

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

AND SAFETY CONFERENCE

Speakers



William A. "Bill" Lowry

President and Shareholder, Nyhan, Bambrick, Kinzie, & Lowry, P.C.

Bill Lowry is president of Nyhan and is responsible for law firm policies, hiring, financial planning, attorney education, and strategic planning. He concentrates his trial and appellate practice on Workers' Compensation and Employer Liability on behalf of self-insured and insured businesses. He collaborates with members of the business caucus and members of the General Assembly in Springfield to draft workers' compensation legislation. Committed to growing the communities of Chicagoland, including the legal community, Bill is a sought-after speaker and board member. Bill also publishes on topics germane to his practice and to the community at large.



Ashley Bayless

Director of People and Culture, Gallagher Asphalt Corporation

Ashley serves as the Director of People and Culture for Gallagher Asphalt Corporation, a paving general contractor and manufacturer in the Chicagoland area. In her current role, she functions as a Human Resources Department of One, facilitates the organization's leadership training and development, and oversees the company's Marketing and Communications department. She spent the first decade of her career in the medical field before transitioning to the construction industry in 2022. She holds a BS from Bradley University, a MS from Western Governors University, and SHRM-CP credentials provided by the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM).



Jeff Cravalho

Senior Manager of Workers' Compensation, Caterpillar Inc.

Jeff Cravalho is a seasoned risk management professional with more than a decade of experience in workers' compensation and claims leadership. Jeff has led large-scale claims operations, process improvement initiatives, analytics programs, and automation strategies at both Caterpillar and Amazon. Known for his data-driven approach and passion for innovation, he specializes in optimizing claim outcomes, enhancing operational efficiency, and developing high-performing teams. Jeff holds a Bachelors Degree in Economics from Liberty University and an associate in risk management designation (ARM) from The Institutes. Jeff is committed to advancing the future of workers' compensation through technology, analytics, and continuous improvement.



Christine Jagodzinski

Shareholder, Nyhan, Bambrick, Kinzie, & Lowry, P.C.

Christine Jagodzinski concentrates her practice in workers' compensation and employment law matters in addition to serving on Nyhan's Board of Directors and as a co-Managing Shareholder. Christine practices across various industries, representing clients in multiple levels of insurance to proactively address the interests of each party. As an accomplished trial attorney over the last 24 years, Christine utilizes her unique experiences to deliver proactive advice concerning workers' compensation defense and employment issues as well as to provide her clients with effective solutions to unique situations. Outside of her legal practice, Christine is active with the Workers' Compensation Lawyers Association (WCLA). She has been a member of the organization since 2017 and previously served as a board member, secretary, vice-president, and president.



Lori Poppe Hiltabrand

Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel, Illinois Chamber of Commerce

Lori comes from 25 years in private practice litigating insurance defense, employment law, casualty and workers compensation matters. She began her career with Heyl, Royster in Springfield. In 2003, she opened a Springfield office for Chicago based Hennessy & Roach. From 2005 – 2022, she was a partner with Koepke & Hiltabrand, PC. Lori has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Illinois Wesleyan University and graduated with honors from Southern Illinois University School of Law. She lives in rural Pleasant Plains with her husband, daughter and son.



State Representative Dan Ugaste

Illinois State Representative, 65th District

Representative Dan Ugaste was first elected to the Illinois House in 2018. He represents the 65th District, which includes the far western suburbs of Chicagoland, including the areas in and around Campton Hills, Elburn, Elgin, Geneva, Lily Lake, South Elgin, St. Charles & Wayne. Ugaste is a former shareholder and attorney at the firm of Nyhan, Bambrick, Kinzie and Lowry, specializing in workers' compensation defense & other relation litigation. He works every day to protect businesses from over-zealous advocates in the court system and against a system of regulations & red tape that hamper efforts to create their product, deliver a valuable service & provide good paying jobs for workers & their families.



Diandra Abate

Partner, Amundsen Davis Law, LLC

Diandra dedicates her practice to defending employers, insurers, and carriers against workers' compensation claims. As a partner in the firm's Workers' Compensation Service Group, she manages workers' compensation and subrogation claims from inception through resolution, whether through alternative dispute resolution or litigation. She works proactively with claims specialists, third-party administrators, and insureds to attain cost effective resolution of workers' compensation issues. In addition, Diandra is a seasoned litigator with experience arguing complex matters before the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission and state courts. She also counsels her clients on related compliance topics, such as Medicare, to minimize risk and exposure.



