ABOUT THE EDITORS

Ashley Belleau works with fidelity and surety bond companies in coverage and merits disputes. Named one of the Top 25 Women Louisiana Super Lawyers for 2018–2020 and recognized by The Best Lawyers in America© and a Recognized Practitioner by Chambers and Partners USA in its Commercial Litigation category, she advises clients about construction, fidelity, surety and financial institution bonds and professional liability matters. Ashley serves as a member of the Panel of Arbitrators and Mediators for FINRA and served as a member of the Panel of Mediators for the Louisiana Department of Insurance Hurricane Mediation Program Administered by American Arbitration Association (AAA) mediating over 350 hurricane wind damage disputes between homeowners and insurance companies. Ashley currently serves as a member of the AAA Construction Panel and AAA Commercial Panel as an arbitrator and mediator. She also served in 2010–2011 as the National President of the Federal Bar Association and serves as a current Vice-Chair of the ABA Fidelity and Surety Law Committee. Ashley is a Partner in the New Orleans office of Lugenbuhl, Wheaton, Peck, Rankin and Hubbard and serves on its Board of Directors. She is admitted to the United States Supreme Court, United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, all Louisiana State Courts, all Texas State Courts, and all Wisconsin State Courts.

Lee McGraw Brewer is a founding member of Bryan & Brewer, LLC, located in Columbus, Ohio. Lee represents parties involved in commercial, construction, insurance, and surety related disputes in state and federal courts. Lee secured the degree of juris doctor from Capital University Law School (cum laude) in 1989 and was invited to Law Review. Lee also has a Master’s in Business Administration from Capital University (1982) and a Bachelor of Science (major: Accounting) from the University of Tennessee (1978). She is licensed to practice law in the State of Ohio, the U.S. District Court for the Northern and Southern Districts of Ohio and in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.
She is a member Vice-Chair of the American Bar Association, Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section, Communications Division, on the Board of the Surety Association of Ohio and a member of Ohio State Bar and Columbus Bar Associations.

Laurence P. (Larry) Jortner is Brooklyn-born and raised and has logged over 30 years as an in-house surety claim professional and the last 23 with CNA in Chicago, where he is currently a Surety Claims Director. A believer in continuous learning, he earned his J.D. from St. John’s University School of Law in Queens, NY and his LLM with Honors in Insurance Law at the University of Connecticut School of Law. At UConn, his graduate thesis focused on distinctions between surety and insurance. He is a licensed attorney in Indiana and has served as a volunteer judge at International Law Student Moot Court Competitions in Russia, Belarus and Japan, as well as in the United States. His activities also include community theater in Northwest Indiana in both musicals and comedies.

Mark Oertel is a partner in the Los Angeles office of Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard and Smith and a member of the Surety, Fidelity, Construction, and Insurance Law Practices. He has more than 30 years of experience in the areas of surety and fidelity and serves as the National Chair of both firm wide practice areas. His experience also includes litigation and counsel in international and domestic insurance, professional liability, construction and commercial disputes.
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Theodore M. Baum is the managing partner of the Rochester, New York office of McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter, LLP, and is a member of MDMC’s Surety & Construction Practice Group. A trial and appellate attorney, Mr. Baum’s practice is focused on the direct representation of sureties, as well as construction and other commercial litigation. Mr. Baum is a graduate of the University of Rochester and received his J.D. from Albany Law School of Union University.

Amy E. Bentz is a managing partner with Bentz Law Firm, P.C. in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She has been practicing law for almost 30 years and has represented clients in a wide variety of cases, including sureties in complex litigation, defense and salvage matters. Attorney Bentz has been named a construction Pennsylvania Super Lawyer for the years 2012 through 2017, an honor bestowed upon the top 5 percent of Pennsylvania lawyers. Ms. Bentz is the Program Chair for the Surety Claims Institute Programs for the years 2017 and 2018. She is admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States, the United States Court of Federal Claims and the United States Court of Appeals for the Third and Seventh Circuits, the United States District Courts for the Eastern, Middle and Western Districts of Pennsylvania as well as the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and all of its subordinate courts. She is also admitted to the District of Columbia Court of Appeals and all of its subordinate courts. Attorney Bentz is a member of the National Bond Claims Association, Surety Claims Institute, American Bar Association, is past President and Board Member of the Construction Section of the Allegheny County Bar Association, and is a member of the Philadelphia Surety Claims Association. Ms. Bentz holds a B.A. from The University of Michigan and a J.D. degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.
Jonathan Bryan is a member of Bryan & Brewer, LLC, where he focuses his practice on the areas fidelity and surety law and insurance defense. Mr. Bryan is licensed to practice in the state and federal courts in Ohio and in the Sixth Circuit. Mr. Bryan received his undergraduate degree from Youngstown State University (*magna cum laude*) and his law degree from the Ohio State University (with honors). Mr. Bryan began his career in surety law with McNamara and McNamara. Mr. Bryan is a member of the American Bar Association, Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section, Fidelity and Surety Law Committee, and the Forum on the Construction Industry. Mr. Bryan was an adjunct professor teaching appellate advocacy at the Ohio State University College of Law.

