

Presenter Bios

Katie Anderson

Katie Anderson develops legal solutions for governmental entities, including educational institutions, housing authorities, and special districts. Katie assists educational institutions with labor and employment law matters such as employee leave, discrimination, grievances, investigations, discipline, and termination. Her work with school boards includes board fiduciary duties and governance, Texas Public Information Act, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Texas Open Meetings Act.

Katie was appointed as a Special Discovery Master in Collin County State District Court and is General Counsel for Texas Public Risk Management Association. Katie loves to leave a client better than she found them by tenaciously identifying workable legal solutions.

Corey J. Benson

Corey J. Benson is Dean of Students and Deputy Title IX Coordinator at The University of Texas Permian Basin. Corey was the recipient of the Outstanding New Professional and Outstanding Mid-Level Professional awards from the Texas Association of College and University Student Personnel Administrators (TACUSPA) as well as the Outstanding New Professional and Service to Student Affairs awards from the NASPA Gender and Sexuality Knowledge Community. Corey earned a master's degree in educational leadership and policy studies from The University of Texas at San Antonio and a bachelor's degree in communication from University of Houston-Clear Lake.

Matthew Besmer

Matthew Besmer has been General Counsel for the State Center Community College District since 2019, which includes five campuses serving 69,000 students. Previously he served as Deputy Attorney General for the California Department of Justice. Dr. Besmer has a an Ed.D. from Creighton University and a JD from the Indiana University McKinney School of Law.

Ah Ra Cho

Ah Ra Cho, Ph.D. has many years of expertise and experience working in higher education spanning from assessment and evaluation, accreditation, institutional research and effectiveness, teaching, academic affairs, and student affairs. Ah Ra recently transitioned over from working in traditional higher education, and recently started a job as a researcher working for an education publishing company. She has a Ph.D. in Higher Education from the University of North Texas, MS.Ed. in Higher Education & Student Affairs from Baylor University, and B.A. in Biology from Texas A&M University.

Kathleen Conn

Kathleen Conn, Ph.D., J.D., LL.M. is Of Counsel with the firm of King, Spry, Herman, Freund & Faul, LLC in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, specializing in Education Law. She also teaches as an Adjunct Professor in Public Health at Muhlenberg College, Allentown, and is the author of three books and numerous book chapters and scholarly publications in science, education, and law.

Jennifer Cowley

Jennifer Evans-Cowley is the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of North Texas. As provost she leads one of the nation's largest and most diverse Carnegie Tier 1 public research universities, educating more than 42,000 students through a broad and balanced array of 230 academic programs. The education of these students is through the efforts of more than 1,700 faculty and 1,200 academic staff. Prior to becoming provost at UNT in 2017, Cowley served the Ohio State University for more than 15 years. Cowley is a native of North Texas, growing up in Arlington. She was awarded a bachelor of science in political science, a master of urban planning, and a PhD in urban and regional science, all from Texas A&M University. In addition, she earned a master of public administration degree from the University of North Texas.

Danielle Dary

Danielle Dary is an Associate in the Austin office of Thompson & Horton. Prior to joining Thompson & Horton, Danielle was a staff attorney at the Texas Association of School Boards, Community College Services where she provided legal advice to Texas public community colleges, and developed legal reference and model local board policies. Danielle also previously served as a compliance investigator for the Texas A&M University System where she investigated high-profile complaints across the university system related to civil rights discrimination, Title IX and sexual harassment, and related retaliation.

Todd A. DeMitchell

Todd A. DeMitchell is a professor emeritus and former John & H. Irene Peters Professor of Education and University Distinguished Professor at the University of New Hampshire. He completed his M.A. at the University of California, Davis, his Ed.D. at the University of Southern California, and his post-doctoral study at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

William R. Fossey

William "Richard" Fossey is professor emeritus at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He holds a law degree from the University of Texas and a doctorate in education policy from Harvard University. He is on the Editorial Advisory Board of *Education Law Reporter* and blogs regularly on the student loan crisis at condemnedtodebt.org. In 2012, he retired from the University of North Texas, where he was the Mike Moses Endowed Chair and a full professor.

Christine Hubbard

Dr. Christine Hubbard has served as President of the North Texas Community College Consortium since September of 2014. Christine has more than twenty-five years of experience working in higher education. She has taught at the University of North Texas, the University of Texas at Arlington, and at four of the five campuses of Tarrant County College District. Christine earned a Bachelor of Arts in English, Master of Arts in Radio, Television, and Film, and Doctor of Philosophy in English from the University of North Texas.

