

# ASCIDC 64TH ANNUAL SEMINAR

MARCH 27-28, 2025 | JW MARRIOTT LOS ANGELES L.A. LIVE

IT'S TIME TO ELEVATE YOUR GAME!

- ✗ Mock Jury Trial with Legal All Stars
- ✗ Year in Review
- ✗ Winning Strategies for Damage Control
- ✗ State of the Courts

Keynote Speaker  
**DAVE ROBERTS**  
Manager  
Los Angeles Dodgers



# REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Advance registration for the Annual Seminar is a necessity. Click [here](#) to register.

The registration fee covers attendance at the Annual Seminar on Thursday and Friday, attendance at Thursday's Reception and Casino Night, and the Luncheon on Friday featuring Keynote Speaker Dave Roberts. Thursday's Specialty Luncheon is included for the first 80 registrants. Space is limited and sign up in advance is required to attend. The paralegal registration fee covers attendance at the Annual Seminar and Luncheon on Friday, only.

## REGISTRATION FEES:

<input type="checkbox"/> ASCDC Members	\$550	<input type="checkbox"/> Claims Personnel	\$195
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Member Attorneys	\$650	<input type="checkbox"/> Paralegal	\$195
<input type="checkbox"/> Young Lawyer Member*	\$375	<input type="checkbox"/> Luncheon Companion Ticket	\$150
		<input type="checkbox"/> Reception Companion Ticket	\$150

\* In practice up to five years

## REFUND POLICY

Due to our commitment to the hotel, any meeting registration cancellation and request for refund must be in writing and submitted to the ASCDC office no later than March 14, 2025. A \$100 surcharge will be assessed to all cancellations received on or before March 14, 2025. No refunds will be made for cancellations made after March 14, 2025.

## GUESTS

Each person registered for the Annual Seminar is entitled to bring one guest to Thursday night's reception for an additional cost of \$150, and one guest to the Friday Lunch for an additional cost of \$150. All reception and lunch guests must be registered in advance.

## PHOTO/VIDEO DISCLAIMER

By registering for and attending this event, you agree that your image may be taken during the event and used at any time, without further notification, for printed materials, websites, social media and other marketing purposes.

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# THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025

TRIAL TRACK		HOT TOPIC TRACK		NEW LAWYER TRACK	
8:00 am - 9:30 am Plenary Session - Year in Review					
9:45 am - 10:45 am Trial Preparation with the Legal All-Stars, Part 1	11:00 am - 12:00 pm Trial Preparation with the Legal All-Stars, Part 2	9:45 am - 10:45 am Striking Out the Claims: A Motion for Summary Judgment Playbook	10:45 am - 11:00 am Break  11:00 am - 12:00 pm Product Liability 2025 - Updates and Trends	9:45 am - 10:45 am Winning Discovery Strategies  10:45 am - 11:00 am Break	11:00 am - 12:00 pm Evidence: Don't Strike Out in the Courtroom!
10:45 am - 11:00 am Break					
12:00 pm - 1:15 pm Specialty Lunch: Becoming Allies - Supporting Women (Pre-Registration Required)					
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm Lunch On Own					
1:30 pm - 3:30 pm Mock Trial Demonstrative Session	3:45 pm - 4:30 pm Juror Deliberations + Moderated Discussion	1:30 pm - 2:30 pm Tripartite: Communicating with Your Number One Teammate: Your Client	2:45 pm - 3:45 pm Damage Control - Strategies for Reducing Future Medical Expenses  3:45 pm - 4:00 pm Break	4:00 pm - 5:00 pm Young Lawyer Mentorship - Ask Us Anything	
3:30 pm - 3:45 pm Break	4:30 pm - 5:00 pm The Game Is Over and the Verdict Is In: Questions for Jurors and Lawyers	2:30 pm - 2:45 pm Break	4:00 pm - 5:00 pm Civility On and Off the Field		
5:00 pm - 7:30 pm Cocktail Reception, Casino Night and Music!					

# FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025

PRIMARY TRACK		HOT TOPIC TRACK		YOUNG LAWYER / PARALEGAL TRACK	
8:30 am - 9:30 am Legislative Update	9:45 am - 10:45 am Health and Wellness in the Legal Profession	8:30 am - 9:30 am Defending the Construction Case: Hitting a Home Run with the Smart Use of Technology	9:30 am - 9:45 am Break  9:45 am - 10:45 am Demystifying AI: Harnessing Its Power in Modern Legal Defense for Our Clients	8:30 am - 9:30 am Preparing for the First Pitch: Propounding, Responding and Objecting to Discovery	9:45 am - 10:45 am A Good Offense is the Best Defense: Mindful Client Reporting and Summarizing
9:30 am - 9:45 am Break				9:30 am - 9:45 am Break	
10:45 am - 11:00 am Break					
11:00 am - 11:45 am State of the Court Update and Meet the LASC Judges				11:00 am - 11:45 am Preparing for Opening Day: Trial	
12:00 pm - 2:00 pm Annual Luncheon with Keynote Speaker Dave Roberts					

Register now! Click [here](#).

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER



## Dave Roberts, LA Dodgers MLB Manager

David Ray Roberts is an American professional baseball manager and former outfielder who is the manager of the Los Angeles Dodgers of Major League Baseball (MLB). He played for five MLB teams over a ten-year career and then coached for the San Diego Padres before being named Dodgers manager in 2016. Roberts batted and threw left-handed.

The son of a Japanese mother and African American father, Roberts became the first manager of Asian heritage to lead a team to the World Series in 2017 when the Dodgers captured the National League pennant. He also led the Dodgers to the World Series in 2018 and 2020, winning in the latter year and again in 2024. Roberts is both the first manager of Asian heritage and the second African American manager to lead a team to a World Series title. His leadership was recognized when he was named NL Manager of the Year in his first season.

Although Roberts played for the Boston Red Sox for only part of one season, his most notable achievement as a player was "The Steal," a critical stolen base in the 9<sup>th</sup> inning of Game 4 of the 2004 American League Championship Series, which ignited the Red Sox's drive to their historic championship that year. This moment remains a significant highlight in his playing career.



# THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025

7:00 am - 7:30 pm **Registration Open** Platinum Foyer

7:00 am - 8:00 am **Continental Breakfast** Platinum Foyer

7:00 am - 4:00 pm **Exhibits Open** Platinum Foyer

8:00 am - 9:30 am **Plenary Session - Year in Review** Platinum D  
**(MCLE 1.5 General Credit)** Join us as we break down 2024's most impactful decisions for the defense bar. Get ready to step into a new season ready to play ball.

- Jeff Gurrola, Esq. - Greines, Martin, Stein & Richland
- David E. Hackett, Esq. - Greines, Martin, Stein & Richland

9:30 am - 9:45 am **Break** Platinum Foyer

## TRIAL TRACK

9:45 am - 10:45 am **Trial Preparation With The Legal All-Stars, Part 1** Platinum D  
**"Setting the Tone for the Game - Mastering Jury Selection and Opening Statements"**

**(MCLE .5 Implicit Bias and .5 General Credit)** The top trial attorneys in Southern California share their tips and tricks on how to best position your case for trial. You will discover the latest trends from the plaintiff's bar and how to avoid trial curveballs from attorneys and judges. Part one will focus on voir dire and opening statements. This panel will provide valuable pointers to help you select your best jury and to give the most persuasive opening statement.

- MODERATOR: Lisa Collinson, Esq. - Collinson | Greco
- Alice Chen Smith, Esq. - Yoka | Smith
- Lourdes DeArmas, Esq. - Omega Law Group
- Robert Gonter, Esq. - Gates, Gonter, Guy, Proudfoot & Muench
- Stephen C. Pasarow, Esq. - Knapp, Peterson & Clarke

10:45 am - 11:00 am **Break** Platinum Foyer

11:00 am - 12:00 pm **Trial Preparation With The Legal All-Stars, Part 2** Platinum D  
**"Sealing the Win-Mastering Cross-Examination and Closing Arguments"**

**(MCLE 1.0 General Credit)** Part two will provide you with strategies and techniques to avoid common pitfalls and when to attack and when to sit back. We will also discuss effective story telling and techniques in structuring a persuasive closing argument.