Matt Gorski

Partner, Amundsen Davis Law, LLC

As a Partner with Nyhan, Adam Cox's (he/him) practice primarily focuses on workers' compensation trial defenses but it quickly expands in scope. Adam is a seasoned trial attorney, representing the interests of employers throughout Illinois for over two decades. He prides himself in handling complicated and high-exposure claims, while tailoring his skills to the unique demands, goals, and priorities of each client and situation.

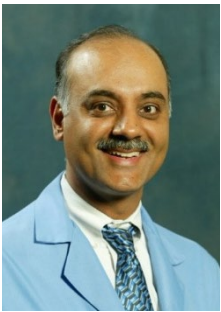
In addition to his law practice, Adam also serves as the Executive Director of the Illinois Self-Insurers' Association (ISIA), playing an integral role in directing "the voice" of Illinois self-insurers and businesses in workers' compensation matters.



Kevin Deuschle

Vice President, IFMK Law

Kevin J. Deuschle joined IFMK Law from Inman & Fitzgibbons (I&F) where he was a Partner, Shareholder, and member of the Executive Committee. He was also and remains Chair of the firm's Client Education Committee and Information Technology Practice Management group, including the Committee on Digital Ethics. Kevin is primarily known for his Workers' Compensation Defense practice, representing insurance carriers, self-insured businesses, risk management associations, third-party administrators, and municipalities in industries that include transportation, health care, food service, and manufacturing. He is also an experienced litigator who has consulted with clients on risk management and employment issues, enforcement of clients' subrogation rights, Medicare Secondary Payer compliance issues and matters related to general insurance defense.



Raj Khanna, M.D.

Medical Director, CompCorePro

Raj Khanna, MD, is a sports medicine specialist who has more than 30 years of occupational health experience. He owned occupational medicine clinics in Illinois that provided medical care to about 700 companies and 15 sports teams during his career. Dr. Khanna is the co-founder of CompCorePro. CompCorePro is a proprietary software with medical algorithms that helps employers take control of their workers compensation claims costs and get their injured employees the appropriate medical care cost-effectively. Our software and team of clinicians assist HR directors, safety directors, business owners, and adjusters in managing our clients Worker's Compensation claims. CompCorePro currently works with about 100 companies in 31 states. Our clients typically see a 20-30% reduction in their claims costs in the first year if they follow our medical algorithms and allow us to assist in facilitating care. We help eliminate the inefficiencies and reduce the abuse within the workers compensation system.



Adam C. Young, M.D.

Anesthesiologist and Interventional Pain Management Physician, Illinois Bone & Joint Institute

Adam C. Young, MD, is a board-certified anesthesiologist and pain management physician, fellowship-trained in pain management. He attended the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Rockford and completed his residency and fellowship training at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. As an anesthesiologist and interventional pain management physician, Dr. Young understands the complex nature of pain, including physical impairment, emotional and psychological distress, and its effect on normal human function. Since pain can affect each individual differently, it is important that Dr. Young takes time to understand his patients' unique story, develop trust and provide a sense of comfort.



John Campbell

Partner, Keefe Campbell Biery & Associates

John Campbell received his JD from Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1999 and co-founded the Keefe, Campbell, Biery & Associates firm in 2003. John's area of concentration is in workers' compensation as well as employment and OSHA citation defense. John enjoys teaching as an adjunct professor of workers' compensation law as well. JD from Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1999 and co-founded the Keefe, Campbell, Biery & Associates firm in 2003. John's area of concentration is in workers' compensation as well as employment and OSHA citation defense. John enjoys teaching as an adjunct professor of workers' compensation law. In addition to his work as a courtroom litigator, John is also an adjunct law professor and regular speaker regarding workers' compensation and employment law issues.



Shawn Biery

Partner, Keefe Campbell Biery & Associates

Shawn Biery received his JD from Thomas Jefferson School of Law in 2001. He was a founding member of Keefe, Campbell, Biery & Associates in 2003 after practicing in employment law and patent law firms prior. Shawn utilizes strategies similar to those he developed while an active-duty member of the US Marines conducting desert warfare training. In addition to his work as a courtroom litigator, Shawn is also an adjunct law professor and regular speaker regarding workers' compensation and employment law issues.