Neal Hutchens

Neal Hutchens, J.D., Ph.D., serves as Professor in the University of Mississippi Department of Higher Education. He is also an Affiliated Faculty in the University of Mississippi School of Law. His research focuses on legal and policy issues in higher education, with a key strand of his scholarship centered on free speech and academic freedom. Among his publications, Hutchens is on the author team—along with William A. Kaplin, Barbara A. Lee, and Jacob H. Rooksby—for the sixth edition of *The Law of Higher Education*, a leading treatise on higher education law.

Rosalind Latiner Raby

Rosalind Latiner Raby, Ph.D., is a senior lecturer at California State University, Northridge in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department, is the Director of California Colleges for International Education, a non-profit consortium of California community colleges, and is the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education (JCIHE). Dr. Raby received her Ph.D. in Comparative and International Education from UCLA and, since 1984, has worked with community college faculty and administrators to help them internationalize their campuses. Dr. Raby has been publishing in the field of community college internationalization since 1985.

Noah Lelek

Dr. Noah Lelek received a Ph.D. in Theatre and Performance Studies from the University of Missouri in 2012, where he was the Assistant Director for the MU Interactive Theatre Troupe and a member of the prestigious Rollins Society. He also received a B.S.Ed. in Speech and Theatre Education and a M.A. in Theatre, both from Missouri State University. After receiving his Ph.D., he briefly worked for a theatre company in Chicago creating original musicals with incarcerated youth. In 2015, Dr. Lelek was awarded the Diversity Award for Excellence from the Mississippi Board of Trustees and the Mid-Career Award for Artistic Scholarship, Teaching and Leadership from the National Communication Association. His research and creative interests include performance auto/ethnography, performative writing, devising, directing, lighting design, and theatre for social justice. He is the creator and Artistic Director of the TWU Interactive Theatre Troupe.

Scott Lewis

Scott Lewis, J.D. is a partner with The NCHERM Group. He is the co-founder and advisory board member of ATIXA (the Association for Title IX Administrators – www.atixa.org) and NaBITA (the National Behavioral Intervention Team Association - www.NaBITA.org). He has served as Special Advisor to Saint Mary's, Associate Vice Provost at the University of South Carolina, and as a Student Conduct and Residence Life administrator at Texas A&M University. He also serves as faculty, teaching courses in Education, Law, Political Science, and Business. He works with the Department of Education's Offices of Civil Rights and the Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women as a trainer and consultant, training their staff and investigators. Scott was a consultant to the Office of the Vice President and the White House Task Force on issues of Sexual Misconduct and Title IX in schools and on campus. He works with and trains athletes, coaches and administrators at all levels of intercollegiate and K-12 athletics as well as with the USOC®, the Center for Safe Sport® and the NCAA® in the areas of sexual misconduct and gender equity in sport.

Andrew Little

Andrew Little is Associate Dean of Abilene Christian University's College of Business Administration, where he also teaches business law. A 2000 graduate of Texas Tech University School of Law, he practiced law for ten years in Texas before joining the ACU faculty in 2010. His research encompasses employment law, environmental issues, and business ethics. He has published articles in the American Business Law Journal, the Journal of Legal Studies Education, and the Journal of College and University Law, among others.

Amy Magee

Amy Magee, J.D., is the Director of TASB Community College Services. She provides legal services to TASB's 50 community college members and develops and reviews their policies. She also publishes educational materials, including FAQs (colleges.tasb.org), and is a frequent presenter. Amy received her Bachelor of Science from Texas A&M University and her J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law.

Maureen "Moe" McGuinness

Dr. Maureen "Moe" McGuinness leads the Dean of Students Office and provides administrative supervision for the Intervention Team, Conduct & Community Standards, Survivor Advocacy, Food Pantry Presented by Kroger, Student Legal Services, the We Mean Green Fund, and the RISE Center. Dr. Moe is also a Deputy Title IX Coordinator and chairs the CARE Team and Clery team. She began her tenure as Dean of Students in 2011, and has worked at UNT since 1997 as a hall director, in central housing and as Dean of Students. Dr. Moe received her B.A. in Communications from John Carroll University, a Master's in Counseling & Higher Education and her Doctorate in Higher Education from UNT.

