

TENNESSEE WORKERS' COMPENSATION  
EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE 2024

**More Than  Recovery**  
*THE FUTURE OF WORKFORCE WELLNESS*

## Presenter Biographies



### Fred Baker

ATTORNEY AT WIMBERLY LAWSON WRIGHT DAVES & JONES, PLLC

FREDRICK R. BAKER is a Member in the Cookeville, Tennessee, office of Wimberly Lawson Wright Daves & Jones, PLLC, which he joined in 2001. His law practice includes an emphasis in workers' compensation and employment discrimination, as well as ADA and FMLA compliance. Fred is the Editor of the *Tennessee Workers' Compensation Handbook*, published by M. Lee Smith Publishers. He is also Legislative Co-Chair of the Upper Cumberland Society of Human Resource Management and is Tennessee's representative for the National Workers' Compensation Defense Network. Fred has an AV Preeminent® Rating - which is the highest possible rating given by Martindale-Hubbell, the leading independent attorney rating entity. He is also listed in The Best Lawyers in America® in the field of Workers' Compensation Law/Employers, was named 2022 LAWYER OF THE YEAR by *Best Lawyers* for Workers' Compensation Law/Employers (Nashville Region) and is listed in *Mid-South Super Lawyers®* in the area of Workers' Compensation. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy, *summa cum laude*, from Transylvania University and his law degree, *magna cum laude*, from the University of Tennessee.

### Jason Barclay, PT, CSCS, COMPT, CIDN, Astym-Cert

REGIONAL DIRECTOR AT STAR PHYSICAL THERAPY

Jason has been practicing as a Physical Therapist since 2008. He graduated from University of Missouri – Columbia with master's degree in physical therapy. He played soccer in college for University of Missouri – St. Louis as an under grad. Jason is married with three children and lives in Thompson's Station, Tennessee.



## Hilary Blair, MFA, CEO, CSP

TEAM AND LEADERSHIP ACTIVATOR AT ARTICULATE REAL + CLEAR

As an actor, teacher, and voice performer, Hilary Blair approaches communication from a different perspective than many businesspeople would think to consider.

She is impassioned by moving beyond habits and learned behaviors to uncover what is unique and authentic in individuals and groups. She knows from experience that behind fine communication lies good technique. She understands the importance of tapping into each speaker's unique story, style, and inherent ability to connect with an audience. She appreciates how aligning one's breath, voice, body, and message can put the audience in the palm of your hand— be they seated across the table or gazing out of a small rectangle in a laptop's glass wall.

Hilary is co-founder and CEO of ARTiculate: Real & Clear, a senior executive training firm that helps excellent clients become more extraordinary. A presentation and speaking voice expert, Hilary is a highly regarded coach and facilitator working extensively across the globe with a variety of businesses including American Express, Maersk, Genentech, Liberty Global, Slalom, Merrill Lynch, and Hunter Douglas.

She helps clients know what is going on “under the hood” physiologically and encourages them to honor their breath to release their power. Upon this foundation of breath, science, and human connection, Hilary builds interactive executive sessions aimed at understanding and shaping executive presence, improving public speaking and presentation skills, and being an authentic leader who welcomes a chorus of voices on a team. Clients seek her and ARTiculate out for ongoing skill-building and for guidance at pivotal moments, such as developing keynote presentations, preparing for difficult conversations, or messaging in response to crises.

Hilary has been coaching and teaching for 35 years. She has been a keynote speaker, host, and facilitator for global corporate events and TedX conferences. She is on faculty for the Denver Center for the Performing Arts and has been adjunct faculty for several universities. She is an active member of NSA and former board member of the Colorado Chapter. She is also a former board member of VASTA – the Voice and Speech Trainers Association.

Hilary is certified in Conversational Intelligence and CultureTalk and has earned the designation of Certified Speaking Professional. She holds an MFA in acting from the National Theatre Conservatory and a BA from Yale University.



## Hon. Timothy W. Conner

PRESIDING JUDGE, TENNESSEE WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS BOARD

Timothy W. Conner is the presiding judge of the Tennessee Workers' Compensation Appeals Board, where he has served since August 1, 2014. Prior to that, Judge Conner practiced law for twenty-two years in the areas of workers' compensation, wills and estates, and general liability defense. He is also an Adjunct Professor at Lincoln Memorial University's Duncan School of Law, where he teaches Legal Writing and Workers' Compensation Law. He received his bachelor's degree from Boston University and his J.D. from Wake Forest University School of Law. He is a member of the Knoxville and Tennessee Bar Associations, the Hamilton Burnett American Inn of Court, and the National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary.



