

AILA CONFERENCE BIO LIST

Alexander Afanassiev, FosterQuan (Houston, TX)

Alexandre I. Afanassiev is a senior attorney with a Houston based firm of FosterQuan, LLP. His immigration practice concentrates in the area of immigration litigation. He is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and is admitted to practice before the Southern District Court of Texas, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court. Mr. Afanassiev received his J.D. from the University of Houston Law Center. He is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and is fluent in Russian. He may be contacted via e-mail at aaafanassiev@fosterquan.com

Sujata Ajmera, Jackson Lewis (Austin, TX)

Ms. Ajmera has extensive experience in all areas of U.S. immigration and nationality law, but primarily focuses her current practice on all aspects of employment-based immigration and I-9 compliance for large multi-national corporations, as well as small to medium sized businesses. Ms. Ajmera also works with colleges, universities, and secondary institutions to obtain and maintain work authorization for their foreign national employees, including extraordinary and outstanding professors and researchers.

In addition to her broad experience working with corporate clients, she has also represented foreign national artists and performers, as well as professional athletic teams and athletes. Ms. Ajmera is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and is a frequent speaker on immigration and compliance related seminars.

Ms. Ajmera is the Co-Founder and Chair of the South Asian Bar Association of Austin (SABAA) and is a Member of the Board of Directors of the Asian American Resource Center and American Gateways. In 2013, she was named a Texas Rising Star in Immigration Law by Super Lawyers.

Ms. Ajmera is admitted to practice in Texas. Ms. Ajmera earned her B.A. in Economics and Government in 2001 from the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Texas at Austin; she earned her J.D. in 2005 from the University of Texas School of Law.

Magali Suárez Candler, FosterQuan (Houston, TX)

Magali S. Candler is a Partner and Head of Litigation at FosterQuan, LLP. She is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and has been practicing primarily in the area of immigration law for over 20 years.

She started practicing immigration law at Catholic Charities in Houston, first as Staff Attorney, then as Supervising Attorney, and has been Head of Litigation at her current firm (previously Tindall & Foster, P.C.) since leaving Catholic Charities in 2000. She is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), is currently serving on the Liaison Committee of the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) for AILA National and has previously served on the Texas Service Center (TSC) Liaison Committee. She is a former Chair of the Texas Chapter of AILA, having previously served as Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Asylum Office Liaison, and Liaison for the Houston EOIR. She is a member of the State Bar of Texas (SBOT) and has served on the SBOT Committee for Laws Relating to Immigration and Nationality (1998 to 2003). She is currently serving as Vice President for Asylum and Refugee Issues for the SBOT's Immigration Law Section, and has previously served as Vice President for Deportation and Removal. She is a member of the Houston Bar Association (HBA), is currently on the HBA Gender Fairness Committee and has also served on the University of Houston Law Center Public Interest Law Foundation Board (1999-2000). In 1999 the SBOT awarded her the J. Chrys Dougherty Legal

Services Award for outstanding contributions guaranteeing indigents access to the legal system. She serves on the Advisory Board of the Tahirih Justice Center I Houston, and is on the Board of Directors of Houston Early Music, for which she served as President from 2009 to 2012.

Ms. Candler specializes in representation of individuals in removal proceedings and companies in worksite enforcement (Form I-9) proceedings, and advises corporate clients and individuals on inadmissibility and deportability, as well as on the immigration consequences of crimes. She is a frequent lecturer at Immigration Law conferences. Her articles include: "Worksite Enforcement in the ICE Age" (2007) for the University of Texas Immigration Law Conference, "Are We Safer Yet? The Effects of Recent Immigration Legislation," (2005) for the Hispanic National Bar Association; "One-Step Marriage Based Cases" (2013) for AILA National; "VAWA, the 'Best Revenge' for the Immigrant Victim of Domestic Violence" and "Trafficking Victims Protection Act, the 'T' Visa," (various updates), as well as an Ethics presentation (2006), Mock Removal Hearing with Analysis (2010, 2011), and presentations on the Immigration Consequences of Crimes (2011) and Unlawful Presence (2012) for the SBOT. She mentors attorneys, including pro bono attorneys for VAWA, U Visa, T Visa, and asylum. She is admitted to practice in Texas, the U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals (Fifth and Eleventh Circuits) and the Supreme Court of the United States, where she was co-counsel on a winning case in 2012 (*Umer v. Holder*). Magali received her J.D. from the University of Houston Law Center in 1989 and was licensed in 1989.