- MODERATOR: Lisa Collinson, Esq. - Collinson | Greco
- Alice Chen Smith, Esq. - Yoka | Smith
- Lourdes DeArmas, Esq. - Omega Law Group
- Robert Gonter, Esq. - Gates, Gonter, Guy, Proudfoot & Muench
- Stephen C. Pasarow, Esq. - Knapp, Peterson & Clarke

# THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025

## HOT TOPIC TRACK

9:45 am - 10:45 am **Striking Out the Claims:** Platinum C  
**A Motion for Summary Judgment Playbook**

**(MCLE 1.0 General Credit)** Join us for an in-depth look at the most common subject matter Motions for Summary Judgment, including topics such as *Privette*, recreation liability waivers, dog bite claims, sudden emergency defenses, and third-party criminal conduct. Learn how to gather and present the critical evidence needed to succeed in your MSJ, backed by the latest case law. Gain essential practice tips and strategies for navigating MSJ procedures and maximizing your chances of success in the courtroom.

- MODERATOR: Mary R. Fersch, Esq. - Schonbuch Hallissy
- Steven S. Fleischman, Esq. - Horvitz & Levy
- Hon. Linda S. Marks - Orange County Superior Court (Ret.), Judicate West
- Lisa J. McMains, Esq. - Schonbuch Hallissy
- Hon. Stephen P. Pfahler - Los Angeles County Superior Court

10:45 am - 11:00 am **Break** Platinum Foyer

11:00 am - 12:00 pm **Product Liability 2025 - Updates and Trends** Platinum C  
**(MCLE 1.0 General Credit)** Adjust your defense strategy in your Products Liability game! Come join us for a discussion between in-house counsel, outside counsel, appellate counsel and an expert engineer on recent trends and updates in Product Liability cases. With automotive companies facing a huge increase in breach of contract and fraud claims, we will discuss the latest defensive maneuvers in consumer warranty actions.

- MODERATOR: Sabrina Narain, Esq. - LTL Attorneys
- Stuart Heath, Esq. - Stellantis
- Eric Kalis, Senior Engineering Consultant - Design Research Engineering
- Hannah Lee, Esq. - Spencer Fane
- Rebecca Powell, Esq. - Horvitz & Levy

## NEW LAWYER TRACK

9:45 am - 10:45 am **Winning Discovery Strategies** Platinum AB  
**(MCLE 1.0 General Credit)** Early plays help you control the game! Come learn how to approach discovery with an aggressive, iterative approach intended to coax plaintiffs into meeting their burden of proof and evidencing their claims.

- Vicki Greco, Esq. - Collinson | Greco
- Benjamin J. Howard, Esq. - Neil Dymott Hudson
- Eric C. Schwettmann, Esq. - Ballard Rosenberg Golper & Savitt

10:45 am - 11:00 am **Break** Platinum Foyer

# THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025

## NEW LAWYER TRACK

11:00 am – 12:00 pm **Evidence: Don't Strike Out in the Courtroom!** Platinum AB  
(MCLE 1.0 General) Learn how to get the evidence you need into court. This session will focus on getting the evidence you need for your case admitted. From foundation to authenticity and hearsay, all of your questions will be answered.

- Emily Cuatto, Esq. – Horvitz & Levy
- Juan Delgado, Esq. – Ford, Walker, Haggerty & Behar
- Ninos Saroukhaniouf, Esq. – Morgenstern Law Group

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm **Lunch On Own**

12:00 pm – 1:15 pm **Specialty Lunch (Pre-Registration Required)** Platinum E-F  
"Becoming Allies – Supporting Women"

(MCLE 1.25 Elimination of Bias Credit) This interactive lunch panel will focus on a discussion of the unique issues faced by women attorneys, and will include topics such as civility, overcoming unique challenges faced by litigators, practical advice for attaining personal and professional goals, and finding one's village of professional colleagues.

