



26TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE



SHIFT

HAPPENS

LEADING THROUGH CHANGE



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21 & FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2024
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4.5 CLE CREDIT HOURS (0.5 HOURS ETHICS INCLUDED)



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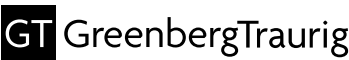
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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2024

12:00–1:45 PM	KICK-OFF WELCOME LUNCHEON: THE CHAMPION WITHIN YOU: THE SCIENCE OF WINNING AND LOSING Ashley Merryman Founder/President, The Sherwood Group, LLC, <i>New York Times</i> Bestselling Author
2:00–2:20 PM	TALK 01: EMBRACING PIVOT POINTS: SETTING PRIORITIES IN CHANGING LANDSCAPES Damien M. Diggs United States Attorney, Eastern District of Texas
2:20–2:40 PM	TALK 02: ENGAGING (OR NOT) ON SOCIETAL ISSUES: GUIDANCE IN A CHALLENGING TIME Jennifer Loven Partner, FGS Global
2:40–3:10 PM	NETWORKING BREAK W/ SNACKS
3:20–3:40 PM	TALK 03: NAVIGATING THE GEN AI REVOLUTION Dr. Jessica Ouyang Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science, University of Texas at Dallas
3:40–4:00 PM	TALK 04: DIPLOMACY AND THE LIMITS OF PERSUASION Aaron Honn Public Affairs Advisor, U.S. Mission to NATO
4:00–4:05 PM	THANK YOU & HOUSEKEEPING
6:00 PM	MAGNA STELLA AWARDS DINNER (SEPARATE TICKET REQUIRED)

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2024

8:15–8:55 AM	NETWORKING BREAKFAST
9:00–9:10 AM	GATHERING, THANK YOU & HOUSEKEEPING
9:10–9:30 AM	TALK 05: SHIFT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT: REFLECTIONS ON CHANGE Irma Carrillo Ramirez Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
9:30–9:50 AM	TALK 06: BOTH/AND THINKING Wendy K. Smith Dana J. Johnson Professor of Management & Faculty Director, Women's Leadership Initiative, University of Delaware
9:50–10:10 AM	TALK 07: SUCCESS IS NOT FINAL: NAVIGATING CHANGE BY ADVOCATING CHANGE Joe Tocco Senior Vice President - Assistant General Counsel, AT&T
10:10–10:40 AM	NETWORKING BREAK W/ SNACKS
10:40–11:00 AM	TALK 08: INJUSTICE OF THE PEACE Mark Melton Partner, Holland & Knight LLP
11:00–11:20 AM	TALK 09: TODAY'S ECONOMICS, IT'S BEEN SOME CRAZY SHIFTS Jeff Lanier Head of Finance and Economics, SVP of Strategic Accounts, Stewart's Agency Business
11:20–11:50 AM	TALK 10: THAT COULD NEVER HAPPEN TO ME: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN GOOD LAWYERS MESS UP Seana Willing Chief Disciplinary Counsel, State Bar of Texas
11:50–12:00 PM	THANK YOU, EVALUATIONS, PRIZE DRAWINGS & SAVE THE DATE FOR 2025
12:00–2:30 PM	FAREWELL CELEBRATION LUNCH



THE CHAMPION WITHIN YOU: THE SCIENCE OF WINNING AND LOSING

Ashley Merryman

Founder/President // The Sherwood Group, LLC
New York Times Bestselling Author

Ashley Merryman changes the world's dialogue. Having written two *New York Times* bestsellers, Merryman's genius is that she finds the science essential to understanding what makes people tick—what motivates us, what inspires us—from individual quirks to institutional phenomena. Then she explains how to use these insights to transform our lives. With Po Bronson, it was Merryman who introduced the world to Carol Dweck and her now-famous concept of growth mindset. Then Merryman brought the science of creativity to the public's attention. Now, she's using science to help people succeed.