Gregory Z. Chen, Director of Advocacy, AILA (Washington, D.C.)

Gregory Chen is Director of Advocacy for the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Prior to joining AILA in 2010, Greg served as Director for Legislative Affairs with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and as Director for Policy and Advocacy at U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants. He came to Washington DC after spending five years in San Francisco at Legal Services for Children representing children in detention and removal proceedings and other immigration matters as well as child welfare, juvenile delinquency, and education law proceedings. He is a graduate of Harvard College and NYU Law School and clerked for the Honorable Stephen Reinhardt of the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. Greg and his wife, Joanne Lin, reside in Washington, DC with their two children: daughter Tenaya and son Shanwai.

Bruce Coane, Coane & Associates (Houston, TX)

Bruce A. Coane, of Coane and Associates, PLLC has practiced in the areas of immigration and nationality law and labor and employment law for the past 30 years. Mr. Coane is the founder and past president of the National Employment Lawyers Association – Houston Chapter and is past president of the American Immigration Lawyers Association – Texas Chapter. He is board certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Mr. Coane has appeared on various TV and radio talk shows, and he is the author of many published papers on various legal topics. He is a frequent speaker at professional education programs. Mr. Coane received his B.A., with honors, from Penn State University and his J.D. from the University of Houston. He has handled cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and Texas Supreme Court, as well as various U.S. Courts of Appeal across the country. He has offices in Houston and Miami Beach.

Mark Cross, Berry Appleman & Leiden (Houston, TX)

Mark Cross is a Senior Associate in the Houston office of Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP. He devotes his practice to all aspects of corporate and business immigration matters relating to temporary work visas, employment-based immigration, naturalization, consular processing, and the immigration practices and regulations for foreign employment offshore on the Outer Continental Shelf. Mr. Cross' clients include both large multinational corporations and regional companies in various industries.

Prior to joining Berry Appleman & Leiden, Mr. Cross was a Senior Associate for a national immigration law firm. Additionally, he attended the Foreign Service Institute in Washington, D.C. and served as a Consular Officer for the U.S. Department of State

Corina Farias, FosterQuan (Austin, TX)

Corina M. Farias received a Bachelor's degree in English from Texas A&M University and her law degree from Widener University School of Law in Pennsylvania. Ms. Farias is Board Certified in Immigration & Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and has been practicing immigration law since 2001. While in law school, she interned with the Executive Office for Immigration Review (Immigration Court). Prior to joining FosterQuan, Ms. Farias practiced employment and family-based immigration law at a prominent Buffalo New York immigration firm, where she concentrated in deportation defense. Ms. Farias also worked for the Political Asylum Project of Austin as a coordinating attorney. She is admitted to the State Bar of Texas and is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, the Austin Bar Association, the Hispanic Bar Association of Austin and the Travis County Women Lawyers' Association. Ms. Farias has been recognized as one of the top immigration practitioners in the state, as a Texas Rising Star, in the Texas Monthly magazine. She is fluent in Spanish.

Gary Frost, Chavez & Valko (Dallas, TX)

Gary Frost received his Bachelor's Degree from the University of North Texas in 1990, and his Juris Doctor from the University of Tulsa in 1995. While at the University of Tulsa, he was a three year member of the school's trial team, president of the Board of Advocates, production editor for the Tulsa Law Review and had an article published in the Tulsa Law Review. He is licensed to practice in Texas and is admitted to practice in the US District Court for the Northern District of Texas. He is also an active member of the American Immigration Lawyer Association. Mr. Frost's broad legal practice experience has included practice in private law firms as well as in-house counsel positions with both - public and private corporations. As a result, he brings a wide range of knowledge and experience to the immigration practice at Chavez & Valko. His immigration practice primarily focuses on detention and removal, federal court litigation. He also assists clients with nonimmigrant and immigrant visas, adjustment of status and naturalization. Among other clients, Gary had counseled and represented Grammy-nominated singer and NHRA race car driver. In addition he assists businesses in matters ranging from formation selection to contractual and corporate governance issues.