Bradford R. Carver is a partner with Watt, Tieder, Hoffar & Fitzgerald, LLP, Boston, Massachusetts. He is a graduate of Colgate University, A.B. 1977 and Western New England School of Law, J.D., cum laude, 1980. He is a former Vice Chair of the ABA TIPS Fidelity and Surety Law Committee. He is also a member of the ABA Forum on Construction, the Surety Claims Institute and National Bond Claims Association. In 2019 Mr. Carver was recognized by Best Lawyers publication as Boston’s Lawyer of the Year for Construction Litigation.

Dan Centner is a *summa cum laude* graduate of Tulane University Law School, where he was elected to the Order of the Coif and served as the Senior Associate Editor of the *Tulane Law Review*. He completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Colorado, graduating with a B.S. in Mathematics after being named to the Dean’s List five times. He practices at Lugenbuhl, Wheaton, Peck, Rankin & Hubbard in New Orleans, Louisiana, where he defends individuals and entities in a wide variety of commercial disputes, including oil and gas matters, insurance coverage issues (particularly those involving “Personal and Advertising Injury” coverage and claims for additional insured rights), contractual claims, trademark and copyright claims, various real estate disputes, and construction matters. He also has experience pursuing claims against corporate directors and officers, and their insurers, in connection with pending bankruptcy proceedings. In his free time he enjoys lifting weights and spending time with his three boys.

Grace Winkler Cranley Partner with Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP in Chicago, Illinois. She is a graduate of the University of Illinois with a B.A.
degree in French and economics and received her J.D. degree from IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law. She has served as a Vice Chair of the ABA TIPS Fidelity & Surety Law Committee and is Co-Chair of the Women’s Involvement Subcommittee of the ABA TIPS Fidelity and Surety Law Committee.

**Thomas H. Duke** is Surety Claims Counsel for Liberty Mutual Surety. Before joining Liberty, he was in private practice for 16 years specializing in surety law. Prior to private practice, Mr. Duke served as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Southern District of Florida for 5 years. Mr. Duke received his Juris Doctor from the Fredric G. Levin School of Law and Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Florida. Mr. Duke also has a Masters of Divinity with Languages degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Joe Trey Felty** previously worked as an engineer at a large defense contractor before transitioning to law, and has spent 14 years in the surety claims industry. Mr. Felty received his education from Texas A&M University and Valparaiso School of Law. He is currently a surety consultant with Cashin, Spinelli & Ferretti, LLC.

**Megan Ford** was Associate Manager and Staff Counsel for Kazlow & Fields LLC of Baltimore, Maryland from 2011 until September 2019. Established in 2001, Kazlow & Fields pursues recovery for sureties and fidelity carriers in all 50 states, in addition to performing asset investigations. She has been admitted to practice law in Maryland since 2010 and clerked with Kazlow & Fields during law school. She obtained her B.A. in English from the Pennsylvania State University and her J.D. from the University of Baltimore School of Law.

**Katherine Freeman** is Assistant Vice President and Bond Counsel with CNA Surety. Ms. Freeman facilitates domestic and international contract and commercial underwriting of surety bonds and indemnity agreements in North America and internationally. A recognized surety industry speaker and writer, Ms. Freeman has presented at the American Bar Association Fidelity and Surety Law Committee and Forum on the Construction Industry, the Southern Surety and Fidelity Claims Association, the Pearlman and many others, and serves on several industry committees. Ms. Freeman’s in-depth knowledge includes international
and cross-border indemnity and recovery, Public Private Partnerships, Small Business and Native American contracting, and environmental construction issues. Prior to joining the surety industry, Ms. Freeman represented contractors, subcontractors and sureties in private practice with a construction boutique law firm in Atlanta, Georgia. She graduated with honors from Emory University School of Law, where she was Managing Editor of the International Law Review.