As a lecturer, Merryman has appeared at more than 200 venues—global leaders such as Staples, FOX, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, State Street Global Advisors, FTI, YPO, Aspen Institute and SXSW. Her book *NurtureShock*, co-authored with Bronson, has become one of the most influential books about children ever published. On the *New York Times* bestseller list for more than six months and an Amazon Top Nonfiction 100 book for over a year, it has been translated into 20 languages. Their follow-up, *Top Dog: The Science of Winning and Losing*, was another instant *New York Times* bestseller on “best of” lists.

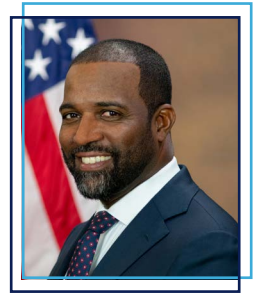
In addition to cover stories and more for *Newsweek* and *New York*, Merryman has written for the *New York Times*, *Time*, the *Washington Post*, CNN.com, *Military Times*, and more. Recently, she wrote nearly 40 articles on the business, practice and substance of law for *US News & World Report* and an award-winning feature for *Lawfare*.

She has made countless media appearances including: CNN's *Anderson Cooper 360*; *Fox and Friends*; *CBS This Morning*; @KatieCouric; *John Stossel*; ESPN's *Outside the Lines*; HBO's *Real Sports*; RedBull's *Visions of Greatness*; BBC's *World News and Sports Hour*; and NPR's *On Point*.

Among the honors Merryman has received: She was presented with a Meritorious Civilian Service Award from the United States Navy. She has been a Poynter Fellow for Journalism at Yale University. She has received 12 awards for her reporting including the PEN Center USA Literary Award and AAAS Award for Science Journalism. Her work is so authoritative that it's been cited in more than 1,240 journals and books to date.



EMBRACING PIVOT POINTS: SETTING PRIORITIES IN CHANGING LANDSCAPES



Damien M. Diggs

United States Attorney // Eastern District of Texas

Damien M. Diggs has taken the oath of office to become the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas. Diggs was nominated by President Joe Biden on Feb. 2, 2023 and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on May 4, 2023. He took the oath of office on May 7, 2023 from Chief U.S. District Judge Rodney Gilstrap.

Diggs, 48, of Frisco, is the chief federal law enforcement official in the Eastern District of Texas, which includes 43 counties stretching from the Oklahoma border to the Gulf of Mexico. The district includes six fully staffed offices in Beaumont, Plano, Tyler, Sherman, Texarkana, and Lufkin with 103 employees, including 53 prosecutors. Diggs is responsible for the prosecution of federal criminal offenses in the district and will represent the United States in all civil litigation in the district.

"I am honored to have been nominated by President Biden and confirmed by the Senate," said U.S. Attorney Diggs. "I'm excited to continue serving the public in this role and ensuring that justice is served for the citizens in the 43 counties that make up the Eastern District of Texas.

Diggs has served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Northern District of Texas since 2018 where he was assigned to the criminal division's violent crime section prosecuting firearms violations and fraud matters. Prior to that, he worked as an assistant U.S. attorney in Washington, D.C. from 2012 to 2018. From 2007 to 2012, he was an attorney with the Department of Education. Diggs was also an associate at Hogan & Hartson for two years before beginning his service with the federal government.

Diggs earned his Bachelor of Science in political science and government from Towson University's College of Liberal Arts in 1998 and his law degree from American University's Washington College of Law in 2003.



ENGAGING (OR NOT) ON SOCIETAL ISSUES: GUIDANCE IN A CHALLENGING TIME

Jennifer Loven

Partner // FGS Global

As a Partner in FGS Global's Strategic Communications Division, Jennifer Loven specializes in crises, issue management, public affairs and messaging and media strategy for organizations' highest-stakes moments. Jennifer brings three decades of experience in and around media at the highest levels to counsel for a wide range of clients across industry sectors.

Prior to joining the firm, Jennifer was an Associated Press reporter, most recently as AP's chief White House correspondent. She covered both the Bush and Obama presidencies, chronicling for the world's oldest and largest newsgathering organization nearly every major domestic and global event of the times, presidential election campaigns, and White House travels to all 50 states and over 50 foreign countries.