- MODERATOR: Lindy Bradley, Esq., Partner – Bradley, Gmelich + Wellerstein
- Deborah Chang, Esq. – Chang | Klein; Athea Trial Lawyers
- Hon. Samantha Jessner – Los Angeles County Superior Court
- Alison Peacock, JD, CPI – Hodson P.I.

## TRIAL TRACK

1:30 pm – 3:30 pm **Mock Trial Demonstrative Session** Platinum D  
(MCLE 2.0 General Credit) Live Mock Jury Trial Demonstrative Session with the Legal All Stars. Step up to the plate and witness major league trial attorneys go head-to-head in a fast-paced mock trial, covering jury selection, opening statements, cross-examination and closing arguments. Watch the top trial attorneys swing for the fences to persuade the jury before the final verdict is in!

### VOIR DIRE OF JURORS

- Gina Kandarian-Stein, Esq., Defense – Gates, Gonter, Guy, Proudfoot & Muench
- Martin I. Aarons, Esq., Plaintiff – The Aarons Law Firm

### OPENING STATEMENTS

- Christopher Faenza, Esq., Defense – Yoka | Smith
- Deborah Chang, Esq. – Chang | Klein; Athea Trial Lawyers

### CROSS-EXAMINATION

- Jeffrey Behar, Esq., Defense – Ford, Walker, Haggerty & Behar
- Gary Dordick, Esq., Plaintiff – Dordick Law Corporation

### CLOSING ARGUMENTS

- James Yukevich, Esq., Defense – Yukevich | Cavanaugh
- Brian Panish, Esq., Plaintiff – Panish | Shea | Ravipudi

# THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025

3:30 pm – 3:45 pm **Break**

Platinum Foyer

3:45 pm – 4:30 pm **Juror Deliberations + Moderated Discussion** Platinum D  
(MCLE .75 General Credit) It's the bottom of the 9<sup>th</sup> and the game is tied.... Following closing arguments, come watch live jury deliberations where they will determine liability and damages on the mock trial. On live feed, you will have the opportunity to see what matters to the jury.

4:30 pm – 5:00 pm **The Game Is Over and the Verdict Is In: Questions for Jurors and Lawyers** Platinum D

(MCLE .5 General Credit) Join us for a question-and-answer session with the courtroom players and the jury following the mock trial and the jury verdict.

## HOT TOPIC TRACK

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm **Tripartite: Communicating with Your Number One Teammate: Your Client** Platinum C

(MCLE 1.0 Legal Ethics Credit) Stepping up to the plate in the legal game, this presentation explores the tripartite relationship between the lawyer, the insured, and the insurer. Just like in baseball, success depends on strategy, communication, and knowing the rules of the game. We'll cover the roles each player takes on, the curveballs that can arise, and how to ensure a winning defense while staying within the ethical baselines.

- MODERATOR: Alexis T. Morgenstern, Esq. – Morgenstern Law Group
- Matthew Adler, Large Loss Specialist – AXA XL
- John P. Cotter, Esq. – Diepenbrock & Cotter
- Heather L. Mills, Esq. – Skane Mills
- Elizabeth Skane – Skane Mill

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm **Break**

Platinum Foyer

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm **Damage Control – Strategies for Reducing Future Medical Expenses (Audish v. Macias)** Platinum C

(MCLE 1.0 General Credit) Join us for an in-depth legal discussion analyzing the groundbreaking *Audish v. Macias* case and its impact on litigation strategy. Our panel of experienced defense attorneys will discuss evidentiary hurdles to strategic motions for ensuring the admissibility of evidence to help you control inflated medical expenses at trial.