Raed Gonzalez, Gonzalez Olivieri (Houston, TX)

Raed Gonzalez was born in Puerto Rico. He earned his B.A. (Cum Laude, 1992) and J.D. (Cum Laude, 1996) from the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, where he was also associate editor of the law review. As part of his JD, in 1995 he studied comparative constitutional law at the University of Barcelona (Spain) imparted by Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. He received his L.L.M. in Health Law from the University of Houston's Law Center (1998).

Mr. Gonzalez is presently a senior litigator and principal at Gonzalez Olivieri LLC. He has considerable litigation experience representing clients throughout the US in immigration, federal district and appellate courts. Mr. Gonzalez is admitted to the 1st, 2nd, 5th and 6th Circuit Court of Appeals, the Southern District of TX, the Supreme Court of TX, the Supreme Court of PR and the Supreme Court of the US.

His published precedent decisions include Manuel Flores Ledezma v. Gonzalez, 415 F.3d 375, 380 (5th Cir. 2005) (the first case to interpret the real ID Act in the 5th Circuit), Perez-Pimentel v. Mukasey, 530 F.3d 321 (5th Cir. 2008) (challenging the AG regulations as ultravires) McCarthy v. Mukasey, 555 F.3d 459, 462 (5th Cir. 2009) (the first case in the fifth circuit to challenge the visa waiver regulations); most notably on his groundbreaking victory before the U.S. Supreme Court where the court granted revoked the 5th Circuit and remanded the case of Dada v. Mukasey, 554 U.S. 1 (2008) and finally on his most recent grant of certiorari before the Supreme Court on a

collaborative effort with Alexander Affanasiev from FosterQuan in *Alexis v. Holder*, No. 09-955, (Unpublished) (June 21, 2010).

Mr. Gonzalez is involved is an active member of the State Bar of TX, the PR State Bar, the Houston Bar, and a member of AILA and EOIR Liaison for the Texas Chapter from 2010-2013. He served as the Advocacy Liaison from 2003-2004 and from 2005-2010. Mr. Gonzalez is an advocate for Comprehensive Immigration Reform and frequent speaker with AILA National, AILA Texas Chapter, the State Bar of Texas and other non profit organizations. He has organized conferences for the AILA TX Chapter, the State Bar of Texas and is a faculty member for the University of Texas Conference on Immigration. Mr. Gonzalez is a regular contributor with Univision Houston, Telemundo Houston and Televisa Mexico. He has was interviewed on 2011 by Greta Van Susteren on her nationally acclaimed TV Show, "On the Record" (National Fox News), has been a guest of Julie Banderas' American News Headquarters and Justice with Judge Jeanine Pirro (National Fox News Channel) . Mr. Gonzalez is a frequent contributor with the Houston Chronicle and has been featured in the New York Times after representing and winning asylum for Kevin Cassasola, a migrant child portrayed in the Oscar nominated HBO documentary "Which Way Home" was granted asylum in the United States. Mr. Gonzalez has been selected as Houston Top Lawyer 2012 and 2013 by the H Houston Magazine and has been named Super Lawyer by Super Lawyer Thompson Reuters Organization for the year 2013.

Angelica Grado-Wright, Berry Appleman & Leiden (Houston, TX)

Angelica Grado-Wright is a Senior Associate 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 and Colorado, 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. She is fluent in Spanish and conversant in Italian.

Kathryn Karam, The Law Office of Kathryn N. Karam, P.C. (Houston, TX)

Kathryn N. Karam has over five years of experience practicing immigration law. She is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Attorney Karam opened her law practice in July 2013 in order to provide high-quality, personalized services on a range of immigration matters. Her office offers services in Spanish and Chinese.

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, and detention and removal cases. She gained a reputation for being diligent, passionate, creative, and a dedicated problem solver. 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 J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law, Attorney Karam earned a Bachelor of Arts 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.

Ms. 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, the Tahirih Justice Center for Immigrant Women and Girls, and volunteered at citizenship clinics in the Houston area.

Faye Kolly, DMCA & Associates (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 specializes in several areas of immigration law and is dedicated to providing comprehensive short and long-term immigration legal strategies to individual and corporate clients.

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 and artists among others. She is also focused on developing U.S. immigration solutions to keep families together.

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)." In 2012 Faye often volunteers her time a pro bono naturalization clinics in the Austin and San Antonio area.

