

NAA SE Region 2025 Regional Arbitration Conference – Speaker Bios (alpha order)

	Patrick F. Clark is the Managing Shareholder of Ogletree Deakins' Atlanta office. He concentrates his practice on advice and litigation in all areas of employment law. Although he has particular expertise in representing healthcare industry clients, Patrick's representative clients also include insurance, paper/building products and publishing companies. His representation of clients encompasses litigation in state and federal courts across the country. Patrick is viewed as one of the firm's "go to" lawyers for cases anticipated to be tried. To date, his active trial practice has included trying cases to verdict in Alabama, California, Florida, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Georgia – all states in which he holds bar memberships. Before beginning the practice of management-side employment law in 1997, Patrick spent five years representing labor unions and employees in disputes with management and tried cases to verdict on their behalf.
	Jack Clarke, Athens, Georgia, is a full-time arbitrator and mediator with broad experience beyond just labor grievances. His experience as a neutral in the collective bargaining arena extends to interest and rights claims in both the public and private sectors. A member of the National Academy of Arbitrators, he served as Chair of the Southeastern Region from 1989 to 1992, as Local Arrangements Chair for the Academy's Annual Meeting in Atlanta in 1992, as a member of Board of Governors from 1994 to 1997, as Program Committee Chair for 1999 Annual Meeting and as Vice President from 1999 to 2001. Mr. Clarke is a member of the Georgia and Alabama chapters of LERA, the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers, and the Society of Federal Labor & Employee Professionals. Mr. Clarke served as the principal draftsman for the Alabama Code of Ethics for Mediators, which the Alabama Supreme Court adopted effective March 1, 1996. AAA/International Centre for Dispute Resolution awarded Mr. Clarke its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2025 and the AAA awarded him the Whitney North Seymour, Sr. Arbitration Medal in 1988. The Alabama State Bar presented him with its Outstanding Service award in 2002. The U.S Department of Labor awarded him a Certificate of Appreciation in 2023.
	Paul Daragjati is a graduate of FSU School of Law and has served as a police officer and an Assistant State Attorney. Since 2007, Paul has represented public employee labor unions, public employee pension funds, individual employees throughout the state, and currently serves as statewide counsel to the Florida State Fraternal Order of Police. Paul is admitted to practice before the state courts of Florida and Georgia, the United States District Courts of Florida, and the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. Paul has represented clients in front of state and federal trial and appellate courts, as well as in arbitration, career service, and in front of administrative agencies. Paul has also represented over 150 officers in deadly force incidents and has defended as many officers in federal civil rights cases.

NAA SE Region 2025 Regional Arbitration Conference – Speaker Bios (alpha order)

	Erika Goodman is a senior attorney at Marie A. Mattox, P.A., with an impressive 25-year tenure in the legal field. Throughout her career, Erika has dedicated herself to representing plaintiffs in employment law matters. Her extensive practice spans state court, federal courts, administrative bodies, and appellate courts. As the firm's foremost authority on arbitration, Erika expertly handles all arbitration proceedings, applying her skills in navigating complex employment disputes through alternative dispute resolution. Erika graduated from Nova Southeastern University in 1995 and is a member of the Florida Bar, the United States District Court, Northern District of Florida, and the United States District Court, Middle District of Florida.
	Joshua M. Javits is a neutral mediator and arbitrator. He is President of the National Academy of Arbitrators, on the rosters of the AAA, FMCS, NMB, and serves on numerous permanent arbitration panels. He served on four railroad Presidential Emergency Boards. He was Chairman and Member of the National Mediation Board from 1988 to 1993. He was Grievance Chair for the International Monetary Fund from 2007 to 2011. He was the President of the National Association of Railroad Referees (2014-16). Mr. Javits represented labor unions and management -- at different times -- in the past, and began his career as a trial attorney with the National Labor Relations Board. Mr. Javits was an adjunct professor at the Georgetown University Law Center where he taught courses in arbitration, transportation labor law and alternative dispute resolution. He has been rated "AV" -- the highest rating -- by Martindale Hubbell's Best.Lawyers.in.America since 2001. He is a graduate of Yale College and Georgetown University Law Center.
	Leslie W. Langbein has been Board Certified by the Florida Bar in Labor and Employment Law since 2001. She was an active litigator in federal and state courts in the areas of employment law, housing discrimination and Title III of the ADA until establishing herself as a full time neutral. Mrs. Langbein is a member of AAA's Labor, Employment, Commercial and Consumer panels of arbitrators and mediators. She is a Florida Public Employee Relations Commission Special Magistrate and a panelist on the rosters of FMCS, NMB, Center for Labor Relations, and American Health Law Association. Elected to the National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals in 2014 and admitted as a fellow of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers in 2024, she is the past chair of, and a frequent presenter for, the Florida Bar Labor & Employment Section.