## Jeff Francis

**ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

A native of middle-Tennessee, Jeff received his B.B.A. degree in Marketing from Austin Peay State University in 1983 and his master's degree in Labor Studies from the University of Massachusetts in 2000. He is a member of the 2008 graduating class of the Tennessee Government Executive Institute and of the 2017 graduating class of LeadTN. He is the former President of the Tennessee Labor Management Foundation.

As a Program Coordinator for the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development from 2004 until April 2008 he developed and managed the Medical Impairment Rating Registry.

Now the Assistant Administrator of the Tennessee Bureau of Workers' Compensation, his responsibilities include assisting with budgeting, Human Resources and Information Systems and supervising the Claims, Coverage and Communications aspects for the Bureau. He has been married to his college sweetheart for over 30 years and they have a son and daughter. Jeff enjoys gardening, traveling has served as a Mentor for the Tennessee Promise Educational Scholarship Program and is a grandfather.

He is a frequent speaker on workers' compensation issues.

## Sandy Garrett

**CHIEF DISCIPLINARY COUNSEL FOR THE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE**

Sandy Garrett is Chief Disciplinary Counsel for the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Supreme Court of Tennessee. Sandy has been with the Board of Professional Responsibility since October, 1992. She serves as the Executive Director of Tennessee Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection and as the Southeast Regional Vice President of National Client Protection Organization. She earned her J.D. degree from Vanderbilt University. She is an emeritus member of the Harry Phillips American Inn of Court, a current member of the Tennessee Bar Association (TBA) Committee on Ethics, and an honorary TBA Young Lawyers Fellow.



## Hon. Pele I. Godkin

**JUDGE, TENNESSEE WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS BOARD**

Pele I. Godkin was appointed to the Tennessee Workers' Compensation Appeals Board by Governor Bill Lee on January 14, 2020. Judge Godkin began her practice in Tennessee with the Tennessee Bureau of Workers' Compensation shortly after the 2004 workers' compensation reform. Judge Godkin entered private practice in 2008 where she practiced law in the areas of workers' compensation and general liability defense. She received her bachelor's degree from Central Washington University and her law degree from Seattle University School of Law. She is a member of the Nashville and Tennessee Bar Associations, The Belmont University College of Law American Inn of Court, and the National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary.



## Troy Haley

ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Troy Haley is Administrator for the State of Tennessee's Bureau of Workers' Compensation. He has been with the Bureau since 2007. As a Workers' Compensation Specialist and Administrator's Designee he conducted hearings and issued determinations regarding temporary disability and medical benefits, reviewed and approved workers' compensation settlement agreements, and mediated workers' compensation disputes. In June 2014, he has served as administrative counsel for the Bureau and legislative liaison for the Bureau and Governor's office. He provided legal counsel to the Bureau Administrator and Medical Director and to other Bureau program areas. He drafted rules and legislation and works with the Governor's Office and the General Assembly to advance the administration's legislative agenda.

He is a native of east Nashville and is a graduate of Stratford High School. He received his B.A. degree from David Lipscomb College, his M.A. degree from Tennessee State University, and his J.D. degree from the University of Memphis. He has been licensed to practice law in Tennessee since 1992. He has been a Rule 31 mediator since 2008. Prior to his state service, he worked as staff counsel for a title insurance company and was also in private practice.



## Dan Headrick, PT, CEAS III, CETS, Astym, MA

PHYSICAL THERAPIST AT STAR PHYSICAL THERAPY

Dan is a multi-talented professional with a background in both healthcare and leadership. After graduating from Lambuth College and the University of Tennessee at Memphis School of Allied Health (1990, 1992), he dedicated over 30 years to practicing physical therapy. He further expanded his qualifications by earning a master's degree in Pastoral and Ministerial Leadership from Northwest Nazarene University in 2022.

Dan is a Certified Ergonomic Assessment Specialist (Levels I & III) and a Certified Employment Testing Specialist. His passion for sharing his expertise led him to teach Functional Capacity Evaluations at Tennessee State University. He is a sought-after speaker, having presented at conferences like BAMA, SHRM, MSWCA, and various state-sponsored worker's compensation and safety conferences.