Faye is a member of the Austin Bar Association and American Immigration Lawyers Association where she previously served as Texas Chapter Citizenship Day coordinator in 2008, 2009. She currently serves as the co-chair of the Austin AILA chapter. She has recently presented at the conference, "REGULATING UNREGULATED MIGRATION: European and U.S. Reactions to Immigration" at the University of Pittsburgh; St. Mary's School of Law Scholar Symposium on "Legal Update: Texas Driver's laws for Temporary Visitors to the U.S."; University of Texas Conference on Immigration and Nationality Law, "In a Country Where Unlawful Presence Reigns, We Bring You "Bars, Tolling and Waivers"; and American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) Annual conference in Nashville, Tennessee on the topic of Unlawful Presence and Status Violations.

Rebecca R. Massiatte, Jackson Lewis (Dallas, TX)

Ms. Massiatte practices exclusively in the areas of immigration and nationality law, with particular emphasis assisting private, corporate and non-profit organizations and individuals obtain visas, and assist with immediate relative processing and naturalization proceedings. She is skilled at advising clients about the foreign labor certification process and the implementation of effective immigration policies with regard to laws governing the employment of foreign nationals in the U.S.

Ms. Massiatte previously worked as an immigration associate attorney at the law firms of Jenkens & Gilchrist and Winstead PC. She was also a judicial law clerk for the San Antonio and Harlingen Immigration Courts (EOIR) through the U.S. Department of Justice, Attorney General's Honors Program. Her bar admissions include the Fifth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals and Texas (2002). She is a member of the State Bar of Texas, American Immigration Lawyers Association, National Association of Women Lawyers, Attorneys Serving the Community (Membership Co-Chair 2011-2013), and a fellow of the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers.

Ms. Massiatte is an appointed Member on the State Bar of Texas Laws Relating to Immigration and Nationality Committee (Member, 2008-2010; Vice Chair, 2010-2011; Chair 2011-2014); previous member of the following American Immigration Lawyers Association appointed committees: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service-Texas Service Center Liaison (2009-2011);

Verification and Document Liaison (2011-2012) and 2012 National Annual Conference Committee (2011-2012); and serves as Co-Coordinator for the Dallas Section/Texas Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Ms. Massiatte has been recognized as a Texas Rising Star in the field of Immigration by Texas Monthly magazine (2009-2013) and recognized in the 2013 edition of *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business*.

Ms. Massiatte is an honors graduate of Texas State University; she has a master's degree in social work from Washington University in St. Louis and a juris doctorate from Washington University School of Law, where she was a founding member of the *Global Studies Law Review* and was named Public Service Law Student of the Year.

Ruth Lozano McChesney, Demott, McChesney, Curtright, & Armendariz (San Antonio, TX)

Ruth Lozano McChesney, born in Mexico, immigrated to the United States as a child when her father took a position as a medical doctor with a Texas hospital. She was raised in a Spanish speaking home and has resided in San Antonio since 1994. She has practiced with the firm since 1998 and has managed it since 2000.

Ms. Lozano McChesney has extensive experience in all facets of immigration and nationality law. Primarily focusing in business immigration matters, she represents, advises and provides legal strategy to companies ranging from Fortune 100/Global 500 to small local businesses in various industries such as healthcare, restaurant, energy, construction, research, religion, technology, and education. Providing comprehensive legal representation for over a decade, she has obtained temporary work visas (E1, E2, E3, H-1Bs, H-2As, H-2Bs, L-1As, L-1Bs, Os, Ps, Qs, R-1s, TNs) and lawful permanent residency (EB1, EB2, EB3, EB4, EB5) for individuals and their families, and has provided corporate counsel on issues ranging from mergers and acquisitions to Department of Labor (DOL) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) I-9 and employer compliance audits. Ms. Lozano McChesney has cultivated expertise in advising foreign national investors and U.S. corporations in all areas including the establishment of EB-5 regional centers.

She has successfully represented clients in an array of professions including researchers, professors, international executives and managers, investors, engineers, IT professionals, accountants, priests, Hebrew instructors, national security experts, medical doctors, nurses, physical therapists, Olympic athletes, circus performers, construction workers, airplane mechanics, landscapers, and chefs.

Ms. Lozano McChesney obtained her Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting from the University of Texas at El Paso and earned her Juris Doctorate from St. Mary's University School of Law. Licensed to practice in Texas, she is a member of the State Bar, charter member of its Immigration and Nationality Section, and a member of the College of the State Bar of Texas. Ms. Lozano McChesney is also licensed to practice before the United States District Court for the Western District of Texas.