From 2008-2009, Jennifer was president of the White House Correspondents Association, negotiating disputes between the White House and the press corps and overseeing the first White House Correspondents Dinner of the Obama presidency.

Before the White House beat, Jennifer covered the telecommunications, housing, environment and agribusiness sectors from Washington for the AP, and reported out of the AP's Detroit and Michigan statehouse bureaus. Earlier, she worked for The Russ Reid Co., a marketing agency for nonprofits in Pasadena, California, and for African Enterprise in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

A native of Charlotte, NC, Jennifer received a BA in English and American studies from the University of Virginia and an MS from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. She serves on the Board of Horizons Greater Washington, which helps economically disadvantaged students achieve better academic outcomes. Jennifer lives with her family in Chevy Chase, Maryland.



NAVIGATING THE GEN AI REVOLUTION



Dr. Jessica Ouyang

Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science // University of Texas at Dallas

Jessica Ouyang is an assistant professor in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD), specializing in artificial intelligence and natural language processing. Her research interests include error detection and correction in news summarization and video caption generation, automatic literature review generation for scientific documents, and modeling persuasive narratives embedded in argumentative documents. She has also worked on several applications of natural language processing techniques for specialized domains, such as medical school essay analysis, structure prediction for light-harvesting molecules, and AI-enhanced trauma therapy.

She has received awards for Best Paper, Notable Data Set creation, and Outstanding (peer) Reviewer, as well as serving as an Area Chair on the program committees of top AI conferences, such as ACL, EMNLP, and COLING. At UTD, Jessica serves on the Computer Science Department's Graduate Admissions and PhD Committees, as well as the engineering school's Information Security Advisory and Strategic Planning Committees, and she is the faculty advisor for the UTD chapter of Girls Who Code.

Jessica graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of Pennsylvania in 2012 with undergraduate degrees in computer science and linguistics. She received her PhD from Columbia University in 2019, advised by Professor Kathleen McKeown. Her dissertation focused on automatic summarization for new information sources, such as social media posts and non-English documents.



DIPLOMACY AND THE LIMITS OF PERSUASION

Aaron Honn

Public Affairs Advisor // U.S. Mission to NATO

Aaron Honn is currently the Public Affairs Advisor at the U.S. Mission to NATO. Aaron is a career diplomat, who joined the U.S. Department of State as a Foreign Service Officer in 2006. He has served as the Spokesperson for the State Department's Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, as Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy to Moldova, and as Deputy Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy to Sweden. He previously served as a staff assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs as a press officer in the same bureau. Earlier in his career, he was Vice Consul at the U.S. Embassy in Panama, and at U.S. Consulate General Toronto, focusing on political, economic and consular work. He is the recipient of numerous Superior Honor Awards and Meritorious Honor Awards from the State Department.

Aaron graduated from Yale University and the University of Houston Law Center. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, he practiced civil litigation in Houston; he is a member of the State Bar of Texas and the Bar of the United States Supreme Court. He is also a Distinguished Graduate of National Defense University's National War College, where he received a Master's Degree in National Security Strategy with a focus on U.S. relations with NATO and the EU. Aaron has also been published in the *Foreign Service Journal* and the Army War College's *War Room*. He and his wife, Anne Coleman-Honn, have three children.



SHIFT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT: REFLECTIONS ON CHANGE



Irma Carrillo Ramirez

Circuit Judge // United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

Irma Carrillo Ramirez was sworn in as Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit on December 11, 2023. She had previously served as a United States Magistrate Judge for the Northern District of Texas, Dallas Division, for 21 years. Prior to her judicial service, she was an Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas, Dallas Division, where she spent time in both the criminal and civil divisions, and an associate attorney in the general commercial litigation section of the law firm of Locke Purnell Rain Harrell L.L.P. She received her law degree from Southern Methodist University School of Law, Dallas, Texas, where she was a Sarah T. Hughes Diversity Fellow, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from West Texas State University, Canyon, Texas.