Dan is credited with creating the JDA portion of Tennessee's REWARD Program. His dedication to the field is further evidenced by his recognition as a finalist for the Sue Ann Head Award in 2022. Currently, he serves as the President of the Mid-South Workplace Compensation Association (MSWCA) and holds a position on the Executive Committee for the American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP).



## Hon. Pamela Beason Johnson

WORKERS' COMPENSATION JUDGE,  
TENNESSEE COURT OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS

In May 2014, Judge Johnson was one of eight attorneys appointed to the newly established Tennessee Court of Workers' Compensation Claims. Now a twelve-member Court, Judge Johnson currently hears cases pending in Knoxville.

She is a member of the National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary, Tennessee Bar Association, Knoxville Bar Association, and East Tennessee Lawyers' Association for Women. She is the immediate Past-President of the National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary and chairman of the Lunch and Learn and New Judges' Boot Camp committees.

She is a regular speaker on issues of workers' compensation practice and procedures at the national, regional, state, and local levels. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in August 1997, and her law degree from the University of Memphis, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law in May 2000.



## "Judy" Kilgore

**CERTIFIED THERAPY DOG, GEORGE & TAMMY KILGORE FAMILY/TRAINERS**

Both George & Tammy Kilgore are retired from working in agriculture with the State of Tennessee. George was the Director of the Davidson County Extension Office and Tammy worked as a Food Marketing Specialist. They now devote themselves to certified therapy dog work with their Goldador named Judy. They also help raise seeing eye and service dogs for Southeastern Guide Dogs. When not knee deep in puppies, they are knee deep in vegetable, herb and flower gardening at their home in Smyrna.



## Patsy Nickle

**VICE PRESIDENT OF EDUCATION AND BUSINESS RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT,  
JIMMY SIMPSON FOUNDATION'S SAFEHAVEN**

Patsy Nickle has been in the Worker's Compensation healthcare for more than 20 years. A graduate of Lee University, She is currently the V. P. of Bus. Dev. and Edu. at Safehaven/The Jimmy Simson Foundation. Her experience include Erlanger Hospital, The State of TN Brain Injury Program, NeuroRestorative, Cumberland Children's Hospital and Nexus Health System as a clinical evaluator.

During her entire career she has dedicated herself to applying ethics to every endeavor, referral, insurance encounter, doctor, nurse, adjuster, attorney and client process. She believes that ethics plays a huge role in everyone involved with the healthcare system and the worker's compensation arena.



## Anastasia Settle, R.N., C.C.M

**CASE MANAGEMENT LIAISON AT CARLISLE MEDICAL**

Anastasia has over 30 years of nursing experience in the clinical, community, and workers compensation setting. She has had both the honor and pleasure of work as both a Certified Case Manager (CCM) and as a supervisor in multiple states. She obtained an Advanced Ministry Degree from Boyce College/SBTS in 2017. She currently works as a Case Management Liaison coordinating and volunteers for the local homeless coalition in SW FL where she resides.

While in nursing school, Anastasia participated on the Ethics board for a local hospital which sparked her interest in this field. She has since further studied Ethics while at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Anastasia also regularly interacts with various groups and peoples that suffer from discrimination within our society including members of the LGBTQI+, homeless, and religious communities. Anastasia has had the opportunity to speak on Ethics, Workplace Violence, various specific health topics, and about the Case

Management process to many organizations including primary conferences for IWCI, ASIA (Arkansas), SHRM (FL), SAWCA, NC PRIMA, SCWCEA; Anastasia is an occasional speaker for CMSA and also provides CEU's and training for several insurance companies.

Currently Anastasia works for Carlisle Medical as the Case Management Liaison interacting with the multidisciplinary team including Case Management, Durable Medical Equipment specialists, and Pharmacists to ensure that the care provided to the persons that we have the privilege of caring for truly have the benefit of our exceptional team.



## Gerry Stanley, M.D., P-CEO

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER AT HARVARD MEDTECH

Gerry Stanley, M.D., is an accomplished third-generation family doctor, speaker, author, and catalyst for change in the workers compensation industry. With a passion for healthcare transformation, Dr. Stanley has spoken and presented extensively on the topic of healthcare IT, population health management, self-insured health plan management, and medical consumerism and direct to employer network enablement.

