminars for attorneys, as well as seminars and meetings for business groups, schools and community organizations. He has appeared on various TV and radio talk shows.

**Kathryn N. Karam, *Law Office of Kathryn N. Karam, P.C., Houston TX***

Kathryn N. Karam is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization, making her one of only 160 attorneys in the entire state with this certification. Attorney Karam has over 7 years of experience practicing immigration law. Attorney Karam began her career at Quan, Burdette, and Perez, P.C., which later became FosterQuan, LLP, in Houston, Texas. During this time, she handled all types of immigration matters, including family-based immigration matters, naturalization and citizenship issues, employment-based matters, non-immigrant visas, issues involving Customs and Border Protection, Violence Against Women Act cases, and detention and removal cases. Attorney Karam was later employed with Greenberg Traurig, LLP in Houston, Texas, where she primarily handled business non-immigrant visa matters. Prior to earning her Juris Doctor (J.D.) from the University of Texas School of Law, Attorney Karam earned a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Chinese from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, and a Certificate in Chinese Studies from the Johns-Hopkins-Nanjing University Center for Chinese and American Studies. Attorney Karam opened her law practice in July 2013 to offer her clients the experience that comes with working at some of the most prominent immigration law firms with the personal attention and value of a small firm. Her office offers services in Spanish, Chinese (both Mandarin and Cantonese), and English. As President of the Law Office of Kathryn N. Karam PC, Attorney Karam and her team have built a reputation for offering creative solutions to complex immigration problems, excellent personal service, and care and consideration for their clients' needs. Attorney Karam is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) and served as Advocacy Liaison for AILA's Texas Chapter from 2010-2013. She has volunteered at the Chinese Community Center (CCC), the Tahirih Justice Center for Immigrant Women and Girls, and at citizenship clinics in the Houston area. She served as a panelist on the topic of Requests for Evidence (RFEs) and Notices of Intent to Deny (NOIDs) at the 2013 AILA Texas Chapter Fall Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico and a panelist on the topic of the DACA program at the Fall Conference in 2014 in Playa Del Carmen. She was named to the Houston Business Journal's 40 Under 40 Honorable Mention List in October 2014. Attorney Karam's articles have been published in the Houston Business Journal, Houston OilPatch Magazine, OilPro.com, and Lebanon Times. Attorney Karam has a reputation for being a diligent, creative, resourceful, and dedicated problem solver.

**Jennifer Minnear, *McCandlish Holton, P.C., Richmond VA***

Jennifer Minnear is a Director with the firm of McCandlish Holton, PC in Richmond, Virginia where her business immigration practice focuses largely on the healthcare and education sectors. Jennifer is the current AILA National Secretary and is a frequent author and speaker on immigration issues.

**9:20 – 10:10 *Que Dijiste? Supremes and DOS: Zivotofsky v. Kerry; Kerry v. Din***

**Magali Suárez Candler, *Suárez Candler Law, PLLC, Houston, TX***

Magali Suárez Candler, Principal at Suárez Candler Law, Houston, TX, has been practicing immigration law for over 25 years. She was a partner and head of litigation at Foster Quan (formerly Tindall & Foster, now Foster, LLP) for over 14 years. Past Chair of the Texas Chapter, Ms. Candler is currently an EOIR Liaison Committee member. She is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law in Texas, and received the J. Chrys Dougherty Legal Services Award from the State Bar of Texas in 1999 for her longtime work at Catholic Charities. Co-counsel on a 2012 win at the Supreme Court, *Umer v. Holder*, she is licensed at the U.S. Supreme Court, the Fifth and Eleventh Circuits, and the U.S. District Court. Ms. Candler is a frequent speaker nationally and regionally.

**Christine Poarch, *Poarch Law Firm, Salem, VA***

Christine Lockhart Poarch is the owner and managing attorney of Poarch Law, a full-service immigration law firm in Virginia. Licensed in Texas in 1999 and in Virginia in 2001, Christine has practiced exclusively in the area of immigration law since 2003. Christine is licensed before the U.S. Supreme Court, the Fourth and Eleventh Circuit Courts of Appeals and the Eastern and Western District Courts of Virginia. Christine is on the Board of Governors for the Federal Bar Association Immigration Law Section, a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and frequently speaks at regional and state continuing education seminars on immigration law. Christine was recently named a Fellow by the Virginia Law Foundation and is rated AV Preeminent by Martindale-Hubbell.

**10:10 – 10:20 Break**

**10:20 - 11:10 *!Uno, Dos, Tres—Knock Out! Immigration cases from the last Supreme Court Term: Reyes Mata v. Lynch and Mellouli v Lynch***

**Sheridan Green, *Gonzalez Olivieri LLC, Houston TX***

Sheridan Green graduated with a bachelor's degree in classical studies from Brigham Young University in 2007. He graduated cum laude from South Texas College of Law in 2012 where he was a member of the law review and worked 2 semesters in the immigration clinic. For his work with Malian female genital mutilation asylum cases, he was awarded the Lyndon Baines Johnson Civil Rights Award. After passing the bar, Sheridan became an associate and later a shareholder with Gonzalez Olivieri LLC. Sheridan practices both business immigration as well as litigation with Gonzalez Olivieri. He has filed over thirty petitions for review with the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals with seven petitions (to date) either granted or remanded to the BIA. Additionally, he has won numerous difficult cases before the Board and the immigration court and filed numerous writs of mandamus in the federal courts. Sheridan had his first petition for certiorari granted in January of 2015 and had his first Supreme Court win in June in *Reyes-Mata v. Holder*, 135 S.Ct. 2150 (2015). In addition to multiple litigation wins, Sheridan has gained immigrant and non-immigrant visa approvals for business owners, doctors, engineers, and professional wrestlers.