Lori McNabb

Lori McNabb is the Senior Strategic Consultant at Civitas Learning. In that role, she helps higher education leaders, faculty, and staff members achieve their student retention and graduation goals through the development of data-informed decision-making cultures and processes. She also serves as an adjunct instructor at St. Edward's University where she teaches a course called "Data Analytics for Leaders" for master's students and is developing "Predictive Analytics for Higher Education and Leadership" for doctoral students. Prior to joining industry, Lori was a student affairs leader at The University of Texas at Austin and The University of Texas System. She also managed alumni relations at St. Edward's. Lori holds a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy from UT Austin. She earned an M.S. in Organizational Leadership and Ethics and a B.A. in Economics from St. Edward's.

Renee McNamara

Renee is a proud UNT alum, earning her M.S. in Clinical & Mental Health Counseling and a B.S. in Human Development. She serves as the Associate Dean of Students, overseeing intervention services programs in the office including the CARE Team, Seeking Options & Solutions program, the UNT Food Pantry presented by Kroger, and the Student-initiated withdrawal process. Renee is committed to helping students overcome barriers they may experience while trying to reach their educational goals.

Ross Mitchell

Ross works closely with schools, universities, and religious institutions to create systems of accountability that mitigate abuse risk. Ross trains employees and parents, conducts risk assessments, and develops policies to ensure youth are protected in his clients' programs. Prior to coming to Praesidium, Ross practiced law in his firm's education practice group. He represented teachers in a variety of employment matters and worked closely with both teacher organizations and school districts. Ross graduated from Baylor University with a bachelor's degree in Marketing and obtained his law degree from South Texas College of Law in Houston, Texas.

David Nguyen

David Nguyen is an Assistant Professor of Urban Education Leadership and Policy and Adjunct Professor of Law at IUPUI, where he teaches and researches in areas of education law and policy. David combines his academic and professional expertise and concentrates his research in education policy, specifically in diversity in education, issues of ethics, governance/administration, and leadership, and law and policy implications in education.

Kim Novak

Kimberly Novak, CEO NovakTalks is an independent consultant for Campus Safety, Student Risk Management and Integrating Public Health approaches to prevention into work with college students. Additionally she serves Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity as the Director of Health & Safety. She is recognized as a national expert in student-focused risk management, student organization conduct, hazing prevention, and involving students in campus safety efforts. She has been invited to speak /consult at national conferences and on college campuses around the country and has served as faculty for several nationally sponsored professional institutes including the Interfraternity Institute and the Interdisciplinary Institute for Hazing Prevention.

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Scott Rizzo

Scott Rizzo, Ph.D., is the Community College Policy Specialist for TASB Community College Services. Scott is a resource for Texas community colleges in relation to their local policy development and is an expert in higher education institutions and their connections to secondary education. Scott earned a Ph.D. in Higher Education from the University of Georgia, an M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from Florida Atlantic University, and a B.A. in History from the University of Florida.

Makenzie Schiemann

Makenzie Schiemann is the Vice President, Behavioral Intervention and Threat Assessment at TNG and the President of the National Association for Behavioral Intervention and Threat Assessment. She started her professional career as a teacher working in middle grades education before spending ten years in higher education overseeing the behavioral intervention team, case management program, and victim advocacy department at both a small private college and a large public university. Her areas of expertise include policy and program development for behavioral intervention teams, case management, and victim advocacy, strategies for chairing behavioral intervention teams, research and assessment, and strategic planning for comprehensive educational and awareness programming.

Lynn Rossi Scott

Lynn Rossi Scott is a shareholder in the law firm of Brackett & Ellis in Fort Worth, Texas. She has practiced school law since 1985, representing public school districts, independent and private schools, charter schools, junior colleges, universities, and education foundations. Mrs. Scott served as: Chair of the School Law Section of the State Bar of Texas; Chair of the Board of Directors of the Texas Association of School Board's (TASB) Council of School Attorneys; and as President of the national Education Law Association (ELA). She has been listed as a Texas Super Lawyer in the area of school law since 2006 and has been listed in Best Lawyers in America in Tier One School Law since 2009. In 2008, she was named one of 30 Outstanding Women in Texas Law by Texas Lawyer magazine. In 2019, she received the prestigious Marion A. McGehey award from ELA for service to ELA and the field of school law.

Patricia Somers

Patricia Somers, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Higher Education Leadership at the University of Texas at Austin. She holds the Ph.D. in Educational Administration (Higher Education track) from the University of New Orleans, an M.A. (Portuguese, University of Illinois) and a B.A. (Spanish, Michigan State University). She studies and writes about Academic Freedom, college student persistence, affirmative action in the BRIC countries, and college presidential decision-making.