His visionary perspective on the opportunity to find a solution for the growing opioid epidemic and mental health crisis by creating a resource for clinicians to treat patients holistically is what he describes as a “once in a lifetime opportunity to solve a societal need.” As the Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer for Harvard MedTech, his belief that a collaborative approach and strong foundational understanding of health care delivery, health systems, insurance brokers/consultants, and self-insured employers is critical to scale health plans and achieve the quadruple AIM of healthcare. Considered by many, an industry disruptor, his upcoming book entitled “The Innovation Equation” provides a framework for safe and effective innovation and effective cross organization communication to foster a culture of change.

Most recently, Dr. Stanley served as the Chief Medical Officer for the Employer and Consumer division of Cerner, where he was able to put into play his unique ability to identify market specific opportunities for development, stabilization, and growth. This included developing a value-based care and population health strategy for critical access hospitals, community hospitals, and a framework for health plan development for integrated delivery networks. While at Cerner, he also had the responsibility for Cerner’s national system on on-site and near-site health centers/pharmacies/occupational centers serving self-insured employers, care coordination teams, a national team of corporate wellness strategists, an analytics division, a third-party administrator (TPA), and the self-insured and direct-to-employer insurance strategies for Cerner clients.

Dr. Stanley received his undergraduate degree from Creighton University studying Classical and Near Eastern Civilizations where he graduated *magna cum laude*. He then attended the Creighton University School of Medicine where he served as class president for three years and graduated with clinical honors and received the university's highest honor, the Spirit of Creighton Award. Upon graduation he completed his residency at the Northern Colorado Family Medicine Program with a focus on rural and surgical family medicine where he served as the chief resident. He practiced medicine for over 10 years in a variety of practice settings with group/hospital leadership positions before attending the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and graduated from the Physician CEO program.



## Hon. Dwight E. Tarwater

SUPREME COURT JUSTICE FOR THE STATE OF TENNESSEE

Dwight E. Tarwater was confirmed by the General Assembly in 2023 as the newest justice on the Tennessee Supreme Court. Justice Tarwater was nominated by Governor Bill Lee.

Justice Tarwater was born and raised in Knoxville. He earned a B.A. in political science from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He was named a Torchbearer, the University's highest honor, recognizing excellence in academics, leadership and service. He earned his law degree from his alma mater.

After working as a judicial law clerk for Judge Houston M. Goddard of the Tennessee Court of Appeals, Eastern Section in Knoxville, Justice Tarwater joined the law firm Egerton, McAfee, Armistead and Davis and four short years later was named a partner. Three years later, his name was on the door at Paine Tarwater Bickers LLP. He was invested in the Knoxville legal community, serving in almost every leadership position possible at the Knoxville Bar Association.

Justice Tarwater developed a national reputation in handling complex litigation cases. He has managed hundreds of complex cases at the trial and appellate levels in both federal and state courts and has developed a particular talent for legal discovery, expert testimony, and jury trials. As a result, he has handled cases in all three Grand Divisions of Tennessee and more than 20 states.

In 2006, Justice Tarwater was inducted into the American College of Trial Lawyers, which is comprised of the best trial lawyers in the United States and Canada. He has repeatedly been recognized as one of the Best Lawyers in America, which is compiled through a peer review survey of thousands of lawyers.

From 2014 to 2019, Justice Tarwater served as general counsel to former Governor Bill Haslam. The job of general counsel to the governor is broad and all encompassing. From reviewing every legal document the governor signs to analyzing proposed legislation, the position handles a multitude of legal, political and governmental issues. Justice Tarwater proposed reform measures in criminal justice, juvenile justice, law enforcement, and drug treatment as well as advised the Governor on criminal law issues involving defendants, such as extraditions, sentencing, and clemency requests, including those in capital cases.

Recognizing the impact even modest legal guidance can have on an individual person, Justice Tarwater has consistently accepted cases pro bono from Legal Aid of East Tennessee as well as accepted other cases at reduced fees.

Justice Tarwater served on the board of directors of LAET, the Volunteer Legal Assistance Program and the Pro Bono Project.



## Deniece Thomas

COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Governor Bill Lee appointed Deniece Thomas as Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development in September 2022.

Before her appointment, Commissioner Thomas had served as the agency's Deputy Commissioner since 2019. She started her career with the state of Tennessee in 2007 working in the Clarksville American Job Center. Over

the years, Commissioner Thomas has risen through the ranks of the Department as a Director, Assistant Administrator, Assistant Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner.

