

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES
CIVIL LITIGATION PANEL VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Thursday, June 6, 2024 – Phoenix
9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Jury Assembly Room
U.S. District Court – District of Arizona
Federal Bar Associations, Phoenix & Tucson Chapters
Step Up to Justice & Community Legal Services

Michael T. Liburdi
United States District Judge
District of Arizona

United States District Judge Michael T. Liburdi began his legal career as a law clerk to the Honorable Ruth V. McGregor of the Arizona Supreme Court.

He entered private practice with the law firm of Brown & Bain P.A., which became the Phoenix office of Perkins Coie LLP. He later practiced at Snell & Wilmer L.L.P.

From 2015-2018, Judge Liburdi served as General Counsel to Arizona Governor Douglas A. Ducey. Judge Liburdi provided legal advice to the Governor, advised on appointments to the state judiciary, directed litigation involving the state agencies, and worked with Arizona's Congressional delegation on legal policy issues.

Immediately prior to his judicial appointment, Judge Liburdi was a shareholder at the international law firm of Greenberg Traurig, LLP.

Judge Liburdi's private sector practice included complex commercial litigation, antitrust, constitutional law, and political and election law.

Judge Liburdi has served as an adjunct professor of law at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University.

Judge Liburdi earned his Juris Doctorate from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law and a Bachelor of Science degree from Arizona State University.

Jodie W. Brown
Supervisory Staff Attorney
United States District Court, District of Arizona

Jodie graduated from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University in 2005. During law school, Jodie served as a legal extern to Judge Lawrence O. Anderson for the United States District Court and Judge Michael Daly Hawkins for the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Following graduation, Jodie served as a law clerk to Judge Morton Sitver before joining the Staff Attorneys' office in May 2006.

Patricia (Pat) J. Gerrich, Esq.
Volunteer Lawyers Program
Community Legal Services Inc.

Patricia (Pat) Gerrich was previously the Director of the Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP) and currently works with VLP to provide staff support for the Free Advice Only Clinic that arranges pro bono guidance for unrepresented non-incarcerated civil litigants in the Phoenix District Court. The Volunteer Lawyers Program (VLP) is co-sponsored by Community Legal Services, the “legal aid” organization for 5 counties in Arizona, and the Maricopa County Bar Association.

As VLP Director, Pat supervised staff advocates and worked with private lawyers who volunteered their time to provide legal advice or representation to people with low incomes in Maricopa County, to supplement the work of legal aid staff. The volunteer attorneys addressed civil legal issues such as consumer, bankruptcy, children’s issues, debt collection, domestic violence/family law, guardianship, home ownership, tenants’ rights, tort defense, and transactional assistance to non-profit organizations.

Pat previously was Executive Director of The Arc of Arizona for 7 years where she supervised advocates and was responsive for legislative advocacy on behalf of individuals with disabilities. She also served as staff attorney for 3 ½ years for the Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest where she participated in litigation and other advocacy to benefit children with disabilities, people with mental health needs, and seniors. Pat received her J.D. from Arizona State University College of Law.

Loresa Purden
Arizona Department of Corrections
Legal Monitor

Loresa Purden has worked with law enforcement for over 20 years. She is currently the Legal Access Monitor for the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry. She ensures that inmates have adequate and constitutional access to the courts. Using case law, such as *Lewis v. Casey*, 518 U.S. 343, 116 S.Ct 2174 (1996), relevant statutes, and agency policy as her guides, Ms. Purden is responsible for establishing appropriate measures for inmates to proceed with habeas corpus cases and other matters, unencumbered. She also supervises the contract paralegal responsible for assisting inmates in a limited capacity, on qualified legal claims as outlined by policy.

**Robin Larkin & Sarah Fern
Larkin & Fern, PLLC**

Robin Larkin and Sarah Fern met in law school in 2008, and both graduated in 2011 with honors. They then worked as associates for a local Phoenix law firm representing disabled individuals in claims for Social Security disability benefits and gained experience while representing hundreds of clients in administrative hearings before the agency. They formed the law firm Larkin & Fern, PLLC, in 2019, and they focus exclusively on representing claimants in federal court appeals of administrative denials of Social Security disability benefits. They are both admitted in the United States District Court for the District of Arizona and the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Both Robin and Sarah have argued Social Security cases before the Ninth Circuit, with their next oral argument scheduled for July 2024.

**William Furnish
Osborn Maledon
Attorneys at Law**

William Furnish has become a rising star in business litigation, lending his knowledge on cybersecurity, privacy and data security matters to businesses across a varied set of industries. As a litigator, William focuses on professional liability, complex commercial litigation, and privacy and data security matters. He excels at the intellectual, ethical challenges that arise between data privacy and attorney ethical violations and has established himself as a thought-leader in the ethical overlay between attorney privilege and data privacy and ethics violations.

Of his most recent accomplishments, William provided counsel to the Arizona Attorney General in groundbreaking litigation regarding a law that allowed automobile dealers to access essential and sensitive customer data. He has extended his knowledge on ethics violations to a varied set of industries, including accountants, attorneys, healthcare professionals dealing with nuanced questions surrounding malpractice, securities and privacy.

Prior to joining Osborn Maledon, William was a litigation and trial associate with a firm in New York, where he advised and represented Big Four accounting firms, pharmaceutical manufacturers and other institutional clients in connection with securities, professional liability, intellectual property and commercial litigation. A skilled writer and presenter, William has written articles for a number of publications and spoken on data breaches and cybersecurity.