**Stephanie Geer** is Surety Claims Counsel at Liberty Mutual Surety in its Atlanta, Georgia office. Prior to joining Liberty Mutual Surety, she was Associate Vice President—Assistant Claims Manager at Merchants Bonding Company in Des Moines, Iowa. She received her Bachelor of Arts in French from the University of Iowa, and she received her Juris Doctor from the University of Iowa Law School.

**Neil Sigurd Haldrup** is a founding shareholder and the managing shareholder of Wall Templeton & Haldrup, P.A. with offices in Charleston, South Carolina, and Raleigh, North Carolina. Mr. Haldrup represents parties involved in commercial, construction, insurance, and surety related disputes in state and federal court, before local and state procurement agencies, the Boards of Contract Appeals, arbitration tribunals, and state and federal appellate courts.

Mr. Haldrup graduated from Purdue University in 1986 with a degree in Construction Engineering and Management and received his J.D. from the Maurer School of Law at Indiana University Bloomington in 1989.

Mr. Haldrup worked as a field engineer on commercial projects prior to and while in law school. He started his legal career with Ogletree Deakins Nash Smoak & Stewart, LLC, in 1989. He founded and managed Elmore & Wall, P.A., from 2003 to 2011, and then he started his current firm in 2011. He is certified mediator and panel member of the American Arbitration Association. Mr. Haldrup regularly authors articles and speaks about law in the construction industry, insurance law, and suretyship. He and his family live in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

**Chris Indelicato** is Counsel for the Midwest Region and Canada in the Legal Department at Liberty Mutual Surety. Mr. Indelicato graduated from Temple University School of Law and was in private practice in Philadelphia until 2003, when he joined Liberty’s Claims Department. In 2010, he moved to the Legal Department, where he provides legal support for Liberty’s underwriting and executive teams. Mr. Indelicato has
been a presenter at various surety industry conferences and events, and makes frequent presentations to Liberty’s underwriting personnel.

**Tina Kocke** is a Claims Attorney, Merchants Bonding Company. She is a graduate of University of Central Oklahoma, B.A. 2002 and Oklahoma City University School of Law, J.D. 2005. She is a Vice Chair of the ABA TIPS Fidelity and Surety Law Committee.

**Wayne D. Lambert** is the Regional Manager in Farmington, CT for the Northeast office of Cashin, Spinelli & Ferretti, LLC where he serves as a consultant to the Surety industry in Performance and Payment Bond claims and project completions. Prior to becoming a surety consultant, Mr. Lambert was a Senior Surety Counsel for Liberty Bond Services (now Liberty Mutual Surety); AVP of surety claims for Continental Insurance Company, a lawyer in private practice, and a Captain in the U.S. Army’s Judge Advocate General’s Corps. Mr. Lambert is a graduate of Georgetown University and the Western New England College School of Law.

**Jennifer Leuschner** is a Bond Claim Manager for Philadelphia Indemnity Insurance Company. Ms. Leuschner earned her J.D. from Roger Williams University School of Law in 2003 and is a licensed attorney in the State of Texas.

**Gina Lockwood (Shearer)** is a senior claims attorney at Merchants Bonding Company. Based out of Austin, Texas, she handles a variety of contract and commercial bond claims across the United States. Prior to joining Merchants Bonding Company in 2019, she spent nearly a decade in private practice, most recently as a senior attorney at Clark Hill Strasburger. While in private practice, Ms. Lockwood devoted her practice primarily to construction and surety matters, with particular emphasis on bankruptcy, oil and gas plugging and abandonment obligations, payment and performance bond obligations, construction defect disputes, and enforcing rights against indemnitees. She also represented parties in complex commercial litigation in federal and state trial and appellate courts, as well as before tribunals and federal agencies.