Ian M. Steusloff

Ian M. Steusloff is Staff Attorney for TASB Community College Services. Ian provides legal advice and policy development and training services to TASB's community college members, writes TASB's monthly Legal Update Newsletter to inform community college members of the latest legal developments, and helps keep TASB's legal library current with new and updated FAQs and resources addressing a variety of legal topics. Ian received his B.A. from the University of California, Riverside; his M.A. from Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences; and his J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law.

Jonathan Stewart

Jonathan Stewart is a Professor of Finance at Abilene Christian University in Abilene, Texas. He completed his PhD in Finance at Texas Tech University and joined the faculty at Abilene Christian University in 1996. He has taught undergraduate Financial Management, International Finance, and Financial Markets as well as graduate Advanced Financial Markets. Stewart has published articles about financial institutions and markets in academic journals including The Journal of Financial Research, The Journal of Investing, and the Economic Review of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. Stewart has served as the NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative for ACU since 2017.

Renaldo Stowers

Renaldo Stowers is a Senior Associate General Counsel for the UNT System. Before joining UNT in 1997, he was a Senior Assistant Attorney General for the State of Texas and defended state officials and agencies against employment and constitutional law claims. He received his J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law and his B.A. with high honors in political science as a commissioned Distinguished Military Graduate from the University of Texas at Arlington.

Zachary Taylor

Zach Taylor has worked in education for 15 years and has published over 120 peer-reviewed articles and chapters related to higher education. He is an independent researcher who writes about linguistics and disability services in higher education.

Derek Teeter

Derek Teeter is a partner in the Higher Education practice group of Husch Blackwell LLP. Derek represents colleges and universities in complicated, prominent litigation involving federal and state regulatory statutes, governmental immunities, constitutional rights, and class actions.

Pete Thompson

Pete Thompson is a counselor who is passionate about representing governmental entities and educational institutions. As a former reporter, Pete is familiar with many of the challenges school districts and universities face when placed under a public microscope by the news media. Pete has assisted governmental entities in the following areas:

- Constitutional law and civil rights
- Texas Public Information Act
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
- Texas Open Meetings Act
- Discipline and termination
- Policy drafting

Pete seeks to assist governmental entities navigate rough waters when under pressure due to unwanted publicity. Pete also serves the immigrant community in North Texas and has worked on the border to assist families seeking asylum.

Chad Timmons

Chad Timmons is a Director and Shareholder with Abernathy, Roeder, Boyd & Hullett, P.C. His practice focuses on school law, including issues regarding employment/personnel, contracts, governance, Board representation, open meetings, and open records. Chad represents colleges and public school districts in administrative hearings, investigations, general administration matters, and litigation.

Katy Washington

Katy Washington serves as the Director in the Office of Disability Access at the University of North Texas. She has spent over fifteen years working with faculty and staff to facilitate inclusive campus environments for students with disabilities. Katy received a Master of Science in Counseling Psychology from the University of Central Arkansas. She also holds a Juris Doctor from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and a Ph.D. in Public Policy from the University of Arkansas. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) as the President-Elect.

Jackie Wernz

Jackie Gharapour Wernz is a Partner in the Dallas office of Thompson & Horton. As a former civil rights attorney with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, Jackie has a deep understanding of civil rights law, including prohibitions on discrimination based on race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation. She is a sought-after national speaker, media commentator, and expert witness in Title IX matters, including sex-based discrimination, harassment, assault and violence, and retaliation. She is the first call for many educational administrators and in-house lawyers seeking authoritative guidance on the changeable landscape of civil rights compliance in Title IX and beyond.

Ashley Wheelis

Ashley started her career in higher education at the University of Tennessee where she earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Her career began in Athletic Academic Advising until she moved to Texas in 2015 to become Assistant Registrar over Athletic Certification at the University of North Texas. Since then she has held the position of Senior Assistant Registrar and currently Deputy Registrar. In her spare time she loves teaching Pure Barre, exercising, and college football.

Yi Leaf Zhang

Yi Leaf Zhang, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Texas at Arlington. Her research focuses on community colleges as a gateway to STEM education, transfer students' educational pathways, and international education. Dr. Zhang has received funding from national, state, and local agencies, including the National Science Foundation (NSF), Council for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC), and the Greater Texas Foundation (GTF). She serves as an associate editor of the Journal of International Students (JIS) and editorial board member of the Community College Journal of Research and Practice (CCJRP).