NAA SE Region 2025 Regional Arbitration Conference – Speaker Bios (alpha order)

	Philip A. LaPorte is a member of the National Academy of Arbitrators and has 40 years' experience in labor arbitration. A graduate of Saint John's University in Minnesota and the University of Minnesota, Professor LaPorte spent 36 years in higher education teaching classes in Labor History, Collective Bargaining, Labor Economics, Labor Law, and Arbitration at the University of Minnesota and Georgia State University in Atlanta. He served as Chair of the Atlanta Civil Service Board and on 13 permanent panels including AT&T Mobility and CWA and the IRS and NTEU. He spent three seasons on the Salary Arbitration Panel for Major League Baseball and the Players Association. He is the Secretary-Treasurer for the Georgia Labor Management Conference and Program Chair for the Atlanta LERA Chapter.
	Reyburn Lominack is a partner at Fisher Phillips LLP in Columbia, South Carolina. He has been practicing labor and employment law for more than 20 years and is certified by the South Carolina Supreme Court as a specialist in the field. Most of Reyburn's practice is devoted to representing employers in traditional labor matters, including union organizing campaigns, collective-bargaining negotiations and arbitrations, and litigation before the NLRB. He has been the lead attorney in dozens of discharge and contract-interpretation arbitration cases around the country.
	Kerstin Meyers Groff is a supervisory field attorney with the Atlanta office of the National Labor Relations Board. Previously, she was a senior field attorney, handling all aspects of unfair labor practice charges filed before the Region, from investigation to litigation. Kerstin has worked on many of the Region's most high-profile cases and has prosecuted before administrative law judges and the US District Court, some of which have had significant impact on mandatory employment arbitration agreements, successorship, and mass discharge cases. Although she regularly litigated cases, her greater passion is creating a path to settlement in furtherance of successful labor relations. Kerstin's extensive experience spans industrial relations in a variety of industries, including manufacturing, security, retail, restaurants, transportation, and shipping. As an attorney, she was often the Board's appointed hearing officer in NLRB representation matters, a role that underscores her commitment to fairness and impartiality. In her current position, she oversees all aspects of the Region's professionals during the investigation and prosecution of unfair labor practices and representation matters. Kerstin is a member of the Georgia State Bar Association and the Georgia Labor and Employment Law Section, and she has participated in the Georgia Bar's Labor and Employment Mentoring Academy. She completed the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services mediation training in 2019 and the Becoming a Labor Arbitrator course in early 2025.

NAA SE Region 2025 Regional Arbitration Conference – Speaker Bios (alpha order)

	Aaron Schmidt is Vice President of Labor at the American Arbitration Association in Cleveland, Ohio. Prior to the AAA, Governor John Kasich appointed Aaron to Ohio’s State Employment Relations Board. He served as Vice Chairman of SERB for six years. He previously served as Assistant General Counsel at the Ohio Lottery Commission. He is a graduate of The Ohio State University (B.A.), The Cleveland-Marshall College of Law (J.D.), and Capital University Law School’s Mediation program. Mr. Schmidt writes and speaks frequently on alternative dispute resolution topics and remains active in the labor, employment, and ADR communities throughout the Midwest and Southeast.
	Joseph Seiner is a Professor of Law and the Oliver Ellsworth Professor of Federal Practice at the University of South Carolina Joseph F. Rice School of Law, where he has taught labor and employment law since 2007. After receiving his B.B.A., with High Distinction (Angell Scholar), from the University of Michigan in 1995 and his J.D., Magna.Cum.Laude, Order of the Coif, from the Washington and Lee University School of Law, in 1998, Mr. Seiner clerked for the late Hon. Ellsworth Van Graafeiland of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. After his clerkship, he practiced law with Jenner & Block, LLP, in Chicago, IL, until September 2001, when he accepted a position as an appellate attorney with the EEOC in Washington, D.C., presenting oral argument as lead counsel in appellate employment discrimination cases. An active member of AAA’s arbitration and mediation panels and the labor arbitration panel of FMCS, Mr. Seiner has served as a Presiding Member of the U.S. Foreign Service Grievance Board, serving as a Presiding Chair of a rotating three-member pane since 2024. Mr. Seiner has published over twenty full-length law review articles, two books with Cambridge University Press, is a co-author of <i>Employment.Law.in.a.Nutshell</i> (West, 5th Ed.) and has published one of the leading casebooks on employment discrimination law.
	Amy Sergent has more than thirty years of experience and participation in Labor and Employment law, representing individuals and employers in a variety of cases. Since 2016, Ms. Sergent has devoted her practice solely to service as a neutral arbitrator and mediator, and she currently serves on the labor arbitrator rosters for the AAA and FMCS, as well as PERC’s roster of Special Magistrates for impasse proceedings. In 2019, she was named to the panel of Hearing Examiners for Miami Dade County Corrections and Rehab, and appointed as an Appeals Referee for Hillsborough County’s Employee Discipline Appeal Process. She currently serves on a number of State, municipal and private panels, and also receives ad hoc appointments in public, private and federal sector.