Commissioner Thomas is a member of the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) where she serves as co-chair for Workforce ITSC, previous chair of the Employment and Training Committee, past member of both the Veterans Committee since 2015 and the National Apprenticeship Workgroup.

Additionally, she also serves as the State Workforce Liaison for the National Governor's Association where she serves on the Executive Committee. She also serves as a member of the Tennessee Advisory Council on Intergovernmental Relations.

Commissioner Thomas is a 2014 Graduate of LEAD Tennessee Alliance 5 and Leadership Tennessee Class VIII. She holds a Master of Arts degree in Civic Leadership from Lipscomb University in Nashville and a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Alabama Birmingham. She is a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.



## Hon. Meredith Balthrop Weaver

JUDGE, TENNESSEE WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS BOARD

Meredith Balthrop Weaver was appointed to the Appeals Board by Governor Bill Lee in June of 2022. Prior to that, she worked for 17 years in the private sector, primarily in workers' compensation, employment law, and general liability defense. A Tennessee native, she went to Auburn University for her undergraduate degree in communications. She returned to her native state to obtain her law degree from University of Tennessee and remained in Knoxville following graduation. While in private practice, she was on the Board for CASA of East Tennessee and served in other civic community groups as well. She currently serves in various capacities on the Boards for her children's schools and is active in the Knoxville Bar Association, as well as the East Tennessee Lawyers' Association for Women.



## Bob Wilson, BA, WRP, WRPA

PRESIDENT OF WORKCOMP COLLEGE.COM; CO-FOUNDER AND FORMER CEO OF WORKERSCOMPENSATION.COM

Bob is president of WorkCompCollege.com, as well as a founding partner and former President & CEO of WorkersCompensation.com. He has presented at seminars and conferences on a variety of topics, related to both technology within the workers' compensation industry, and bettering the workers' comp system through improved employee/employer relations and claims management techniques. He is the author of "From Bob's Cluttered Desk", a blog selected as a top workers' compensation blog by LexisNexis. He has been designated as one of the "50 Most Influential People in the Workers' Compensation Industry" by the SEAK Workers' Compensation and Occupational Medical Conference. He was also the recipient of the 2019 Comp Laude Industry Leader Award.

With an extensive business management and human resource background, Bob brings a strong employer and corporate voice to the workers' compensation arena. Known for an extraordinary sense of humor, his presentations reflect both entertaining and practical advice for both people managing claims and the people "picking up the tab".

He was raised in Durango, Colorado and is a graduate of Fort Lewis College.



He resides with his wife in Bradenton, FL.



## Keven Wilberding

**VICE PRESIDENT, AMBASSADOR SERVICE GROUP**

Keven Wilberding is currently the Vice President of Ambassador Service Group, a full-service provider of interpretation, translation and non-emergency transportation. Keven's diverse background and experience allow him to communicate effectively with people from all walks of life. He has the ability to bridge the gap between individuals and cultures. Keven is a gifted teacher and communicator who has spoken to groups from around the globe. He has traveled in various capacities throughout the world observing cultures firsthand.



## Kimberly Wiswell, CMSP-Fellow

**DIRECTOR OF CLIENT SERVICES, EMBEDDED AI AT GRADIENT AI**

Kim has been engaged in workers' compensation, managed care, and occupational health since the late '70s, with a focus on data analysis and predictive modeling over the past six years. Kim joined Gradient AI, an insurtech provider of claims and underwriting solutions to the Property & Casualty and Group Health arenas, in early 2021 and in her current role, serves as Director, Client Service, Embedded Analytics.

Kim's extensive knowledge of workers' compensation includes medical bill review, provider networks, data analytics, system design & development, workflow re-engineering, and operations management. Over her career, she worked for a diverse set of employers including Coventry; CLARA Analytics; MEDVAL; Fair, Isaac; Health Net; Fremont Compensation Insurance Group; CompPartners; Beech Street; and Medata. She has also consulted for the California Workers' Compensation Institute, the California Division of Workers' Compensation, Kaiser Permanente, Sutter Health, Optum, and many others. She served as president of the National Medicare Secondary Payer Network and has spoken numerous times at conferences concerning MSP matters, as well as having provided consulting services to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Kim attended California State University, Long Beach, and Western State College of Law.