Michael J. Brennan

Chairman, Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission

Michael J. Brennan was appointed as Chairman of the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission by Governor JB Pritzker in 2019. On March 13, 2023, he was reappointed as Chairman, by Governor Pritzker. He previously served as a Public Member Commissioner from 2013 to 2018.

As Chairman he has executed procedural changes leading to the creation and implementation of a paperless filing system for the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission, as well as a virtual process for the appearance of parties at monthly status calls and pre-trial hearings.

Mr. Brennan earned both his Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctorate Degrees at De Paul University. He has practiced law in Illinois and has litigated numerous cases reported by the Illinois Appellate Court, the Illinois Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court. From 1991 through 2013, Mr. Brennan was engaged in a private law practice, with an emphasis on Workers' Compensation. Previously, he served as an Illinois Assistant Attorney General, from 1977 through 1991, where he prosecuted Civil Revenue and Criminal Medicaid Fraud cases, before becoming the Chief of the then Industrial Commission Division.

He was among the principal authors of Larson's Illinois Workers' Compensation Handbook and published numerous articles dealing with Illinois Workers' Compensation issues for Quinlan's, Thomson West and Reuters. He has been qualified and testified as an expert on Workers' Compensation matters and has lectured extensively on the topic. He has been elected by his peers as a Martindale-Hubbell Rated AV Preeminent Attorney for over Twenty Years, an Illinois Super Lawyer, an Illinois Leading Lawyer, named as among the Best Lawyers of America and among the Top Attorneys in Illinois by Chicago Magazine. In March of 2024, he was inducted as a Fellow of the College of Workers' Compensation Lawyers. He is a member of Chicago Bar Association and Workers' Compensation Lawyers' Association.



Dr. Doug Craig

President, Atlantic OccuPsych

Dr. Doug Craig serves as President of Atlantic OccuPsych and the lead Psychologist for IME expertise at Midwest Orthopedics at Rush. A former police officer and university professor, Dr. Craig brings a distinctive combination of firsthand field experience, academic expertise, and clinical practice to his work. Over the course of his career, Dr. Craig has conducted more than 20,000 psychological evaluations and is a national subject matter expert in Independent Medical Examinations (IMEs). In addition to his Chicago and Hoffman Estates, IL offices, he oversees a broader national network of experts, in occupational and forensic assessment with specialized training and certification related first responder mental health factors as well. Thus Dr. Craig brings a unique bridge of expertise between forensic assessment, including identification of malingering, as well as treatment practices for mood and trauma pathology.



Jordan Ryan

Vice President, Illinois Chamber of Commerce

With 14 years of experience in the Illinois Legislature and Illinois politics, Jordan Ryan brings a wealth of knowledge to his current position. Jordan has extensive relationships in the House Minority Staff. He started his career under House Minority Leader Tom Cross and later spent nearly a decade on House Minority Leader Jim Durkin's staff. During his time in the HGOP caucus, Jordan served as the Floor Manager, where he was responsible for assisting the minority Floor Leader

during floor debate and with parliamentary procedures. Jordan also has a background as a legislative analyst, primarily focusing on labor, energy, and environmental issues. Jordan is a lifelong resident of Illinois, having been born and raised in the state. He received his degree in political science from Northern Michigan University but has always maintained Illinois as his home. Jordan and his wife Nicole currently reside in Chicago.



Adam Cox

Partner, Nyhan, Bambrick, Kinzie, & Lowry, P.C.

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Lisa Azoory-Keller

Partner, Nyhan, Bambrick, Kinzie, & Lowry, P.C.

Lisa Azoory-Keller (she/her) concentrates her practice exclusively on workers' compensation matters with a passion for representing employers across the state of Illinois. Lisa has extensive trial experience, enjoys tackling complex cases, and values learning about developing areas of workers' compensation law. She has more than a decade of experience defending employers, and

has also represented an injured worker at her former firm. Lisa's former experience as a petitioner's attorney has given her unique insight into the motivations of injured workers and attorneys, which aids in her defense strategy.