**Eliud Zavala, *Zavala Law Firm, PLLC, Houston TX***

Eliud Zavala is the founder and managing member of the Zavala Law Firm, PLLC - an immigration law firm based in Houston, Texas. Mr. Zavala immigrated to the United States at the age of 10 years old from Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico. His personal experience and the experience of his parents' with the immigration system ignited a passion to become an advocate to the immigrant community of the United States. Mr. Zavala is a former associate immigration attorney of FosterQuan, LLP later Foster, LLP – formerly the nation's largest minority-owned and preeminent global immigration law firm. He has assisted in the preparation and filing of cases before the Executive Office for Immigration Review, Board of Immigration Appeals, Administrative Appeals Office, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service and U.S. consulates throughout the world. Mr. Zavala has also represented clients in the preparation and filing of immigrant investor petitions pertaining to EB-5 investments and nonimmigrant visas (TN – Mexican and Canadian professionals; E1 and E2 – Treaty Visas; L visas – Intracompany managers, executives, or specialized knowledge; H-1B – Specialty Occupation visas; and R-1 – Religious visas). Mr. Zavala graduated from the University of Houston-Downtown with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration with concentration in accounting. He is a graduate of South Texas College of Law where he participated in the law school's Immigration/Human Trafficking clinic representing underprivileged individuals and victims of human trafficking.

Mr. Zavala is a member of the State Bar of Texas, American Immigration Lawyers Association and the American Bar Association.

**11:10 – 12:00 *!Es no Sancocho! Reinstatement of Removal from Ramirez-Molina to Ramirez-Mejia: The more Things Change the More They Stay the Same***

**Jodi Goodwin**, *Law Office of Jodi Goodwin, Harlingen, TX*

Jodi Goodwin practices immigration law in the trenches on the border in Harlingen, Texas. Since 1995 she has represented 1,000's of asylum seekers, economic migrants, long-term permanent residents, businesses, families, and United States citizens in removal proceedings. Jodi also represents immigrants in federal court in both criminal and civil proceedings. She went to school at the University of Texas (Hook 'Em!) and St. Mary's University. Jodi believes the heart and soul of every lawyer should be deeply grounded in truth and a search for justice. She enjoys teaching, especially to new practitioners, and devoting her time to community and pro bono projects. She has many accolades including Texas Super Lawyer and Best Lawyers in America and Texas Lawyer's Top Notch Immigration Lawyer. One of her most coveted achievements was being awarded the Arthur C. Helton Award for Advancing Human Rights in 2007. In her spare time, she devotes hours and hours to her children through active education and Girl Scouting.

**Amanda Waterhouse**, *Reina Bates, Dallas, TX*

Amanda Waterhouse's family told her from a young age that she would make a great lawyer because anyone who liked to argue that much should make a living at it. With their "encouragement" Amanda went on to graduate from Sam Houston State University and then the University of Houston Law Center. She is the senior associate attorney at Reina & Bates Immigration & Nationality Law, having been with the firm since 2007. Her practice consists mostly of family-based immigration filings, litigating citizenship claims, deportation defense, and appellate work. Ms. Waterhouse is also the author of "Don't Fear The Reaper: 204(l) And What It Means For Your Clients", an article published by the State Bar of Texas as part of the 2012 Advanced Immigration Law course. She is conversant in Spanish but frequently forgets how to conjugate her verbs properly. Amanda finds immigration law incredibly rewarding. She loves helping her clients and, of course, getting paid to argue.

**12:00 – 1:00 Lunch**

**1:00- 1:30 Chapter Business Meeting**

**1:30 – 2:20 *"Lo Quiero Hasta La Muerte" - Love in the Eyes of the USCIS: Fighting Sham Marriage Findings (0.25 ethics)***