Additionally, she is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), the American Bar Association, the San Antonio Bar Association, the San Antonio Free Trade Alliance, the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Asociación de Empresarios Mexicanos (San Antonio, Austin, Houston, and The Woodlands). She has been published in professional journals, has been an invited speaker at Continuing Legal Education conferences and an invited speaker at universities.

She is currently on the Board of Directors of the San Antonio Free Trade Alliance and is the elected Council (2013 – 2015) for The State Bar of Texas' Immigration & Nationality Law Section, and it's former Vice President of Employment Based Issues. As well, she served as its Grant Committee Chair 2012-2013. She is also an active Member of the Mexico Forum Committee, as well as of the Women in International Business Committee of the FTA. She served on the Immigration Legislation Sub-Committee of the Texas Chapter of AILA (2011- 2012), as the Liaison to the Texas Workforce Commission for the Texas Chapter of AILA in 2004, and as co-liaison in 2005.

Susan K. McConn, FosterQuan (Houston, TX)

Susan K. McConn is an Associate Attorney with FosterQuan, LLP, in its Houston office. Ms. McConn graduated *cum laude* from Vanderbilt University, where she majored in Latin American Studies. Ms. McConn is a graduate of the University of Texas School of Law, where she participated as a Student Attorney in the Immigration Law Clinic. She also received a Texas Law Fellowship for a summer clerkship with Catholic Charities of Dallas Immigration and Legal Services. She has been admitted to the State Bar of Texas and is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. In addition, she is a founding member of the State Bar of Texas Section on Immigration and Nationality Law. Ms. McConn's practice is concentrated in the areas of employment-based immigration, family-based immigration, naturalization, and employer sanctions. She has conducted numerous comprehensive Form I-9 audits and has represented several clients during investigations by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Ms. McConn is a frequent speaker on immigration topics before attorneys and human resources professionals.

Lynden Melmed, Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP (Washington, D.C.)

Lynden Melmed splits his time between the Washington, D.C. and Northern Virginia offices of Berry, Appleman & Leiden LLP (BAL). Mr. Melmed has unique experience in the legislative and executive branches of the federal government and provides strategic advice to corporations and individuals on complex immigration matters.

Prior to joining BAL, Mr. Melmed served as Chief Counsel of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), that agency's highest ranking legal position. As Chief Counsel of USCIS, Mr. Melmed managed a legal program of approximately 130 attorneys and was a key advisor to senior leadership within USCIS, DHS, the White House, and other federal agencies on all aspects of immigration law.

Prior to his appointment as Chief Counsel, Mr. Melmed served as Special Counsel to Senator John Cornyn (R-Texas), who at that time was Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security and Citizenship. In that capacity, he was actively involved in oversight of the federal immigration agencies and played a leading role in drafting and managing the comprehensive immigration legislation that passed the U.S. Senate in 2006. He also coordinated the agency's litigation strategy through the Department of Justice, including but not limited to national security cases.

Earlier in his career, Mr. Melmed served as an attorney in the DHS and INS General Counsel's offices, where he focused on immigration benefit, visa and border security issues. Before joining the federal government in 2002, Mr. Melmed spent four years in private practice in Dallas, Texas.

Mr. Melmed assists clients in navigating the sensitive political issues that are unique to immigration law. He has served as immigration counsel and as an expert witness on the largest civil and criminal immigration investigations of the past decade. He is also recognized as one of the leading immigration advocacy attorneys in Washington, D.C. and serves as Chair of the Global Immigration Benchmarking Council (GIBC). He also serves as Chair of the Legal Advisory Committee of ImmigrationWorks and as counsel to two of the most influential business immigration coalitions in the country. He has testified before the U.S. Senate's Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, is a frequent lecturer on immigration law and policy, and is quoted frequently in major media outlets.

Mr. Melmed has an active pro-bono practice and provides legal advice to patients and families staying at the Children's Inn at the National Institutes of Health. Mr. Melmed received his Juris Doctorate and Bachelor of Arts degrees from the University of Virginia. He currently resides in Bethesda, Maryland with his wife and two daughters.