Judge Ramirez received the State Bar of Texas Hispanic Issues Section Judge of the Year Award, the Dallas Women Lawyer's Association's Louise B. Raggio Award, the Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law's Distinguished Alumni Award for Judicial Service, the Dallas Hispanic Bar Association's La Luz Achievement Award, the SMU Women in Law Distinguished Alumna Award, a Federal Executive Board Public Service Award, the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers' Outstanding Mentor Award, and the SMU Law School Board of Advocates Coach of the Year Award. She is a member of SMU Dedman School of Law's Executive Board and the SMU Law Review Association Advisory Board, and she has previously served as an SMU Community Fellow. She has also served two terms on the Board of Trustees for the Texas Center for Legal Ethics, including as the Chair in 2019. She is a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation and the Dallas Hispanic Law Foundation; a Sustaining Life Fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation, the Dallas Bar Foundation, and the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers; a Master in the William "Mac" Taylor Inn of Court and the Sarah T. Hughes Inn of Court.



BOTH/AND THINKING

Wendy K. Smith

Dana J. Johnson Professor of Management & Faculty Director // Women's Leadership Initiative, University of Delaware

Management thought leader and award-winning organizational psychologist Wendy K. Smith is on a mission to help individuals and organizations turn our problems into possibilities.

Smith currently holds the prestigious title of Dana J. Johnson Professor of Management and serves as the faculty director of the Women's Leadership Initiative at the Lerner College of Business and Economics, University of Delaware. Wendy is also one of the youngest people named as an Academy of Management Fellow. As an organizational psychologist, she is a leading expert on the power of paradox - applying both/and thinking to help us innovate, change and generate more creative, sustainable solutions to our toughest challenges. In her talks, Wendy brings science-based research to life with real world stories to both captivate and motivate her audiences.

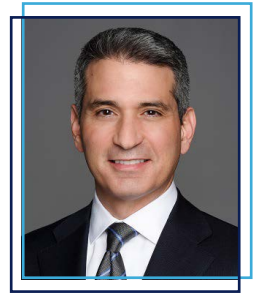
Smith is the co-author of *Both/And Thinking: Embracing Creative Tensions to Solve Your Toughest Problems*, along with Marianne Lewis, named a Top 10 Management Book by Thinkers50, a finalist for the Next Big Idea Award, and a #1 Amazon New Release. Smith and Lewis were awarded the Thinkers50 Breakthrough Idea Award for these groundbreaking ideas.

Wendy is also an award-winning scholar. She has been named the Web of Science Highly Cited Researchers for being among the top 1% most-cited researchers for 5 years in a row. She has published her research in influential journals such as the Academy of Management Journal, Administrative Science Quarterly, Organization Science, and Management Science, while also reaching beyond academia to publish in Harvard Business Review, Forbes, Fast Company, Newsweek and others. As a compelling and engaging teacher, she won the MBA Excellence in Teaching Award 5 times.

Beyond accolades and awards, Wendy's passion lies in helping leaders worldwide tackle the complex challenges of interpersonal dynamics, team performance, organizational change, and innovation to transform their organizations and the world. Approachable, insightful, and globally revered, she continues to shape the future of management thinking.



SUCCESS IS NOT FINAL: NAVIGATING CHANGE BY ADVOCATING CHANGE



Joe Tocco

Senior Vice President - Assistant General Counsel // AT&T

Joe Tocco is responsible for all litigation and IP legal support at AT&T.

Before his most recent role, Joe was Senior Vice President and Assistant General Counsel, responsible for legal support for product development, marketing, and sales to AT&T business customers worldwide, and to federal, state, and local governments and educational institutions nationwide.

Since joining the company in 2002, Joe has held more than a dozen positions with responsibility for providing legal and strategic support across a wide range of subject matters, including mergers and acquisitions, marketing and sales, legislative affairs, government investigations, network operations, corporate communications and advertising.

Before joining AT&T, Joe was a partner at one of Michigan's largest law firms, where his practice focused on complex commercial and product liability litigation.