**Lance Curtright** *De Mott, Mc Chesney, Curtright, Armendariz, San Antonio, TX*

Lance Curtright, a native of Lincoln, Nebraska, has practiced immigration law since 2001. He is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Mr. Curtright was selected for inclusion in the 2016 edition of The Best Lawyers in America. Under Mr. Curtright's lead, DMCA's Litigation Section was awarded the 2013 Best Litigation Department of the Year by Texas Lawyer magazine. Mr. Curtright has successfully represented hundreds of clients in deportation proceedings. His successes include published

decisions in *Amrollah v. Napolitano*, 710 F.3d 568 (5th Cir. 2013); *Matter of Lamus*, 25 I&N Dec. 61 (BIA 2009); see also *Mortera-Cruz v. Gonzales*, 409 F.3d 246 (5th Cir. 2005). He has published articles about immigration law in several law magazines and is a frequent speaker at immigration law conferences. He serves as the Immigration Customs and Enforcement liaison for the San Antonio district. Mr. Curtright earned a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Dallas (UD) in Politics. While at UD, he studied in Rome, Italy for a semester. He graduated from UD cum laude in 1998. After college, Mr. Curtright attended law school at the University of Nebraska. He was selected to be on the school's National Moot Court team. The team competed against teams from other law schools in mock appellate cases. They placed second in their region and were able to advance to the final national rounds. In law school, Mr. Curtright was selected to the "Order of Barristers" based upon his advocacy skills. He graduated from law school with distinction. Mr. Curtright is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, the Federal Bar Association, and the San Antonio Bar Association. Mr. Curtright is admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, the Western District of Texas, the Southern District of Texas, the Northern District of Texas and Texas State courts.

**David Anton Armendariz De Mott, Mc Chesney, Curtright, Armendariz, San Antonio, TX**

David is a partner at De Mott, McChesney, Curtright & Amendariz, LLP (DCMA), in San Antonio, Texas. David is a graduate of Southwest Texas State University (now known as Texas State University) and he holds a Juris Doctorate from The University of Texas School of Law. Prior to joining DMCA, he litigated federal civil rights cases with The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights under Law of Texas. Prior to that, he was an attorney at Balber Pickard Battistoni Maldonado & Van Der Tuin, PC, in New York, New York and he clerked for the Hon. William J. Cornelius, Chief Justice for The Texas Sixth Court of Appeals. David focuses his practice on removal defense and defending non-citizens' rights before the administrative courts of the Executive Office for Immigration Review and before federal district and appellate courts. David is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. David is a NIPNLG member.

**2:20 – 3:10 *Yo Quiero Volver, Volver y Volver: The Evolution of the I-601A Provisional Waiver: common issues, RFE's, expansion provisions***

**Olsa Alikaj-Cano Foster, LLP, Houston, TX**

As a native of Albania, and an immigrant herself, it was natural for Olsa Alikaj-Cano to follow the path of practicing immigration law. She is a graduate of the University of Houston Law Center, where she was fortunate to practice as an Immigration Clinic Student Attorney under the direction of the late Professor and Immigration Judge Joseph Vail. She is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. She is a Senior Attorney and a litigator with Foster LLP., in its Houston office. She is an active member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and she currently serves as the AILA Texas Chapter New Members Division Liaison. She focuses primarily on cases involving federal litigation as well as cases with removal and deportation issues. She has been admitted to practice by the U.S. Supreme Court, the State Bar of Texas, U.S. District Court Southern District of Texas, and the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. She is a member of the Pro-Bono College of the State Bar of Texas and is proud of her pro-bono work with the Tahirih Justice Center and other non-profit organizations involved in helping immigrants. Invited by the Mayor of the City of Houston, she currently serves as a council member of the Houston Area Council on Human Trafficking. Prior to becoming an immigration Attorney, Olsa Alikaj-Cano was a Judicial Law Clerk for the Honorable William R. Burke, of the 189<sup>th</sup> Civil District Court in Houston, Texas. She was also an intern for the US Funds for UNICEF Southwest Region, as well as a Mediator and an Arbitrator for the Houston Better Business Bureau.

**Lauren Rohana Quan Law Group, PLLC, Houston, TX**

Lauren M. Rouhana is an associate attorney at Quan Law Group in Houston, Texas. She is a graduate of South Texas College of Law where she began her immigration law career as a Student Attorney representing clients with the South Texas College of Law Asylum and Human Trafficking Clinic. Thereafter, her experience in the

immigration field continued as a law clerk with FosterQuan, LLP while she completed her legal studies. As an attorney, she represents clients in family-based, employment-based, and litigation immigration matters such as international adoption, Asylum, Waivers of Inadmissibility, DACA, E-2, H-1B, L-1, R-1, and various employment-based immigrant visa petitions. She has particularly specialized knowledge in international adoption cases and received the CALI Excellence Award in Immigration and Naturalization in 2013 from South Texas College of Law as a result of her extensive research on the immigration of adopted children. Additionally, Ms. Rouhana received the Hortense Ward Appreciation Award for Human Rights Achievement in 2013 from the Houston Heights Women's Club. Ms. Rouhana is a member of the Immigration and Nationality Law Section of the State Bar of Texas, the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), and the American Bar Association. She graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from Saint Edward's University in Austin, Texas. In addition to English, Ms. Rouhana is fluent in Arabic, Spanish and proficient in French. She hopes to continue to work with refugees and victims of persecution in addition to having her legal research on international adoptions published in the near future.

**James Noble, Jr. *Noble & Vrapı, P.A., New Mexico***

James V. Noble, Jr., is the Senior partner in Noble & Vrapı, P.A., one of the leading immigration firms in New Mexico, with offices in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and El Paso. He has been practicing law since 1979, and limited his practice to immigration since 1999. He leads 6 attorneys in the firm in all areas of immigration. The firm is known for immigration litigation and he does work in immigration court, federal court, and other administrative proceedings. The firm handles a large volume of I-601 and related cases. He is also an active Pastor, leading an orphanage for girls in Pto. Palomas, Mexico, and he and his wife, Pat, are parenting 3 teenage girls from Mexico in their home. In his spare time, he is a rancher.