Irene Mugambi, Irene Mugambi Law Office (Dallas, Texas)

Irene Mugambi has over 17 years in the legal profession in Dallas, Texas. She graduated from SMU, Dedman School of Law in 1995. She began her legal career working at the Dallas County District Attorney's office serving as an Assistant DA. She left the DA's Office to start her solo practice in September 1997, handling criminal defense, family and immigration law cases. Today her primary focus of practice is in the areas of family law and immigration law. Her unique areas of practice have provided her with extensive experience in the two areas. Her immigration practice revolves around family based immigration cases as well complex litigation and removal defense in the asylum and withholding areas. She has assisted served as a legal advisor to the Center of Survivors as well as other small immigrant communities. She has professional affiliations with the Texas Family Bar Association, J.L. Turner. She has served in the AILA liaison committee with Dallas USCIS Field Office and is presently the chair of the committee.

Jessica Mullins, Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP (Dallas, TX)

Jessica Mullins-Ta is an 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.

Maggie Murphy, Jackson Lewis (Austin, TX)

Maggie Murphy is a Partner at Jackson Lewis, LLP in Austin, Texas. She is Board Certified in Immigration & Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and is past-Chair and a Founding Officer of the State Bar of Texas Immigration & Nationality Law Section.

Maggie specializes in complex employment-based immigration cases and has sub-specialties in complicated work visa and permanent residence filings. She also specializes in immigration-related employer compliance issues, including I-9 audits and investigations, E-Verify compliance training and initiatives, and export-control compliance in the work visa context.

Ms. Murphy is a frequent speaker on business-related immigration compliance topics and has leadership roles in several Texas, Southwest, and National immigration sections and committees.

Pamela D. Nieto, BakerHostetler (Houston, TX)

Pamela (Pam) Nieto's practice is focused on handling business immigration matters. Ms. Nieto has extensive experience helping clients meet their business immigration needs, whether a company desires to transfer an employee from an office abroad, needs to hire a foreign national to fill a vacant position or is interested in obtaining a work visa in connection with opening an office or starting a new venture in the United States. She handles the full range of temporary (nonimmigrant) visa matters, including H-1Bs (specialty occupation), L-1s (intracompany transfer), including Blanket Ls for very large operations, E-1s (treaty trader), E-2s (treaty investor), TNs (Treaty NAFTA), O-1s (extraordinary ability), among others. She also handles the full range of permanent ("green card" or

“immigrant”) visa matters, including permanent labor certifications (PERM), multinational manager petitions, EB-5 investor petitions, extraordinary ability petitions, etc. Ms. Nieto works with clients in arranging for J-1 (exchange visitor) visas, as well as in securing J-1 waivers of the two-year home residency requirement. She works with her clients to determine which visa options might be available in a particular situation and, when more than one option is available, she helps her clients consider and assess additional factors so that the optimal visa category is chosen for the situation. Ms. Nieto also handles citizenship related issues, including working with clients to pursue naturalization and working with clients considering relinquishing their citizenship.

In addition, Ms. Nieto provides assistance in setting up compliance programs for and performing audits on I-9 Employment Verification programs and H-1B Labor Condition Application/Public Access File programs. She also works with clients to assess and address export control certification requirements related to hiring foreign nationals. Ms. Nieto counsels clients in connection with programs such as E-Verify and IMAGE, as well as in connection with preparing for inspections and site visits. She is also able to assist in the due diligence review process by assessing the impact a proposed action, such as a merger or acquisition, might have on existing foreign national employees' authorization to continue their employment.

Ms. Nieto works with companies in all industries, from manufacturing, oil and gas, general service providers, healthcare and hospitality, to those in the financial sector, and professional sports teams, among others. She regularly works with multinational companies with hundreds of offices and thousands of employees around the globe, as well as small privately held companies with a single office. Ms. Nieto is conversant in Spanish.

Dustin J. O’Quinn, Gardere Wynne & Sewell (Dallas, TX)

Dustin O’Quinn counsels clients on a full range of immigration issues, including assisting employers in developing and auditing their employment eligibility and I-9 compliance programs. Mr. O’Quinn has significant experience in employment-based and family-based immigration, as well as with uncommon visas, including investor visas and extraordinary-ability visas. Mr. O’Quinn is fluent in both English and Spanish, allowing him to serve a wide array of clients.

Mr. O’Quinn is a frequent speaker and writer on employment-based Immigration law and related matters. Prior to joining Gardere, Mr. O’Quinn honed his legal skills as a Corporate Immigration Associate at two of the most prominent international immigration law firms based in the United States.