NAA SE Region 2025 Regional Arbitration Conference – Speaker Bios (alpha order)

	Shellie L. Sewell is the National Counsel for the National Treasury Employees Union, Atlanta Field Office where she leads a team of seven attorneys supporting local chapters across the Southeastern U.S. and Caribbean. NTEU represents employees throughout 37 federal departments and agencies. In her role, she oversees arbitration case selection, conducts national training programs, and guides litigation efforts within the regional field office. Shellie previously served as Assistant Counsel at NTEU from 2012 to 2018, providing strategic arbitration representation, training local leaders, and providing regular counseling on collective bargaining agreements to local leaders. With over two decades of experience in labor law, including eight years in private practice serving as union’s lead negotiator in various local public sector collective bargaining agreements, Shellie brings extensive knowledge of public sector labor relations and union advocacy.
	Chris Shulman has practiced labor and employment law since graduating Stetson University College of Law more than 30 years ago, representing individuals, labor unions, and employers in connection with a variety of such matters. Since January 2002, however, Chris limits his practice to service as a neutral, serving as mediator and arbitrator through the state and federal courts in Florida and elsewhere, as well as the American Arbitration Association (AAA), the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS), The Labor Relations Connection (LRC), and by permanent labor panel appointment or through case-specific engagement. Since 2019, he has served appointed to Florida PERC’s roster of Special Magistrates for impasse proceedings and he was named as an Appeals Referee for Hillsborough County’s new Employee Discipline Appeal Process. A member of the National Academy of Arbitrators (NAA), he has served as NAA’s Southeast Regional Chair since 2022.
	Robert E. (“Bob”) Thomas, Jr. is a Virginian by birth, who grew up in Jacksonville, Florida. He followed in his father’s footsteps and attended the University of North Carolina, graduating in 1984 with a double major in History and Psychology. Two years later he returned to Chapel Hill for law school and received a J.D. with honors in 1989. After four plus years as an associate in the business litigation section at Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice in Charlotte, he joined the BellSouth Legal Department across the street. Since 1997, he has practiced in the labor and employment litigation department for BellSouth, and later AT&T, in Atlanta. He currently serves as Assistant Vice President – Senior Legal Counsel for AT&T and manages employment litigation across much of the United States. Over 28 years, he has handled hundreds of labor arbitrations for the company.

NAA SE Region 2025 Regional Arbitration Conference – Speaker Bios (alpha order)

	Mark Travis worked as a labor relations and employment law attorney for twenty-five years before becoming full-time independent neutral in 2009. Following his law practice, he served as Director of the Tennessee Labor-Management Center and currently serves on the panels of the American Arbitration Association, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, and also serves as an Administrative Judge for the Office of Federal Operations in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. He is a member of the National Academy of Arbitrators and the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers.
	Robert Weaver is District 3 Counsel for the Communications Workers of America, representing CWA and its more than 40,000 private and public sector members in nine Southeastern states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. He is a graduate of Bowdoin College and the University of North Carolina School of Law. From 1988 until taking his current position with CWA in 2019, Robert was with Quinn, Connor, Weaver, Davies & Rouco LLP, first in its Birmingham office and then in Atlanta, where he represented union clients in all aspects of traditional labor law, including collective bargaining, arbitration and contract enforcement; litigation defense, including fair representation, discrimination, and claims arising from union selective strike and corporate campaigns; and ERISA. Robert is admitted to practice in Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee and their federal district courts; the 1st, 5th, 6th, 9th, 10th and 11th U.S. Courts of Appeal; and the U.S. Supreme Court. He has served as chair of the Georgia Bar Labor & Employment Section; a board member of the Georgia Bar Labor & Employment Mentorship Academy; and as co-chair of the ABA's Subregion XIV Committee on Practice & Procedure Before the National Labor Relations Board.