Ms. Lockwood received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Texas at Dallas, *magna cum laude*, in 2007, and obtained her J.D. from Southern Methodist University in 2010. She regularly authors publications and presents at industry events on a variety of construction, surety, and bankruptcy topics.
Bryan R. Rendzio is a Circuit Judge in the Seventh Judicial Circuit of Florida. Judge Rendzio was appointed to the bench in January 2019. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Florida State University and his juris doctor from Florida Coastal School of Law. While in law school, Judge Rendzio served as managing editor for law review and also served on moot court. He was admitted to the Florida Bar in 2001. In addition to Florida, Judge Rendzio is also licensed in the District of Columbia. Prior to taking the bench, Judge Rendzio was licensed to practice before all Florida federal courts, the Eleventh and Fifth Circuit of Appeals, as well as the Supreme Court of the United States. Judge Rendzio is a Florida Bar Board Certified Construction lawyer. He has an AV® rating from Martindale Hubbell. His accomplishments include serving on The Florida Bar, Construction Law Certification Review Course Committee (Co-Chair) (2014-2017), The Florida Bar, Construction Law Institute Committee (Co-Vice Chair) (2018), and the American Bar Association, Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section (Fidelity & Surety Committee). In addition to the foregoing, Judge Rendzio has been selected to the Florida Super Lawyers®.

Ryan Springer has been with EMC Insurance Companies, based in Des Moines, Iowa, since May 2013. In his current role as Bond Claims Manager Mr. Springer oversees all EMC surety and fidelity bond claims and indemnity actions throughout the fifty states. Prior to joining EMC, Mr. Springer was in private practice with the firm Gunn Shank & Stover, PC, located in Kansas City, Missouri.

DeWitte Thompson is a 1975 graduate of the University of Georgia School of Law and has represented sureties since 1976. In addition to be a frequent speaker at various surety-related conferences such as the Surety Claims Institute and the National Bond Claims Association, Mr. Thompson is the author of several books & articles, including: When the Bottom Drops Out; Bankruptcy and Its Effect on Claims-Use of Receiverships in Lieu of Bankruptcy-Advantages and Disadvantages, The American Bar Association Forum Committee on the Construction Industry Mid-Winter Meeting, 2003; Good Faith and Fair Dealings—A Contract is a Contract . . . Is a Tort?, The American Bar Association Forum Committee on the Construction Industry, 2001; Editor, The Fidelity & Surety Desk Reference Book, 2006.
About the Authors

Patricia H. Thompson is an arbitrator, mediator and special master at JAMS. Prior to joining JAMS, Ms. Thompson had a successful, 40 year career as a trial and appellate lawyer and arbitrator, concentrating her practice in construction, employment, surety, fidelity, insurance coverage, and other complex commercial disputes in state and federal courts. Her goal is to provide neutral services nationwide, efficiently and cost effectively. She balances facilitation, evaluation and perseverance to direct the best avenue of resolution for all parties involved. Ms. Thompson can be reached at pthompson@jamsadr.com.

Kathryn Truman is the Surety Underwriting Office Leader for Westfield Insurance Company, responsible for regulatory compliance, legislative monitoring, risk mitigation, best practices and systems and operations.

Ms. Truman joined Westfield in March of 2012, as Surety Claims Counsel, and advanced to the Surety Underwriting Office Leader in 2016. Prior to Westfield, Ms. Truman served as in-house counsel and Chief Operations Officer for an excavating/-heavy/highway contractor.

She is a frequent lecturer on various surety claims topics at professional education conferences, and is a member of the American Bar Association, the National Bond Claims Association and Surety Claims Institute. She received her B.S. in Industrial Management from The University of Akron and her J.D. from The University of Akron School of Law.

Aaron G. Weishaar is a partner in the St. Louis, Missouri office of Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP. Prior to joining Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP, Mr. Weishaar was principal and officer of Reinert Weishaar & Associates, P.C. in St. Louis. Mr. Weishaar’s practice primarily emphasizes fidelity and surety bond claims and litigation, trusts and estates, business and commercial litigation and construction law. Mr. Weishaar is a native of the St. Louis area obtaining his bachelor’s degree from St. Louis University in 1994 graduating magna cum laude. Mr. Weishaar has been a presenter as well an author to a number of papers and publications in the areas of surety and construction law.

Joseph Wolenski is Senior Legal Counsel with Vanderlande Industries Inc., and formerly a partner with Thompson & Slagle, LLC. Mr. Wolenski obtained his law degree from the University of Miami School of Law and his B.S. from Boston College.