- MODERATOR: Steven Fleischman, Esq. – Horvitz & Levy
- Bron D'Angelo, Esq. – Arpineh Yereimian
- Jennifer Leeper, Esq. – Michael Maguire & Associates
- Robert Yoakum, Esq. – USAA, Law Offices of Carmin Shaffer

3:45 pm – 4:00 pm **Break**

Platinum Foyer

# THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025

## HOT TOPIC TRACK

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm **Civility On and Off the Field** Platinum C

**(MCLE 1.0 Civility Credit)** Join us as we discuss best practices, ethical advocacy, and maintaining professionalism—because in law, as in baseball, playing with integrity leads to a winning season.

- *Marta Alcumbrac, Esq. – Nemecek Cole Law Firm*
- *Elizabeth A. Hernandez, Esq. – BD&J*
- *Hon. Jessica Kronstadt – Los Angeles County Superior Court*

## NEW LAWYER TRACK

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm **Young Lawyer Mentorship – Ask Us Anything** Platinum AB

**(MCLE 1.0 General)** New to the practice? Have burning questions that you don't want to ask your firm partners? Wondering what it's really like to practice on the defense side? Looking for discovery tips and tricks or advice on how to deal with opposing counsel? If you want honest answers from attorneys who have recently been in your position as a new lawyer, join us for a casual conversation where all are welcome to ask any questions that come to mind.

- *MODERATOR: Vivian Rivera, Esq. – Yoka | Smith*
- *Kimberly Byrge, Esq. – Yoka | Smith*
- *Celeena Pompeo, Esq. – Wilson Elser*
- *Mahdi Young, Esq. – Courtney D. Flannery & Associates, In-House Counsel for State Farm*

5:00 pm – 7:30 pm **Cocktail Reception, Casino Night, and Music!** Platinum E-J

Mingle with judges and speakers and colleagues as you enjoy an evening packed with entertainment, prizes, and music.

## MCLE CREDIT

This ASCDC Annual Seminar has been approved for Minimum Continuing Legal Education credit by the State Bar of California in the amount of 10.75 hours.

The Association of Southern California Defense Counsel certifies that this activity conforms to the standards for approved education activities prescribed by the rules and regulations of the State Bar of California governing minimum continuing legal education.

Please make sure to include your State Bar I.D. number on the registration form to receive your MCLE credits. Additionally, please make sure you sign the attendance sheet located in the Platinum Foyer and retain the Certificate of Attendance for your records.

# FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025

7:30 am – 12:00 pm **Registration Open** Platinum Foyer

7:30 am – 8:30 am **Continental Breakfast** Platinum Foyer

7:30 am – 11:00 am **Exhibits Open** Platinum Foyer

## PRIMARY TRACK

8:30 am – 9:30 am **Legislative Update** Platinum D

**(MCLE 1.0 General Credit)** Hear the latest from California Defense Counsel Legislative Advocate, Mike Belote, who will provide attendees with a review of new and pending legislation impacting the defense practice in California.

- *Mike Belote, Esq., Legislative Advocate – California Advocates, California Defense Counsel*

9:30 am – 9:45 am **Break** Platinum Foyer

9:45 am – 10:45 am **Health and Wellness in the Legal Profession** Platinum D

**(MCLE 1.0 Competence Credit)** Join us for an insightful seminar on health and wellness in the legal profession, where we'll explore strategies to manage stress, prevent burnout, and enhance overall well-being.

- *Hon. Wendy Wilcox – Los Angeles County Superior Court*
- *Diana Lytel, Esq. – Klein DeNatale Goldner*

## HOT TOPIC TRACK

8:30 am – 9:30 am **Defending the Construction Case:** Platinum C

### Hitting a Home Run with the Smart Use of Technology

**(MCLE 1.0 Technology Credit)** This panel will discuss the use of technology in litigation. The panel, through the backdrop of construction litigation, will discuss how to effectively and efficiently litigate a complex matter. This will include discussion of electronic discovery, privacy and data protection and utilization of technology to store and analyze large amounts of data.