William has also dedicated a significant portion of his professional life to volunteer service, including spending two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Republic of Armenia, serving as President of the Phoenix Public Library Foundation, and providing pro bono representation to asylum seekers and homeless youth.



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Joshua Carden likes helping people in the field of employment law, be they wrongfully terminated employees, businesses wanting to stay out of trouble, or lawyers needing a sounding board for ideas. While the vast majority of his work is on the Plaintiffs' side of the "v.," he represents just enough businesses to keep himself intellectually honest. He has the dubious distinction of filing or defending more than 172 lawsuits in state and federal court since returning to Arizona in 2012. He recently partnered with a soon-retired property tax attorney, where they assist Arizona county governments.

He has been licensed to practice law in the state of Arizona since 2002 and his original home state of Texas since 2005. He graduated from Dallas Baptist University in Grand Prairie, Texas with a B.A. in political science, then from Regent University School of Law in Virginia Beach, VA – both with honors.

Joshua served for 8 years as a gubernatorial appointee to the Arizona Civil Rights Advisory Board, where he worked closely with the Arizona Attorney General's office to monitor and safeguard the civil rights of Arizonans, including employment and fair housing. He currently serves on the board of the Arizona Employment Lawyers Association, a local affiliate of the national organization.

Last but not least, he has two daughters (19 and 16). He enjoys reading, writing, piano (40+ years), shooting (not hunting), aviation, foreign travel, and saving for the weddings. He does not enjoy boilerplate discovery objections from defense firms, separate statements of fact in summary judgment motions that exceed 200 paragraphs, or re-reading the Supreme Court decision in *Gross v. FBL Financial Services*. Published in 2016, his first e-book [The Employee's Guide To The EEOC](#) has been downloaded over 450 times from Amazon.com.

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Ivelisse Bonilla has been practicing employment and labor law since 1997. In 1995, Ivelisse started working in employment matters as a law clerk and upon graduation from law school she joined the Employment Law Section of McConnell Valdes in Puerto Rico. While an attorney at McConnell Valdes, she was asked to serve as Deputy General Counsel for the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration in Washington, D.C. (Also known as the Office of the Governor of PR in DC). While in Washington, she pursued an advanced law degree in employment law at Georgetown University and then returned to McConnell Valdes to continue her practice. Moving to Tucson, she joined Raven, Awerkamp & Clancy, P.C. in 2004 and in January 2008 Ivelisse and Don Awerkamp formed Awerkamp & Bonilla, PLC, a law firm practicing only employment law. In 2017, Shannon Giles joined the partnership and the firm became Awerkamp, Bonilla & Giles, PLC.

Ivelisse represents employers and employees in all aspects of employment law including, but not limited to, sexual harassment; discrimination because of age, race, gender, national origin, disability and other protected groups; wrongful termination in violation of public policy; and other matters. Ivelisse represents employees and employers in federal and state court and government employees in administrative forums such as the Merit System Protection Board and the EEOC. Since 2013, Ivelisse has been listed as one of *The Best Lawyers in America* in Employment Law-Individuals, as one of the Southwest Super Lawyers in Employment and Labor Law, and in Tucson Lifestyle as one of the best lawyers in Tucson in Employment Law. She is a Past Chair of the Executive Committee of the State Bar of Arizona, Labor and Employment Law Section and Past President of the Federal Bar Association, Tucson Chapter. Ivelisse is also a fellow of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers and an Arbitrator with the AZ State Bar Fee Dispute Arbitration Program.

Ivelisse received her B.A. degree from American University in Washington, D.C., in 1991, her J.D. degree cum laude from the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico in 1997, and her LL.M. degree from Georgetown University Law Center in 2001. She is a member of the bar for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; U.S. Supreme Court, U.S. District Court, District of Puerto Rico; U.S. Court of Appeals, First Circuit; State of Arizona; U.S. District Court, District of Arizona; and U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit.



BENJAMIN RUNDALL is Senior Counsel with Zwillinger Wulkan.

Ben's practice concentrates on civil rights and claims against government entities, general civil and commercial litigation, and Federal Indian law. Ben has built his career as an attorney representing individuals, tribal entities, and businesses in large cases against powerful actors, including government entities. He has extensive experience litigating cases in the State, Tribal, and Federal courts of Arizona and has also led cases on appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and United States Supreme Court. Benjamin's work focuses on patterns and practices by governmental entities resulting in constitutional deprivations and

general/commercial civil litigation work.

Ben also practices Indian law in matters including tribal governance, ICWA, tribal civil and commercial litigation, administrative hearings, economic development, and employment law. He was part of the Indian Legal Program at ASU, is the former Chair of the Indian Legal Section of the State Bar of Arizona, and has worked closely with Indigenous communities in Arizona, representing individuals and tribal interests in State and Tribal courts across Arizona.

In addition to his work as an attorney, Ben also serves on the Arizona District Court's Civil Litigation Panel, Advice-Only Clinic, is a Vice President of the State NAACP Chapter, and is a member of the Arizona Trial Lawyers Association. He was recently honored by the District Court of Arizona as Pro Bono Attorney of the Year. Ben is a graduate of the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University and holds a BA from Arizona State University in Anthropology and Political Science.