



53rd Annual BENCH-BAR & BOARDROOM CONFERENCE

April 22-24, 2026
Lied Lodge at Arbor Day Farm
Nebraska City, NE

Presented by:



EVENT SCHEDULE

Wednesday, April 22nd

- 4:00-10:00 PM REGISTRATION
- 6:30-7:00 PM YLS/FIRST-TIME ATTENDEE MEET-UP
- 7:00-9:00 PM WELCOME RECEPTION
- 9:00 PM PRESIDENT'S AFTER PARTY

Thursday, April 23rd

- 7:30-8:20 AM EARLY BIRD YOGA WITH HON. MICHELLE COCAYNE
- 7:30 AM-5:00 PM REGISTRATION
- 8:00-9:00 AM BREAKFAST
- 8:30-8:45 AM WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS
- 8:45-10:00 AM **JUDICIAL PERSPECTIVES: THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF COURT RULES, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE MISSOURI PLAN (PLENARY)**
Hear directly from Missouri judicial leaders on evolving court rules, technology, and key developments shaping practice across multiple jurisdictions.
Speakers: Hon. Daniel Crabtree, Athena Dickson, Hon. Charles Droege, Hon. Ginger Gooch, Hon. Kevin Harrell, Hon. Alisha O'Hara, Hon. Gary Witt, Hon. Brian Wimes, Moderated by Michael Williams
- 10:00-10:50 AM **BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: THE GENERAL COUNSEL'S PERSPECTIVE ON REVENUE SHARING, TITLE IX, AND THE NEW EDUCATIONAL MODEL (PLENARY)**
Explore the legal and operational impacts of revenue sharing, Title IX, and the shifting balance between athletics and academics in higher education.
Speakers: Bren Chambers, Mark Menghini, Megan Walawender
- 10:50-11:10 AM MEET THE EXHIBITORS
- 11:10 AM-12:00 PM BREAKOUT SESSION #1:

BREAKOUT 1:
CLASS ACTION LITIGATION, PRACTICAL GUIDANCE AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS (MO: ETHICS/ KS: SUBSTANTIVE)

Overview of class action fundamentals, certification, and key ethical issues, with practical guidance for managing complex, multi-party litigation.

Speakers: Kate Gallen, Austin Moore, Alex Ricke

BREAKOUT 2:
FROM BACK ROADS TO BORDERS: NAVIGATING IMMIGRATION RISKS IN CRIMINAL AND TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

Examine how criminal and traffic offenses impact immigration status, including removability, inadmissibility, and detention risks across classifications.

Speaker: Nancy Olivares

BREAKOUT 3:
WALKING THE LINE: DETERMINING PROBABLE CAUSE IN DWI CASES

Analyze probable cause in DWI investigations, including field sobriety testing, evidentiary challenges, and practical application under Missouri law.

Speaker: Denise Kirby



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Presented by: **DBJ** DAVIS BETHUNE JONES | **Ketchmark & McCreight, P.C.** Trial Lawyers

Thursday, April 23rd

12:00 PM LUNCH AND AWARD RECIPIENT REMARKS

12:30-1:20 PM **SPECIALTY COURTS ARE MY SPECIALTY: ADDRESSING RECIDIVISM AND MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY (PLENARY)**

Learn how specialty courts address recidivism, support communities, and operate across programs in the Kansas City metro.

Speakers: Jennipher Hawkins, Tim McCarthy, Hon. Courtney Wachal

1:20-2:10 PM **BREAKOUT SESSION #2:**

BREAKOUT 1:
MAKING EVERY SEAT COUNT:
INTEGRATING YOUNG LAWYERS INTO TRIAL STRATEGY

Practical strategies for integrating young lawyers into trial teams, from preparation through courtroom execution and collaboration.

Speakers: John Carroll, Lauren Dollar

BREAKOUT 2:
THE PERFECT STORM: WHEN ADA, FMLA, AND WORKERS' COMP COLLIDE

Understand how ADA, FMLA, and workers' compensation intersect, with practical guidance on compliance, risk, and real-world workplace scenarios.

Speakers: Joshua Cervantes, Kevin Johnson

BREAKOUT 3:
LASSO UP THOSE MEDICAL RECORDS: HOW TO COLLECT, USE, DEFEND, AND DISPOSE

Practical guidance on managing medical records in litigation, including collection, use, defense strategies, and compliant storage and disposal.

Speakers: Meghan Litecky, Lucy McShane, Rachel Stahle

2:10-2:30 PM MEET THE EXHIBITORS

2:30-5:00 PM ON YOUR OWN TIME/CHOICE OF SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY:

BOURBON & CIGAR TASTING

\$50

Savor the afternoon at Arbor Day Farm enjoying a Bourbon & Cigar Tasting, featuring a thoughtfully selected range of premium bourbons and expertly paired cigars for all experience levels.

WINE TASTING

\$50

Enjoy a tasting of Arbor Day Farm wines and beyond, featuring a curated selection of diverse, high-quality options for wine enthusiasts of all levels.

YARD GAMES

Free

Enjoy classics like cornhole, giant Jenga, ladder toss, and more—perfect for friendly competition and fresh air. Comfortable shoes are encouraged!

6:00-7:00 PM AWARDS DINNER COCKTAIL RECEPTION

7:00-8:30 PM AWARDS DINNER

8:30 PM CONVERSATIONS & COCKTAILS



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DAVIS
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Friday, April 24th

7:30-8:20 AM EARLY BIRD YOGA WITH HON. MICHELLE COCAYNE

8:00-9:00 AM BREAKFAST

9:00-9:20 AM EXHIBITOR PRIZE DRAWINGS

9:20-10:10 AM **ROBOT BOYFRIEND: USING AI SAFELY, COMPETENTLY, AND ETHICALLY**

(PLENARY, MO: ETHICS/KS: ETHICS)

Explore practical AI use in law practice, including tools, ethics, risks, and guidance on confidentiality, compliance, and emerging trends.

Speaker: Steve Cosentino

10:10-10:20 AM BREAK

10:20-11:10 AM **FROM THE TRENCHES: RECENT CASE UPDATES AND NAVIGATING COURTROOM ETHICS**

(PLENARY, SUBSTANTIVE CREDIT ONLY)

Review recent case updates and courtroom ethics with practical insights and lessons learned from experienced trial attorneys.

Speakers: Ben Fadler, Andrew Leroy, Briane Thomas

11:10 AM -12:00 PM **WHEN CAPACITY FADES: DIVORCE, DEMENTIA, AND ETHICAL DECISION MAKING**

(PLENARY, MO: ETHICS/KS: ETHICS)

Examine ethical and legal challenges in divorce cases involving diminished capacity, including the intersection of family and probate courts.

Speakers: Hon. Margene Burnett, Hon. Charles Droege, Hon. Stephanie Goodenow, Dyan Zimmerman moderated by Stacey Janssen

12:00 PM CONFERENCE ADJOURNS