- *Brian Kahn, Esq. – Chapman Glucksman*
- *Paul Mason – AXA XL*
- *Veronika Zappelli, Esq. – Law Offices of Adrienne Cohen*

9:30 am – 9:45 am **Break** Platinum Foyer

# FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025

## HOT TOPIC TRACK

9:45 am - 10:45 am **Demystifying AI: Harnessing Its Power in Modern Legal Defense for Our Clients** Platinum C

**(MCLE 1.0 Technology Credit)** This session aims to dispel common misconceptions and illuminate the practical benefits of AI in our field. We'll explore how AI tools can streamline case analysis, enhance evidence evaluation, and optimize legal strategies, ultimately leading to more effective and efficient practice. Gain insights into responsible AI use, ethical considerations, and how to leverage this technology to not only keep pace but stay ahead in the rapidly evolving legal landscape.

- MODERATOR: *Sabrina Narain, Esq. - LTL Attorneys*
- *Thomas Suh, Co-founder and COO - LegalMation*

10:45 am - 11:00 am **Break** Platinum Foyer

11:00 am - 11:45 am **State of the Court Update and Meet the LASC Judges** Platinum D  
**(MCLE .75 General Credit)** Join Presiding Judge, The Honorable Sergio Tapia, for the State of the Court Address. Judge Tapia will be joined by Los Angeles Superior Court Supervising Judge, The Honorable Lawrence Riff to discuss the operations of Department One. You will also have an opportunity to hear from the IC judges.

- MODERATOR: *Alice Chen Smith, Esq. - Yoka | Smith*
- *Hon. Sergio Tapia, Presiding Judge - Los Angeles County Superior Court*
- *Hon. Lawrence Riff, Supervising Judge - Los Angeles County Superior Court*

## YOUNG LAWYER / PARALEGAL TRACK

8:30 am - 9:30 am **Preparing for the First Pitch: Propounding, Responding and Objecting to Discovery** Platinum AB

**(MCLE 1.0 General Credit)** Join us for a discussion about how a skilled paralegal can set the legal team up for a strong performance in the field. We will cover how you can support the team by strategically propounding, responding and objecting to discovery.

- *Jonathan Dang, Paralegal - Freeman Mathis & Gary*
- *Adesh Singh, Esq. - Cozen O'Connor*
- *Cynthia Sun, Esq. - LTL Attorneys*

9:30 am - 9:45 am **Break** Platinum Foyer

9:45 am - 10:45 am **A Good Offense is the Best Defense: Mindful Client Reporting and Summarizing** Platinum AB

**(MCLE 1.0 General)** Well-prepared reports and summaries ensure the legal team is ready to knock it out of the park when it matters most! Join us for a discussion with seasoned attorneys and claims adjusters who will guide you on how to communicate and report to the client from preliminary reports to pre-trial reports and everything in between.

- *Tyler Ross, Esq. - Grant, Genovese & Baratta*
- *Anne Thompson, Esq., Chief Claims Officer - Lawyers Mutual*
- *Allison Grandy, Esq. - Cullins & Grandy*

# FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025

10:45 am - 11:00 am **Break** Platinum Foyer

## YOUNG LAWYER / PARALEGAL TRACK

11:00 am - 11:45 am **Preparing for Opening Day: Trial** Platinum AB  
**(MCLE .75 General Credit)** We will discuss the behind the scenes work up of a case before trial and how to best support the trial attorney as they go for the win at trial.

- *Rebecca Herman, Esq. - Collinson | Greco*
- *Teresa Ortega-Smith, Esq. - Chapman Glucksman*
- *Martina Moran, Paralegal - Yoka | Smith*

12:00 pm - 2:00 pm **Annual Luncheon with Keynote Speaker Dave Roberts** Platinum EJ

2:00 pm **Annual Seminar Ends - Thank You for Attending!**

**Thank you to our many supporters.**  
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