**3:10 – 3:20 Break**

**3:20 – 4:10 Hot Topics at Consular Posts PART I: Common issues visa applicants and their attorneys face when dealing with these posts and tips from the experts**

**Jan Pederson *Maggio-Kattar, Washington DC***

Jan Pederson, a shareholder in Maggio-Kattar, P.C. in Washington, DC, has circled the globe the past thirty years representing clients at American consular posts in visa matters. She has personally appeared at thirty consular posts to represent clients. She has lectured nationally and internationally on the topic of consular processing. She served as an Editor of the AILA *Visa Processing Guide* for over a decade, providing real time practical tips on how to represent clients at various posts around the world. She served as President of the Washington, DC Chapter of AILA and as an elected member of the AILA Board of Governors for eighteen years. She has mentored hundreds of AILA members on consular processing and other issues over the years. She has also served as a Chair and a member of the AILA Access to Counsel Committee for the past several years. She has lectured at AILA Seminars, Federal Bar Association Seminars and ILW Seminars on consular processing issues. She was honored by AILA with the national Edith Lowenstein award for excellent in the advancement of the practice of immigration law.

**Sylvia D. Johnson Consul General for Dominican Republic**

Sylvia Johnson is the new Consul General for the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo. Ms. Johnson began her career as a Foreign Service Officer in the consular section in Santo Domingo more than 20 years ago. She has served in various countries in Asia and Africa as well as Latin America. She earned a B.A from Duke University, a J.D. from

Loyola University of the South and completed graduate courses in Urban and Transportation Planning in the University of New Orleans. Ms. Johnson was born in South Carolina.

### **Ed McKeon** Envoy International, Washington DC

Edward McKeon currently works in Washington D.C. with Envoy International of Fort Worth, Texas, as an immigration and consular operations consultant to the Office of the Commissioner of Major League Baseball. In this capacity, he works with MLB and baseball teams around the world with strategy and planning to help athletes cross international borders. He also provides advice to the League on U.S. rules and regulations which impact international athletes.

Previous to this, Ed was a Foreign Service Officer for 36 years with the U.S. Department of State. His last assignment was as the Minister Counselor for Consular Affairs in Mexico City. In Mexico he managed the world's largest consular operation with 23 consular offices providing services to American citizens abroad and non-American seeking visas for the U.S. Prior to Mexico, Ed was posted as U.S. Consul General in Tokyo, Tel Aviv and Guangzhou, and as consular chief in both Osaka and Montreal. In Washington, he spent three years as an attorney-advisor in the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Advisory Opinions Division. Among other assignments he spent a year as the Diplomat in Residence at the East West Center in Honolulu. Ed has received numerous State Department Awards including the Mary A Ryan Award for Extraordinary Public Service.

He is a member of the District of Columbia and Hawaii Bars and speaks Japanese, Chinese, French and Spanish.

### **4:10 – 5:00: *Ayudanos A Ayudar: Help us Help Others! VAWAs, U's, T's and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status: Hot Topics for those representing victims of abuse, crimes, trafficking and children***

### **Ramiro Narro Jr.** *Gonzalez Olivieri LLC, Houston TX*

Mr. Ramiro Narro, Jr. was born and raised in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Ramiro earned his Juris Doctor degree from Texas Southern University's Thurgood Marshall School of Law. As a law student, Ramiro participated in legal clinics that provided assistance to the elderly and to indigent individuals. Ramiro has represented detainees and respondents in immigration proceedings before the Executive Office for Immigration Review. He has represented clients in Immigration Court in Houston, TX; San Antonio, TX; Dallas, TX; Chicago, IL; Bloomington, MN; Atlanta, GA; Arlington, VA; and Miami, FL. He has represented clients in bond hearings, in master calendar hearings, and in individual hearings. He has also represented clients at U.S.C.I.S. interviews. Mr. Narro is a member of the State Bar of Texas. He is admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court, the United States 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, and the United States Southern District of Texas. Mr. Narro provides pro bono legal services, and he is fluent in Spanish.

### **Mayra Jimenez** *RAICES (Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services) San Antonio, TX*

Mayra Jimenez is the Children's Program Director and a Supervising Attorney at RAICES, a nonprofit refugee and immigrant center in Texas. She attended Baylor University for her undergraduate studies where she received a Bachelors in Business Administration in Economics and International Business and went on to graduate from St. Mary's University School of Law. Prior to joining RAICES, Mayra worked at Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid, the Bexar County Court House District Court Division, and the Immigration and Human Rights Clinic in San Antonio Texas. She currently oversees the largest program at RAICES that provides legal services to both detained and released unaccompanied children who are placed in removal proceedings in various parts of Texas. Mayra also serves as a Regional Technical Expert for Released Services for Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana as part of the Vera

Institute of Justice Network. Her duties include reviewing regional trends and issues affecting the region relating to unaccompanied children.