Joe is a *summa cum laude* graduate of the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, where he was Executive Editor of the Law Review and a Director of the Moot Court. He has published several legal articles and co-authored a legal reference book for the Institute for Continuing Legal Education. Joe also serves on the board of directors of the US Chamber of Commerce's Litigation Center. He lives with his wife and three children in Southlake, TX.



INJUSTICE OF THE PEACE

Mark Melton

Partner // Holland & Knight LLP

Mark Melton is a partner in Holland & Knight's Dallas office and the Co-Chair of the Tax, Executive Compensation, and Benefits practice group for the firm. He focuses on corporate and federal income taxation issues related to domestic and international transactions of private equity and hedge funds, as well as other investment partnerships, joint ventures, real estate investment trusts (REITs) and operating businesses.

Mark is also the founder of the Dallas Eviction Advocacy Center, which provides free legal representation to tenants facing eviction in Dallas County. His team assists more than 5,000 families facing eviction each year.



TODAY'S ECONOMICS, IT'S BEEN SOME CRAZY SHIFTS



Jeff Lanier

Head of Finance and Economics, SVP of Strategic Accounts // Stewart's Agency Business

Jeff Lanier is Head of Finance and Economics for Stewart Title's Agency and Commercial businesses responsible for overseeing the financial planning and analysis organization to drive business growth and profitability, including Stewart's Economics and Agency Financial Advisory Service.

Prior to Stewart, Jeff was a leader in Deloitte's Insurance and M&A practice; served as Head of Finance & Administration for a national Life and Retirement retail distribution IMO; and served for a decade in a variety of leadership roles at AIG including Global Head of Health Business Alliances; Vice President and Chief of Staff to the CEO of the AIG Global Life, Health, and Annuity business; and Director of Strategy & Financial Planning for AIG Life, Health, and Annuity.

He has worked with insurance businesses based in U.S., Japan, UK, China, Ireland, Israel, South Korea, and Latin America.

Mr. Lanier has a B.A. and B.A.A. from UT Austin, and an M.B.A. from Rice University.



THAT COULD NEVER HAPPEN TO ME: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN GOOD LAWYERS MESS UP

Seana Willing

Chief Disciplinary Counsel // State Bar of Texas

Seana Willing is a 1993 graduate of St. Mary's University School of Law, in San Antonio, Texas, and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Economics in 1985 from the College of Holy Cross, in Worcester, Massachusetts. She is licensed to practice law in all Texas courts, as well as before the United States District Court for the Western District of Texas and the United States Supreme Court.

Willing has served as Chief Disciplinary Counsel for the State Bar of Texas since March 4, 2019. Prior to that, she was Executive Director of the Texas Ethics Commission (2017-2019). From 1999-2017, Willing was with the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, serving as its General Council (2001-2003) and Executive Director (2003-2017). Before serving as a prosecutor for the San Antonio Regional Office of the Chief Disciplinary Counsel (1998-1999), Willing was in private practice in San Antonio, Texas.

For more than 25 years, Willing has been a guest speaker on the topic of ethics, professional conduct, and the Texas attorney and judicial disciplinary systems before a variety of diverse audiences, including state and federal judges, court staff, lawyers, law students, law enforcement officers, legislators, government officials, lobbyists and foreign dignitaries. She has also served as a visiting lecturer in Poland and as a pro bono legal consultant in the Republic of Georgia and in the Kyrgyz Republic. In 2016, Willing was presented with the "Exemplary Non-Judicial Faculty Award" by the Texas Center for the Judiciary. Willing has also been recognized by *Texas Lawyer* as one of "30 Extraordinary Women in the Law" (2008) and an "Impact Player of the Year" (2006). She has written and co-authored several articles and notes published in the *South Texas Law Review* (Summer 2010), the *National School of Judiciary and Public Prosecution*, Lublin, Poland (May 2012), *Texas Bar Journal* (December 2019, November 2022, December 2022, January 2023) and the State Bar Litigation Section Report, *The Advocate* (Winter 2019).



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