Mr. O’Quinn serves on the Board of Directors and volunteers with the Human Rights Initiative of North Texas. He is on the Board of the J.L. Turner Legal Association (Dallas’ Black Lawyers Association). Mr. O’Quinn is also Vice President of Employment-based Issues for the State Bar of Texas Immigration and Nationality Law Section. He is Co-Chair of this conference.

Karen-Lee Pollak, Bell Nunnally (Dallas, TX)

Karen-Lee Pollak is the chair of Bell Nunnally & Martin’s Immigration Section. Selected as a Texas Rising Star® by Texas Monthly and featured as one of *Newsweek’s* **Leaders in Immigration Law Showcase**, Karen-Lee provides full-service legal immigration counsel to large corporations, small businesses and individuals. Karen-Lee’s immigration docket routinely includes representing businesses and families in obtaining immigrant and non immigrant visas to live and work in the United States. Karen-Lee also assists corporations in compliance audits and immigration-related corporation policy formulation. She is the author of an immigration blog, Immigration Solutions which provides information and updates on immigration issues, topics and tips. She is also a frequent speaker and writer on immigration issues. For more information on Karen-Lee's practice, visit our **immigration website** at www.immigrationbn.com.

Sonali Patnaik, Patnaik Law Office (Dallas, TX)

Sonali Patnaik is managing attorney at Patnaik Law Office, PLLC in Dallas TX. Since 2004, she has focused her practice exclusively on Immigration and Nationality Law, handling complex cases before USCIS, Consular Offices, EOIR and the Board of Immigration Appeals.

Sonali is a graduate of The University of Texas at Austin School of Law, where she got her first taste of removal practice in the UT Immigration Clinic. She is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, National Lawyers' Guild, State Bar of Texas, Dallas Bar Association, Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program, and a "Know Your Rights" presenter at the Immigration Court in Dallas. She also regularly volunteers her time to Dallas non-profits who aid immigrant communities, such Mosaic Family Services and Chetna DFW. She can be reached at sonali@patnaiklaw.com.

Lisa Reid, Ogletree Deakins (Houston, TX)

Ms. Reid provides business immigration advice to employers and employees in a wide variety of industries such as energy, information technology, health care, education, engineering, and manufacturing. She counsels employers and foreign nationals on issues relating to nonimmigrant visas such as B-1 business visitor visas, H-1B specialty occupation visas, L-1 multinational manager and executive visas, TN Trade Nafta visas, and J visas for trainees. Ms. Reid also works with employers to obtain permanent residence for foreign national employees through the labor certification process as well as immigrant visas for multinational transferees, National Interest Waiver applicants, and Extraordinary Ability and Outstanding Researcher candidates. In addition, Ms. Reid counsels employers on immigration issues arising from corporate reorganizations and mergers to handling matters arising from work on the Outer Continental Shelf as well as I-9 compliance issues.

Ed Rios, Cox Smith (El Paso, TX)

L. Edward Rios is a shareholder and chairs the Immigration and International Trade Law group of Cox Smith Matthews, Inc. headquartered in San Antonio. He is board certified in immigration and nationality law by the State Bar of Texas, Board of Legal Specialization. He is also an active AILA member, having served on numerous national committees, including Media and Advocacy, CBP Liaison, Admissions and Border Enforcement, and Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Committees. He has served on the AILA Board of Governors and as Chair of the AILA Texas Chapter in addition to providing pro bono legal representation through AILA's Military Assistance Program.

Joy Sanders, The Ezer Law Group (Houston, TX)

Joy E. Sanders concentrates her practice in the area of immigration law, advising and representing U.S. businesses and multinational corporations of all sizes as Of Counsel to The Ezer Law Group in Houston, Texas. Her clients include companies in the energy, manufacturing, finance, real estate and information technology industries, with a particular focus on new and emerging industries such as 'greentech'. Ms. Sanders has extensive experience in preparing PERM labor certification applications and immigrant visa petitions for multinational managers, outstanding researchers, foreign nationals of exceptional and extraordinary ability, and National Interest Waivers. Her expertise includes the full range of temporary (nonimmigrant) petitions and applications, including those for intracompany managers and specialized knowledge professionals, specialty occupations, NAFTA professionals, and business visitors. Ms. Sanders provides her clients with thoughtful, innovative and meticulous legal advice for planning, implementing and managing immigration strategies and policies, and in all facets of nonimmigrant and immigrant visas before the Department of Labor, the Department of State, and United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, among others. She has assisted employers in navigating complex immigration compliance issues relating to employment eligibility and verification, audits, and employment discrimination.