## Saturday, November 21, 2015

### **8:00 – 8:50 *Let's Merengue! What's Hot in Punta Cana? Hot Topics in Business Immigration: Travel; RFEs; Site Visits; H4 EADs; Processing Times; STEM Extensions and New Forms***

**Angelica Grado-Wright**, *Berry Appleman and Leiden, LLP, Houston, TX*

Angelica Grado-Wright is Senior Counsel with Berry Appleman & Leiden in Houston. Ms. Grado-Wright devotes her practice to employment-based immigration matters for large and medium-sized corporations. She is well-versed in all aspects of employment-based petitions with a special interest in complex immigrant petitions including labor certifications, outstanding researcher petitions, and extraordinary ability petitions. Ms. Grado-Wright graduated from Brown University with a bachelor's degree in American Civilization and History and completed her JD at St. Mary's University School of Law. While in law school, Ms. Grado-Wright clerked for a prominent immigration law firm in San Antonio. Licensed in Texas, she is an active AILA member having served as the AILA TX Chapter CBP liaison in Houston. Ms. Grado-Wright has presented on business immigration topics for AILA annual conferences, AILA TX chapter conferences, the State Bar of Texas and other professional conferences.

**Kortney Gibson**, *Berry Appleman and Leiden LLP, Dallas, TX*

Kortney Gibson is a Partner in Dallas office of Berry Appleman & Leiden, assisting corporate and individual clients in an array of business and family immigration matters. Ms. Gibson has represented companies in a variety of industries in obtaining specialty occupation and extraordinary ability nonimmigrant visas for foreign nationals; transferring foreign personnel to start-up and established US offices; securing work-authorized classifications for professionals seeking to enter the US pursuant to NAFTA; and securing treaty trader/investor status for clients in Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Ms. Gibson has represented employers seeking US Department of Labor approval of applications for alien employment certification (PERM) and has executed a full range of employment-based immigrant visa strategies, including demonstrations of extraordinary ability. She has represented foreign nationals in the adjustment of status to lawful permanent residence and has counseled foreign nationals seeking consular processing of employment-based visas abroad. Ms. Gibson's experience includes obtainment of US Coast Guard exemptions from Outer Continental Shelf manning requirements relating to vessels operating in the Gulf of Mexico. She is versed in advising employers of their immigration-related duties with regard to corporate transactions, Form I-9 compliance, and Immigration Reform and Control Act issues. Ms. Gibson manages the U.S. program for one of the world's largest technology companies. Ms. Gibson and her team were responsible for filing over 1600 H-1B Cap petitions and have filed hundreds of green card petitions for her client company in 2015. Ms. Gibson received her Bachelor of Business Administration (International Emphasis) from Texas Christian University, her Master of Business Administration from Texas Tech University, and her Juris Doctorate, cum laude, from Texas Tech University School of Law. She is admitted to the State Bar of Texas, is an active member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and was acknowledged as a Texas Rising Star.

### **8:50 – 9:40 *I need a Mama Juana! Dealing with Worksite Compliance: E-Verify Expansion, I-9s – new attestations, PAFs, Drafting Corporate Immigration policies, Audits – representing the employer, Inspections, Enforcement trends***

**Sharon Mehlman**, *Mehlman Barnes, LLP, San Diego, CA*

Sharon Mehlman is an AV rated\* attorney, whose vast expertise helps to ensure a smooth client experience in the midst of an array of business immigration matters for corporate entities. Her practice is concentrated in the high-tech, biotech, computer gaming, multimedia and telecommunications industries, Sharon enjoys the challenge of practicing in an area of law that is constantly changing. Sharon's expertise spans virtually every corner of employment-based immigration law and practice, beginning with the recruitment and retention of foreign national employees, to the implementation of corporate immigration strategies and policies, all the way through enforcement issues such as I-9 audits, LCA compliance, and related trainings. Apart from her active practice representing an array of industries, Sharon is dedicated to immigration advocacy through ongoing commitments to the national immigration bar for many years. In that capacity, she has met frequently with immigration agency executives and staff to discuss legal and procedural issues, the state of the current immigration system, and has made suggestions for improvement. Sharon also works with immigration attorneys nationwide on best practice issues. She is a frequent lecturer, locally and nationally, on employment based immigration topics including USCIS and Service Center issues, H petitions, PERM labor certifications and I-9 issues.

**Brent Huddleston**, *Haynes and Boone, LLP, Dallas, TX*

Brent Huddleston leads Haynes and Boone's Immigration Practice Group. Board-certified in immigration and nationality law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization, he is skilled at handling complex immigration issues. Brent has represented Fortune 500 corporations in hiring, retaining and obtaining employment authorization for foreign nationals. He regularly counsels clients in establishing company policies regarding hiring procedures, I-9 compliance, employment of foreign nationals, and national origin discrimination issues. He provides employment-related immigration training to Human Resource professionals and legal staff for companies of all sizes. Brent represents clients in obtaining legal permanent resident status for top medical professionals, artists, athletes and entertainers through the Extraordinary Ability Employment Based (EB-1) category - and for foreign national investors through the EB-5 category.