Ms. Sanders received her J.D. from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, and holds an undergraduate degree in Economics, Cum Laude, from the University of North Texas. She is admitted to practice in the State of Texas and is a Charter Member of the State Bar of Texas Immigration and Nationality Law Section. She is the author of several legal articles, and is actively involved in professional organizations, including serving as a Member of *The Houston Lawyer* Editorial Board. Ms. Sanders is Co-Chair of the conference program this year, for the AILA Texas/NM/OK Fall 2013 Chapter Conference

Laurie Snider, Berry Appleman & Leiden (Dallas, TX)

Laurie Snider is a Senior Associate in the Dallas office of Berry Appleman & Leiden LLP. She handles an array of business and family immigration matters including a variety of nonimmigrant visas, green card applications and consular processing. She represents multinational companies predominantly in the oil and gas/energy industry. Ms. Snider has accompanied many clients to U.S. Consulates abroad to obtain visa stamps. Prior to attending law school, Ms. Snider worked for several years as a Human Resources Manager for an international software company. Ms. Snider received her J.D. from Southern Methodist University.

Lincoln Stone, Stone Grzegorek & Gonzalez (Los Angeles, CA)

Lincoln Stone is one of 20 immigration attorneys at Stone Grzegorek & Gonzalez LLP in Los Angeles, www.sggimmigration.com, and he is one of five Certified Specialists in immigration and nationality law at the law firm. Lincoln's legal training includes a federal court clerkship, trial attorney experience with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, private practice experience in business transactions and litigation, and more than 20 years of private immigration law practice. Lincoln served five years as Chair of AILA's EB5 Investor Visa Committee, was Conference Program Chair for five editions of AILA National's EB5 Investor Visa Conference, and is Editor in Chief of *Immigration Options for Investors & Entrepreneurs*.

Olsi Vrapı, Noble & Vrapı (Santa Fe, NM)

Olsi Vrapı is the managing partner at Noble & Vrapı, P.A. with offices in Albuquerque and Santa Fe, NM and soon in El Paso, TX. Mr. Vrapı, is a frequent speaker in immigration law topics and is heavily involved in AILA committees such as conference planning and national and local liaison activities. Mr. Vrapı is an author and editor for AILA publications and is also an adjunct professor of law at the University of New Mexico School of law. Mr. Vrapı is the recipient of the Wasserman Memorial Award (awarded to the entire AILA Amicus Committee in 2010) and of the Minsky Young Lawyer Award awarded in 2012.

David Ware, Ware|Gasparian (Metairie, Louisiana)

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, and NACUA, and is a frequent speaker and author on immigration topics, including recent AILA and ILW publications and *BusinessWeek* online.

Terry Weir, Dunbar Harder PLLC (Houston, TX)

Terry Weir is a senior attorney with Dunbar Harder, PLLC. She specializes in immigration and nationality law with a focus on business immigration. Ms. Weir has been licensed to practice law in the State of Texas since 1996 and is certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.

Ms. Weir has extensive business immigration experience assisting companies and individuals with nonimmigrant and immigrant processes. She represents companies ranging from Fortune 500 to start-up in a wide range of industries such as education, technology, biotech, oil and gas, medical and manufacturing.

Ms. Weir provides compliance expertise to assist companies with planning, training and internal audits as well as enforcement representation. She also represents entertainment groups; individuals of extraordinary ability in business, science, the arts and athletics; as well as outstanding professors and persons performing work in the national interest.

She is frequently invited to speak on topics related to immigration law. She has been an Executive Committee member of the American Immigration Lawyers (AILA) Texas Chapter for Texas New Mexico and Oklahoma since 2010 and currently serves as the Chair. She has also served as AILA liaison for the Texas Service Center and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Houston headquarters. Ms. Weir is a member of the U.S. Mexico Bar Association board.

She is admitted to the State Bar of Texas, the Southern District of Texas District Courts, and the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Judge William K. Zimmer, former* EOIR Immigration Judge, Houston, TX & Miami, FL (*retired Feb. 2012)