**Eileen Scofield**, *Alston and Bird, LLP, Atlanta, GA*

Eileen Scofield has over 25 years of experience concentrating on immigration law and related legal matters for U.S. and foreign-based clients. She has successfully managed over 30 Department of Homeland Security (ICE) subpoenas, audits and investigations on behalf of various clients. She has also provided advice to clients on audit response, internal processing, follow-up and conclusion. Eileen is listed in The Best Lawyers in America, most recently the 2010 Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business, The International Who's Who of Corporate Immigration Lawyers 2010 and 2012 and was named one of "Georgia's Best Lawyers." She is a member of the National Verification & Documentation Liaison Committee and chairperson of E-Verify National Liaison Committee. She has been published in Employment Law360 and quoted in the U.S. News and World Report. She has been invited to work with various DHS departments, such as ICE. She received her J.D. in 1985 from the University of Georgia School of Law, where she was a Hatton Lovejoy Scholarship recipient. She received her B.A. in 1981 from the University of Hawaii.

**Kevin Lashus**, *Jackson Lewis P.C., Austin, TX*

Kevin Lashus is a Shareholder of the Austin, Texas, office of Jackson Lewis P.C. His practice is focused on corporate employment verification compliance and inbound business immigration. Mr. Lashus has experience in providing uniquely tailored advice to assist clients in developing comprehensive employment authorization and immigration-related compliance systems—including full-scale or localized IMAGE and E-Verify implementation protocols. Given his public-sector background—first as a Texas Assistant Attorney General, then as an Assistant District Counsel with the US Department of Justice, and finally, as an Assistant Chief Counsel with the US Department of Homeland Security—he is able to prepare clients to minimize exposure during even the most complex regulatory, administrative, and civil litigation. He is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.

**9:40 – 9:50 Break**

**9:50 – 10:40 How to hit a Home Run with your NIVs: Corporate changes, Waivers, Dual intent, L1B Guidelines, B-1s/ESTA**

**Jessica Mullins-Ta**, *Berry Appleman and Leiden LLP, Dallas, TX*

Jessica Mullins-Ta is a Senior Associate in the Dallas office of Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP. Ms. Mullins-Ta handles a wide array of cases for both individuals and corporate clients. She helps clients obtain nonimmigrant visas, both in the US and abroad, including E-2, H-1B, L-1A, L-1B, O, TN-1, and TN-2. She represents employers of all sizes with labor certification cases, and represents clients obtaining permanent residence as International Managers, Outstanding Ability, Outstanding Researchers, and National Interest Waivers. Ms. Mullins-Ta's experience includes working with a wide array of corporate clients, including public and private universities, publicly traded international companies, religious organizations, and privately owned companies. In addition to her corporate immigration experience, Ms. Mullins-Ta has assisted individual clients in a wide array of family immigration matters including family-based petitions, K visas, and immigration-related court proceedings.

**Sujata Ajmera**, *Jackson Lewis, Austin, TX*

Sujata Ajmera is Of Counsel in the Austin, Texas office of Jackson Lewis P.C. Sujata focuses her practice exclusively on Business Immigration & Compliance law and is Board Certified in Immigration & Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. She is listed as a Texas Rising Star in *SuperLawyers* and she was named a finalist in the Legal category of the Austin Under 40 Awards. Sujata is a 2005 graduate of The University of Texas School of Law.

Sujata has extensive experience in all areas of U.S. immigration and nationality law, but primarily focuses her practice on employment-based immigration and compliance for corporations, academic institutions, and non-profit organizations of all sizes. Her experience includes representing corporate clients, academic institutions, and small to medium sized businesses in a variety of industries. Sujata has expertise in non-immigrant visas and permanent residency campaigns for employers and works with each client to develop cost-effective and successful visa strategies.

Sujata's experience also includes assisting companies in comprehensive I-9 compliance audits, both proactive and reactive to government investigations. She helps develop I-9 and onboarding policies and procedures and conducts regular best practices trainings for Human Resource Professionals and Corporate Counsel.

Sujata is a regular presenter at American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) conferences and also serves as the Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma Pro-Bono Coordinator for the organization. She also speaks frequently at various CLEs on the topic of Business Immigration and I-9 Compliance.

Sujata is extremely active in the Austin community, including service on the Board of Directors for American Gateways and the Asian American Resource Center. She is also a Co-Founder and Board Member of the South Asian Bar Association of Austin.

**Aime Keith**, *Berry Appleman and Leiden LLP, Tysons, VA*

Aime Keith is a Senior Associate in the Northern Virginia Office of Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP. Ms. Keith's practice focuses on all aspects of employment-based immigration law. She advises on nonimmigrant, immigrant, labor certification, consular processing and naturalization matters. Ms. Keith works with clients from a broad spectrum of industries including information technology, financial services, transportation, non-profit, and healthcare. She has assisted clients in all areas of immigration compliance to include audits and investigations by the Departments of Labor and the Homeland Security. Ms. Keith also assists clients in developing robust programs to

meet their compliance needs. Ms. Keith's lengthy immigration career has included service with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (now U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services), managing in-house immigration programs for Fortune 500 companies, as well as practicing immigration law with international law firms. This varied experience provides Ms. Keith with a unique perspective in advising clients and their foreign national employee population on the best strategy for success.

**10:40 – 11:30 Before you hit the beach, let's talk Ethics: Dual representation, How involved should you/can you get (PERM, job descriptions, Training programs), Signing for an employer, Info sharing between employer & employee, Getting truthful info**

**Amy Peck, Jackson Lewis P.C., Omaha, NE**

Amy L. Peck is a Shareholder in the Omaha, Nebraska, office of Jackson Lewis P.C. She dedicates her practice exclusively to immigration law and worksite compliance. Ms. Peck is one of 21 Directors elected to serve on the 14,000-member American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) Board of Governors. Ms. Peck is a member of the AILA National Verification Committee, which liaises with USCIS, ICE and OCAHO on I-9, E-verify and related worksite issues. Ms. Peck recently served on the AILA National USCIS Benefits Committee, the Interagency Committee, the Annual Conference Committee, previously chaired the AILA FOIA Liaison Committee, the AILA Comprehensive Reform Committee (2010-2011) and is a founding member of the Global Migration Action Group (2009 to present). She served as Chair of the AILA National Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) liaison committee (2008-2010). Ms. Peck also served as Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee for AILA (2008-2009) and served on the Spring Conference committee (2008-2010). She was chosen as the editor of the AILA Midyear Conference materials in 2010, and past Chair of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) liaison committee (2004-2006). She is past Chair of the AILA Iowa-Nebraska chapter (2001-2003), and previously served as its treasurer (1999-2000). Ms. Peck is a frequent speaker on worksite enforcement issues, and has recently been quoted in the The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal on employment and enforcement immigration issues.

**Paige Taylor, Fragomen, Dallas, TX**

Paige is a Partner splitting her time between Fragomen's Dallas and Houston offices, where she advises and represents clients across a variety of industries, including telecommunications, technology, energy, engineering and electronics. She has extensive experience in developing, implementing and managing PERM labor certification programs, as well as counseling multinational corporations on immigration practices and policies associated with corporate reorganizations, mergers, name changes and layoffs; H-1, L-1, TN, O-1 and J-1 non-immigrant visas; and public access and I-9 program compliance and improvement. She also has developed a practice representing entertainers, athletes, scientists, researchers and health care professionals.

**Maggie Murphy, Jackson Lewis, P.C., Austin, TX**

Maggie Murphy is the Office Managing Shareholder in the Austin, Texas, office of Jackson Lewis P.C. She concentrates her practice on advanced U.S. immigration and nationality law and global business immigration matters, assisting employers with immigration challenges facing international workforces. Ms. Murphy has extensive experience in all areas of U.S. immigration law, but she primarily focuses her current practice on employment-based immigration for corporate clients and outstanding professors/researchers, as well as sophisticated immigration-related compliance work for employers of all sizes. Ms. Murphy has expertise in managing PERM campaigns for employers and in developing cost-effective strategies for companies and organizations interested in hiring professional foreign workers. She has organized massive I-9 and LCA compliance programs for Fortune 500 organizations. Ms. Murphy is Board Certified in Immigration & Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. She is a frequent speaker on business-related, immigration compliance topics and has leadership roles in several state and national sections and committees.

**11:30-12:30 Hot Topics at Consular Posts PART II: Common issues visa applicants and their attorneys face when dealing with these posts and tips from the experts**

**Jan Pederson** *Maggio-Kattar, Washington DC*

Jan Pederson, a shareholder in Maggio-Kattar, P.C. in Washington, DC, has circled the globe the past thirty years representing clients at American consular posts in visa matters. She has personally appeared at thirty consular posts to represent clients. She has lectured nationally and internationally on the topic of consular processing. She served as an Editor of the AILA *Visa Processing Guide* for over a decade, providing real time practical tips on how to represent clients at various posts around the world. She served as President of the Washington, DC Chapter of AILA and as an elected member of the AILA Board of Governors for eighteen years. She has mentored hundreds of AILA members on consular processing and other issues over the years. She has also served as a Chair and a member of the AILA Access to Counsel Committee for the past several years. She has lectured at AILA Seminars, Federal Bar Association Seminars and ILW Seminars on consular processing issues. She was honored by AILA with the national Edith Lowenstein award for excellent in the advancement of the practice of immigration law.

**Special Appearance by Department of State Non-Immigrant Visa and Immigrant Visa Chiefs, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic**

**12:30 -1:30 Lunch**

**1:30 – 2:20 Bailamos bachata! PERM: Looking Ahead to you Preference category; Recruitment; Audits; Degree equivalency issues; New PERM Regs**

**Peter Bade**, *Berry Appleman and Leiden LLP, San Francisco, CA*

Peter Bade is an Associate in the San Francisco office of Berry Appleman and Leiden LLP. He has experience with various corporate U.S. immigration legal matters, as well as family-based U.S. immigration legal matters. His current practice focuses on the PERM labor certification process, immigrant visa petitions, and H-1B non-immigrant visa petitions. He has served on AILA's Board of Publications, and was recently selected for Super Lawyers Rising Stars for Northern California.

**Dustin O'Quinn**, *The Dustin O'Quinn Law Firm, Houston, TX*

Dustin J. O'Quinn is a native Houstonian who has practiced Business Immigration and Family-based immigration law for nearly a decade in Texas. He attended the University of Texas where he earned his undergraduate and law degrees. Dustin returned to Houston in 2014 to continue practicing Immigration Law and opened The Dustin O'Quinn Law Firm.

U.S. Super Lawyers- Rising Stars, and Chambers USA have named Dustin O'Quinn one of the top Immigration lawyers in Texas. He has also been named a top Immigration Lawyer in Houston by *Houstonia* magazine. Dustin serves on the Board of Directors for the Human Rights Initiative and is a frequent volunteer for other immigrant

rights organizations. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the Houston Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. Dustin has been actively involved in AILA, serving as a past co-chair of the Dallas Section and as Co-Chair of the Texas/New Mexico/Oklahoma Chapter Fall Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico two years ago.

**David Ware, *Ware Immigration, Metairie, LA***

Mr. Ware is a 1981 graduate of the University of Texas School of Law. He has practiced exclusively in the area of immigration and nationality law since 1982, with a consistent academic focus. Mr. Ware is active in AILA, NAFSA, AIEA and NACUA, and is a frequent speaker and author on immigration topics. He currently serves on AILA's DOL and Healthcare Committees.

**2:20-3:10 *Robinson Cano Double Play!! Non-PERM Based Green Card Options and H-2B 2015 Interim Final Rule Update***

**Ashley Foret Dees, *Ashley Foret Dees Immigration Law, Lake Charles, LA***

Ashley Foret Dees represents employers and individuals in a wide range of immigration matters. She splits her time between offices in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and Houston, Texas. She has considerable experience in a variety of areas of immigration law, including H-2A and H-2B Labor Certification and Visa Processing, H-1B Visas, Family Adjustment of Status cases, Consular Processing around the world and representation before the Immigration Courts. In connection with her immigration practice, she has spoken at the American Immigration Lawyers Association's (AILA) Annual Conferences and MidSouth Chapter Conferences, The Annual Federal Bar Association Immigration Law Seminars, and also serves as chair and speaker for the Louisiana State Bar Association's Annual Immigration Law Update CLE. She has served as the AILA Midsouth Chapter, New Member Division Vice-Chair, AILA Midsouth Chapter Pro Bono Committee Vice-Chair and Chair. She has served on both the National and MidSouth AILA Pro Bono Committees. Mrs. Dees is the founder and chair of the newly established Immigration Law Section of the Louisiana State Bar Association, as well as the newly elected Vice President of the Texas State Bar Association's Immigration and Nationality Section, spearheading the committee on Asylee and Refugee Issues. In Southwest Louisiana she serves on the Young Lawyers Division committee as an at-large member. She assists a variety of companies - such as agricultural, construction and food service companies - in complying with the complex immigration regulatory requirements in order to properly hire foreign workers. Mrs. Dees also has experience filing before United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, and the Department of Labor, as well as the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals.

**Faye Kolly, *De Mott McChesney Curtright & Armendariz LLP, Austin, TX***

Faye M. Kolly, a native Texan is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame and Saint Louis University School of Law. Faye has represented clients on a wide range of immigration needs including non-immigrant, immigrant business visas, consular issues, family and litigation based immigration cases. Her clients include advising human resource professionals in Fortune 100/Global 500 to small businesses, investor entrepreneurs, athletes, coaches, professors, engineers, families and artists among others. Faye is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association where she previously served as Texas Chapter Citizenship Day coordinator (2008-2009), Austin AILA co-chair (2012-2014) and AILA DPS liaison (2015). She has presented at American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) Annual conference in Nashville, Tennessee and regularly presents at Texas Chapter Conferences. In addition, Faye is a frequent volunteer and presenter at immigration related events including public Testimony before Texas House and Senate Committees regarding immigration related issues on business and driver's licenses. In 2010, she co-authored a chapter in ILW.com book: The I-140 Book, "Derivative Beneficiaries of Employment Based Immigrant Petitions and the Child Status Protection Act (CSPA)."

**3:10-3:20 Break**

**3:20-4:10 ;Dios Mio! What's up on the Hill? Experts and Advocate's View of the State of Immigration Reform**

**Ben Johnson, American Immigration Council**

Benjamin Johnson is the Executive Director of the American Immigration Council in Washington, D.C. He has studied and worked in the immigration field for more than 20 years. He has written extensively on immigration law and policy and has presented testimony on immigration issues before the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. From 2003 to 2007, he served as the founding Director of the Council's Immigration Policy Center which is one of the four programs housed at the American Immigration Council and also includes the Legal Action Center, International Exchange Center and Community Education Center. A native of Arizona, Johnson has managed several state-wide political campaigns in that state and also spent six years as the co-founder and legal Director of the Immigration Outreach Center, a legal clinic serving low-income immigrant communities in Phoenix. He earned a J.D. from the University of San Diego School of Law and studied International and Comparative Law at Kings College in London.

**4:10-4:30 Closing Remarks and Adjournment**